

COLLECTED WORKS

OF

K. A. KRISHNASWAMY IYER

(Author of 'Vedanta or The Science of Reality')



Publishers :

ADHYATMA PRAKASHA KARYALAYA

HOLENARASIPUR - 573 211 (INDIA)

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2006

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Edited by :

SWAMI SATCHIDANANDENDRA SARASWATI

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PREFACE

My part in the publication of these miscellaneous Writings of the late K. A. Krishnaswamy Iyer has been mostly compiling and arranging rather than editing them.

All these except one have appeared in print, but they were scattered in various periodicals, and could not have taken an easily accessible form, if the idea of collecting them all had not occurred to me immediately after the completion of the revised edition of the *Vedanta or the Science of Reality* by the same author.

The first of these writing is the *Meditations* hitherto hidden in a note-book written in the author's own hand. From the dates prefixed to the several instalments it is seen that it was commenced on 14-3-1900 and I do not believe that it was ever meant for publication seeing that K. Iyer never mentioned its name before his intimate friends even when he had published his *Magnum Opus*. It could never have been rescued from oblivion had not Sri K. S. Krishna Iyer the author's brother-in-law so kindly lent the note-book to us for publication. It is perhaps the earliest connected essay affording us a clue to the evolution and development of the writer's philosophic ideas. His small brochure containing a *critical*

appreciation of Deussen's Elements of Metaphysics, was published ten years later. The Karyalaya must be grateful to *Sri Garadi Rachappa* of Bangalore, for having lent it a copy of the little book. The next is the '*Fundamentals of Vedanta*' a lecture delivered before the *Mythic Society* of Bangalore. This as well as the views on Deussen's *Elements* discloses the importance that Sri Iyer came to attach to the Method of Avasthas almost from the beginning of his lucubrations on Vedanta.

Uma's Mirror and the *Drum-beat of Angels*, are the only poems to reveal that Sri Iyer had also some taste for poesy as his article on "*Tiger Varadachar*" discloses his proficiency in the Science of Music, while we all knew that he was an adept player on fiddle. Except for his article on the *Philosophy of Advaita*, (p. 267), most of his other writings were essays contributed to the *Vedanta Kesari* of Madras on various philosophical topics.

I have every hope that this collection of Sri Iyer's works confirms us in the belief that he was really a born Vedantin in the highest sense who strove to make his fellow-beings equally happy by sharing his ennobling ideas with them through his inspired writings. For myself I consider it the benign grace of Bhagavan Narayana

that blessed me with the happy company of his rare personage for some time, and urged me now to edit his works with the collaboration of the Adhyatma Prakasha Karyalaya, who have undertaken to publish them.

Holenarasipur
1-3-1969

S. SARASWATI



PUBLISHER'S ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We acknowledge with thanks all the gentlemen that have lent the original or printed copies of the several writings, as well as the publishers or editors that have kindly accorded permission to reprint and include the original articles, poems or lectures in this collection. These sources have been duly acknowledged in the body of this work.

We are highly thankful to certain admirers of Sri Swamiji, who have graciously contributed towards the printing expenses of this work. Donation by Mr. D. J. Buxey, Bombay, also has been gratefully appropriated for this purpose.

Holenarasipur
1-3-1969

Y. NARASAPPA,
Chairman, A. P. Karyalaya



PUBLISHER'S NOTE FOR SECOND PRINT

Sri K. A. Krishnaswamy Iyer was a Vedantin par excellence, with a deep understanding of Vedanta as a whole and Shankara's works in particular, backed up by a wide learning extending upto the western scholars from all the brilliant pandits of this land from where Vedanta sprang up. The present book gives a glimpse of his erudition, didactic discussions and dictum on the subject, characterised by his continual thoughts, the clear logic of his presentation, and his command over the English language which runs through an easy flow to represent his understanding of the subject matter never even once digressing from the main stream. During his time he was respected for his authoritative hold on Vedanta, which none the less was never intrusive. But somehow his fame did not run down to the next generations, may be, because his output in terms of books was not quite large.

He was a generous man, very considerate with all the concern for others. His help to Sri Yallambalase Subrahmanya Sharma (later Sri Sri Satchidanandendra Saraswathi Swamiji) in his school days at Bangalore, providing him shelter and arranging for his food at home and at other friends' houses and more importantly, having come to know of his inclination and interest in Vedanta, he gave lessons to the youngster on Vedanta everyday after he came back from school. Later when he realised the quick grasp and the quick silver sharpness in deductions, he was liberal to treat the youngster as a friend for his discussions.

His gesture in pointing out the wrong interpretations,

by the later commentators, of Shankara's views in his Bhashyas' resulting in its material disfigurement in total contrast to the original, but still entertained as gospel truth by all who followed right upto the present great Vidwans also, paved the way for Sri Sharma to bring out '*Mulavidya Nirasa*' a masterly piece of scholarship and clarity ; this also led his incisive mind to every other aspect, hunting and drawing out several such serious discrepancies from Shankara. Naturally, Sri Sharma held this elder in great esteem as his '*guru*' and their friendship lasted their life time.

Therefore, Sri Satchidanandendra Saraswathi Swamiji was happy to get this book published at Adhyatma Prakasha Karyalaya, just as he wrote a long introductory review on Sri Krishnaswamy Iyer's '*The Science of Reality*' - his *magnum opus*. What this book misses is a similar introduction from the Swamiji.

This is the second print of this book, brought out by scanning the original first print in 1969; hence, it comes out as it was in 1969, in a new garb with nothing added or taken away.

The Karyalaya deems it a good task rendered, if only the discerning followers of Vedanta readily take to this book, and make use of it, which would prove to be a good collection in their library.

The Karyalaya is grateful to Sri M. V. Ramachandra for his munificent donation for the publication of this thought provoking book.

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4	4 top	warrent	warrant
6	11 top	envirnments	environments
9	13 top	croocked	crooked
10	5 top	assertain	(could this be assertion?)
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11	1 top	resistence	resistance
12	5 bottom	concensus	consensus
18	3 bottom	r e tains	retains
"	3 bottom	throug	through
"	2 bottom	extremn	extreme
22	9 top	unfeighned	unfeigned
24	10 bottom	itsilf	itself
27	1 bottom	occurance	occurrence
30	1 top	insaparable	inseparable
35	7 bottom	kaieidoscope	Kaleidoscope
37	3 top	coujunction	conjunction
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46	13 top	unchangable	unchangeable
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61	3 bottom	theoritically	theoretically
74	13 top	The colours	the colours
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186	6 bottom	eannot	cannot
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MEDITATIONS



THE CORRELATIVES OF KNOWLEDGE

14-3-1900

All knowledge bases itself on a fundamental distinction between the Ego, the self, the I or the perceiver on the one hand, and the non-ego, the world, the not-I, or the Percept on the other. To say that one acts or even cogitates is to imply this radical distinction.

A real idea of existence precludes the possibility of its being affected by perception. In clearer words, if a something is believed to exist as an independent entity, our idea is that it must never cease to exist with the ceasing of our perception, but continue without a break to exist even when we are not in the attitude of perceiving it. If the world that I see is an independent reality, I must be able to prove that it goes on existing whether I perceive it or not. If I cannot prove this, I must admit that its existence is only

a mode of perception, a creation of my imagination without my being able to explain it, a mystery but not a thing really existing.

Take the instance of a juggler. He actually makes us believe that he transforms a rod into a snake, a snake into a mango-plant etc. That is to say, as far as appearances are concerned, the effect on the mind is decisive, but either what appears to be a snake or a mango-plant is not an actual one at all or he has never changed their real nature, a mango-plant remaining a mango-plant and the snake the snake, his jugglery notwithstanding. Only by sleight of hand he was able to palm off upon us one thing as another. Hence we think it all a delusion ; and the more so because the juggler's productions are found to have no unbroken continuity of existence.

Again taking the instance of a rope appearing like a snake, so long as we fancy it to be a snake we never discredit our momentary belief by recognition of the fact that it is only an appearance, but we take it to be an actual snake till further events prove that we made a mistake, and then we say it only *appeared* like a snake before, but was not so actually ; Why ? Because it was *afterwards* found to be only a rope.

**Our mind can apprehend
appearances only**

From these circumstances we clearly see that the human mind apprehends, and can apprehend appearances only, but from some instinct of nature, believes them to be realities till the contrary is proved – not because their existence independent of perception has been placed beyond a doubt.

The world only an appearance

Hence we can make the following statements: (1) Whatever is perceived is only an appearance (phenomenon). (2) The world is wholly a percept and therefore only an appearance.

An Objection

But before accepting these truths, one might be inclined to raise the following objections: In the world we find only some things illusive in appearance such as the mirage etc. The rest never change their form, or if they do, do so regularly, and so definitely that the very changes of form imply a persisting substance. To this class belong all organic changes whether animal or vegetable, and also changes in inanimate nature. The sun to the un-aided eye is the same

in appearance from day to day, and so are the moon and the stars. In fact the whole aspect of nature presents the same uniformity for ages. Does this not imply or warrent us in asserting or at least philosophically assuming that though forms of things, which alone come to be comprised under phenomena, continually change, there is so much of their substratum remaining unchanged, as to perfectly suffice to let them retain their identity, and this persisting substance (may we not suppose ?) is the reality amidst the fleeting phenomena that alone strike our senses at any given point of time.

The Argument in brief

This argument no doubt is specious so far as it goes, but it does not go far. The circumstances that determine a thing's identity are supposed by this set of thinkers to take the place of objective reality and the simple fact that we can recognize it or that it invariably exhibits the same characters is assumed to be ground enough for establishing its independent existence. This view is so general and is conceived to be so irrefutable that we should scrutinize it carefully and sift it clearly before allowing ourselves to be deceived by its imposing appearance or its time-honoured tradition.

**THE ASSUMPTION OF A SUBSTRATUM IS
OF NO AVAIL TO THE REALIST**

15-3-1900

Now if to explain our power of identifying things we assume an external substance that remains unchanged while its manifestation or the form in which it becomes perceptible to us ever varies, then that substratum, must according to the scientists themselves be conceived to be made up of innumerable atoms which are not individually discernible but in particular combinations are able to produce all the phenomenal effects, such as colour etc. and change of form would simply mean a redistribution of the atoms. Let us see how far this would account for a thing retaining its identity through a change of forms. The crux of the question is, how do we recognize a child of more than twenty years ago in the young man of two and twenty that stands before us? If the atoms are redistributed, what gives us the clue to perceive the identity? Since the substratum is not taken to include anything more than atoms, there cannot be anything else left in the body by whose constant and unaltered presence the thing maintains itself. Evidently therefore, the assumption of the atomic substratum no more helps us to solve the difficulty of identification of things

than the fact of our being in the attitude of perceiving proves that we perceive something that is a real objective universe.

The fact is, whether we believe the world to be real or illusive, the problem of identity of things is to be explained on one and the same principle which is quite unconnected with the nature of the world's essence. We offer to account for our power to identify things on the assumption of the laws of mental association. One sees a boy at some time under certain environments and again after a lapse of some years. In order that he might recognize his identity there ought to be a large number of points of similarity or circumstantial agreement on all essential particulars, while allowance might be made for dissimilarities on less important heads. And even the question of certain points being the essential ones whose similarity will establish the identity, is itself determined by a previous experience of the world and the knowledge of the laws that may be supposed to govern such matters. Hence the longer the interval, the greater the number of points of difference one is prepared to meet with, and conversely, the shorter the interval the greater the number of coincidences one might reasonably look for. Thus from our point of view to say

that John that I see now is identical with John that I saw and spoke to yesterday is really tantamount to saying that between these two figures (mentally conceived as two but not spoken of as such in our daily transaction), namely John of today and John of yesterday, there are so many points of coincidence that we presume that the similarity amounts to identity. This conclusion is all the more countenanced by what I called our instinctive tendency to believe every appearance as real till the contrary is proved.

**Inorganic things change constantly
no less than organic beings**

When I have discussed the case of human identity I have included all cases of identity in the midst of organic changes. Inorganic changes being very slow and scarcely perceptible, one might be induced to make the inorganic universe the stronghold of realism. But on a closer investigation we shall see that what applies to the organic world applies with equal rigour to the inorganic also, and that what we associate in our mind as the imperishable elements of the external world, the sun, the moon, the air, the hills, the ocean, and the elements with their immutable laws, in reality maintain their independence and remain

as individual entities only in some particular cycle of natural evolution which already webs of scientists' fancy, at least a quite different order of things with the very atoms that the sun is composed of dispersed to the farthest confines of the universe is quite conceivable. While we may concede that in the present cycle of the world's progress through time the various stars, planets etc., stand as ineffaceable landmarks by which other less durable or more fleeting things are identified in position and magnitude, it must at the same time become apparent to any one that has followed our line of argument that the landmarks of identification must go on continually varying and in the end giving place to new landmarks, though all this might take place so very slowly gradually and imperceptibly that for a number of such cycles the same landmarks may seem to persist. Of one thing, however, we might rest assured, that whatever be the remoteness of time past or future or the extent of space in which we figure to ourselves the essential or fundamental atoms of the real matter as operating, these three factors namely Time, Space and Matter must be as a matter of necessity for ever conceived as the necessary elements of the perceived world.

We may well question therefore not how we are able to identify external things if they are not objectively real, but why should we suppose the external world to be bound up with Time, Space and Causality (which last is, as we might see further on, the same thing as Matter in the abstract) inseparably.

Idea of Externality itself illusive

Here the discoveries of Kant come to unravel the mystery by showing that Time and Space are the necessary mental preliminaries of thought or cogitation, and so of perception and no more belong to the Universe than my crooked nose to the mirror in which I see it reflected. And what is Causality? It is simply the other instinctive power we have of giving an objective representation to our affections or feelings. So the externality itself is illusive, what then of an otherness?

A Dilemma confronts the Doctrine of external substance

To the opponent that asserts that our ability to identify a thing through all its changes of form, rests on its being a real external thing, we propose this dilemma Do you say that though there is a *totality* of change with form we identify

the thing, or that only when there is a partial change we can recognize its sameness? If he maintains the former, we humbly ask how would he propose to handle the problem, as his dogmatic ascertain does not one whit make the process more intelligible? If, however, he takes up the second position, why, that is our own and our explanation would quite come in handy here, making it quite unnecessary as it is unwarranted to assume an external substratum to persist amidst the changes of form or condition.

Burke's Dictum concerning Human Certainty

Again what is the meaning of Burke's words when he uttered that remarkable sentiment - 'Human certainty is only the highest amount of probability'? Does this not apply to the question of individual identity also? (But not to one's own identity).

The so-called world is only a bundle of ideas

If we consider the real nature of the knowledge we possess of what is called the world and its things, we find that a bundle of ideas is all we know of any one thing, say a chair. It is the same thing to say, the chair is known to us only

NO UNIFORM OPINION CONCERNING ABSTRACT IDEAS 11

as a bundle of attributes, resistance, weight smoothness, height etc. Now we can easily show that each of these attributes is only a way of mental operation with its cognitions - simple result of grouping and generalising impressions according to laws of similarity and contrast. Thus all that we know of the chair is reduced to a few mental notions. What then is the external substratum of which so much is made ?

NO UNIFORMITY OF OPINION AMONG PEOPLE CONCERNING ABSTRACT IDEAS

19-3-1900

We shall resort to the way in which abstract or general ideas are first manufactured by the mind, before we proceed to explain the origin of concrete ideas. It is quite evident that a child acquires its abstract notions later on, and after a number of experiences of the same sensations produced by objects in other respects different from one another.

For illustration let us instance redness. A child sees a red flower, a red coat, a red book, a red tint, a red powder etc., before it can think of the one quality of *redness* as inhering in so many

diverse objects. Therefore whatever might be the objective source of the same sensations caused by different objects, the perception of redness as a quality depends directly on the *power of generalization* or abstraction that the human mind is endowed with. For just as this faculty is made apparent in the case of colours and other properties that are supposed to depend on the objective nature of things, a thousand other imaginary qualities are conceived in the same thing by different persons about whose reality they might much dispute among themselves. And some people require a special mental training before they can comprehend certain abstract notions and in the acquisition they exhibit such an endless gradations of mental power. We may perhaps agree most of us on the greenness of a leaf, but about the exact degree we shall all differ ; and painters whose eyes have had the needful education can detect the least variations of hue that the keenest-sighted of the rest might miss or fail to notice. If from colours we pass on to moral virtues, a concensus of judgement can hardly be available. I call a man good because he was very obliging, another man seeing him indifferent to some of his essential duties might call him bad, and still another with a sterner criterion of

morality may pronounce him wicked owing perhaps to a looseness of character he displays. About historical personages people very often, and more often than not, come to have different estimates according to their whims or passions. One accuses Charles I, of tyranny, another defines the word so as to make it inapplicable to him or quite to consist with all the evil traits that Charles showed himself to be possessed of.

We thus find that though for practical purposes there is a high degree of uniformity or agreement in regard to the import of abstract ideas, yet this cannot prevent us from concluding that they are all mental creations and cannot stand as a guarantee for the reality of their external source conceived by us. How then can we account for this uniformity in the grosser conceptions in the light of philosophy ?

Each one's world, one's own dream

Bishop Berkely has given us a remarkable view of the percept-world. He says " The world you imagine is your dream, and what I conceive is mine. The only peculiarity is that our dreams agree in many particulars ". It is quite possible to explain even this agreement on the supposition of its being fanciful, illusive and un-

real. For, consider how all our ideas are clothed by us in a language taught us from our infancy – a language which had a particular import to our original teachers, and the fact of our use of the same phraseology awakening in them the same train of ideas with the utmost regularity and precision, should be admitted as a foregone conclusion. The child is presented with a shoe-flower. The sight of it gives rise to certain sensations. The child is not yet able to find expression for its feelings. Here the mother comes to its rescue. She instructs the child in the form and colour of the flower. She says ‘the colour is red’. At first the child receives the word with a vague impression. But when the same particularity is pointed out as inhering in several things in other respects greatly varying, the child’s natural power of elimination comes into play, and at the end of innumerable lessons of the sort, given with patience and taken with eagerness and interest, the child remaining quite innocently unconscious of the complicated mental processes, is going on within it through all that variety of experience, at last comes to identify the term red with a particular sensation and this knowledge or idea increases in distinctness with the increase in the number and variety of instances. With many of

us there are a horde of words still awaiting to receive this impression of distinctness and a great orator or poet is precisely the one whose power of *abstraction* in this sense has been of the very highest order. A poet is one whose words are expressive and appropriate, and the force of his diction depends on his pouncing on the right idea conveyed by a word, not after a laborious process of elimination but immediately and, as it were, by instinct.

What do we mean by a common world ?

It is thus seen that every individual creates his own language to express the world of impressions of his own experience, and whenever he has to understand the language of his fellow-beings he first translates it imperceptibly and unconsciously into his own language. When I say therefore that your world and my world are one, I simply mean I am conscious of only my own world. It is therefore begging the question to say that because we use the same words to denote any thing, therefore there should be such a real thing outside answering to all the conceptions we have regarding it.

From this point of view, again, we find that even if there should be a substratum for the external world we perceive, no two persons can

have the same idea about it, simply because we have got only the senses to trust to and they are by their nature perceptive only and not intuitive. For whatever A and B may perceive in the world they must still make known to each other only by language, and we have already shown that it is quite impossible for one man to ascertain in that way what another means. If there were any subjective method of knowing one-another's ideas of things that would raise a presumption in favour of their being a common world giving rise to a common experience to all beings that can perceive.

Now just as the mind with the sounds, object of the sense of hearing, manufactures words which it invests with arbitrary signification, so also with the aid of the experience it obtains through the activity of the other organs of perception, it creates the world full of such a variety, beauty and properties.

The world therefore to the philosophical can only stand for the source of sensations. As such it is quite unperceived and unperceivable.

The Choice before a Philosopher

We should therefore decide whether it is a real external thing whose existence notwith-

standing its imperceptibility must be assumed, or whether on the idealistic supposition, we could explain why we are all led by natural impulses inclined to endow it with an objective reality.

I am the cause of my own Sensations

Here again Kant helps us to unravel the mystery in which the subject was hitherto enshrouded. You remember his three mental functions - Time, Space and Causality. Now when the space-function becomes active we become cognizant of space; when the time-function begins to operate we get aware of time, and when causality-function begins to work we become conscious of an external thing. As Kant observes, in order that experience itself may be made possible the human mind must start with this presuming the externality of things in space and time, in short, of externality itself. These three functions should not be supposed to come into play one after another or at any interval, they precede all cogitation and perception as the very necessary condition of their possibility. Whenever the human mind begins to work it must start with the idea of *outsideness and otherness*. These are the first products of the cogitating intellect which form the warp and woof of our

experience of the external world. Our being able to take in external things in their relation to each other of both Time and Space means no less no more than that the spacial, temporal and causal functions of the intellect have come to operate. And as they are all proved to be subjective, what is really different from them is merely the sensitive and no fancied source of them. Now if the sensations have been proved to spring from no external stimulus, if externality and otherness are themselves gossamers of my fancy, where should I derive them unless from myself? Hence I am the cause of my own sensations - of pleasure or pain, or beauty or ugliness, of comfort and discomfort etc. Here we already come to tread on the sacred soil of the system.

MY OWN EXISTENCE, I CAN NEVER DOUBT

20-3-1900

The problem of the reality of the world is reduced to this simple form. I know both my outside (i.e. the phenomenal part) and my *self*, the substance that retains its identity through all my outward changes and making an extreme supposition, if every one else in the world should

fail to recognize me owing to violent and thorough change in my external shape, I should be the only authority on whom the proof of my identity rests. Further though the whole world may doubt my identity, I cannot have the option of doing the same, for here is nothing to be proved to me, but I require all proof for establishing the identity of anything other than myself, including persons. Evidence is required for maintaining the existence of something external but not one's own, for he that weighs evidences passes judgments and arrives at conclusions is the very person who is at first satisfied about his own existence, all his acts presuming the same. So there are two things in favour of one's own existence. He is both phenomenal to himself in the form of his own body and feelings and noumenal as he knows himself to be the centre of all these appearances, namely a spiritual basis.

The existence of the substrate of the world presumed by analogy

As to anything external such as the world it is a phenomenon only and nothing more. Investing it with a central self as its substantial basis, is simply an act of *mistaken transference* founded on instinctive illusion. The instincts of

our nature seem to argue in this form : I find two elements in myself, bodily and spiritual, the phenomenal and the observer of all phenomena or something persisting as a substance after all the phenomenal portion is supposed to have been, mentally at least, dismissed. *Ergo*, in the world I perceive there ought to be some similar elements the one being what we perceive, the phenomenal, and the other what we do not perceive but by my own analogy ought to be presumed.

**Strictly speaking, I ought to conclude
I am the only observer of the world**

But the analogy is erroneous, is founded on a mistake. For taking the instance of our own self as the substance persisting through the changes of form and condition that my body undergoes, we must conclude in the strictest logic that if the world have a substratum at all it ought to be a spirit, a knowing being such as myself, an observer of changes but never submitting to be observed. But such a supposition would be suicidal to the position of a Realist. For if an observer be granted to be at the bottom of the world we should now discuss whether in that case it is consistent to have a number of observers. All plurality is restricted to things conditioned by space and

time. But an observer cannot be so bound. Therefore we might safely conclude that the observer is only one and that the man's self.

Berkeley's incorrect inference of an external mind

Berkeley was perfectly right when he said that there is not the same kind of evidence for the existence of a world outside of me that we have for asserting our own. But being not acquainted with the system, his reasonings have not been consistent throughout inasmuch as he supposes the human mind to be a product of time, instead of resolving time itself into a chimera of the mind. Failing in this manner to benefit by Kant's discoveries of the mental forms, he falls into many mistakes which appear almost ridiculous in the superior light of the system. He infers for instance from the correct principle that the existence of a world depends on an observer or the perceiver altogether unwarranted existence of an external mind apart from and independently of the human. If he had opposed these as the phenomenal counterparts of each other and hinted at their metaphysical or essential identity, he might have had the credit of arriving at the system through the pure exertions of his intellect

unaided by the conclusions of the system. But this neither he nor Kant seems to have been destined to achieve.

Schopenhauer the first European to comprehend Vedanta

Schopenhauer was the first European thinker to comprehend the principles of the System, and to defy all notions of fashion and etiquette by avowing an unfeigned admiration for them and their source. He openly acknowledges himself as a thorough convert to the System which he undertakes to expound in a mode of his own. Duessen followed and perfected his methods, though it must be said in fairness to the System and its first propounder that notwithstanding its entire adoption in nearly all its details by these renowned thinkers (?) of Modern Europe they have nearly given up the simple but readily convincing style of his argumentation so redolent of the figures and images of the Vedas and for that reason treasured up and mastered by the Hindu scholars, and endeavoured to strike out a path of their own in the sphere of argument and illustration by freely drawing upon the latest conclusions of the empirical sciences cultivated at this time in Europe.

The most important doctrines of the system based upon experience

The simplest statement of the fact about the external world and my own self is, as might be perceived from the foregoing :—

(1) I have a sense of unbroken continuity of existence of myself, for even sleep I conceive as a condition of it. This being a natural feeling I never am inclined to doubt it, for when I seem to doubt, I am still present as the doubter.

(2) I go in quest of evidence for proving the existence of objects of sense ; all evidence is supplied by the operation of the senses; whereas when all the senses are in a quiescent state, when even the unceasing process of the mind have come to a standstill in the soundest sleep, there is a superior intelligence the man's self ever watchful, though without coming under cognizance of the intellect simply because the latter itself is then temporarily extinguished as we become aware of the fact on our first awakening into consciousness. The man rousing himself from a deep sleep expresses his mysterious experience as follows : " I enjoyed a sound sleep and was aware of nothing " The whole system is pivoted on this singular though common feeling of us all. It proves these things : (1) The self was awake. (2) The self is an observer. (3) The self in its unmodified and own nature is blissful and free from all sorrow. (4) All

impressions of the world can for a time at least be completely effaced from the self. (5) The self which thus runs as a thread through the three wakeful, sleeping and dreaming states knows of no break in this continuity whereas (6) during sleep we lose touch altogether with the outside world whose existence during that time being not perceived nor felt should be inferred only and (7) as this inference is really grounded on a mistaken transference of the persisting power of the self to the non-self, the non-self or the world does not in reality exist at all. (8) The self is wrapped up (?) in ignorance.

ILLUSORY IMPOSITION OF MUTUAL ATTRIBUTES

21-3-1900

If then outsideness itself is a mistaken notion, so is insideness. The Self therefore is neither outside nor inside, neither near nor distant, but being the only thing that exists is all and everywhere and again none of what we see as these are phenomena bound by the laws of time and space. Here then is finally cleared up the mystery about the Kosmos. It has no independent reality and is nothing, but is only illusively appearing as something additional or second to the Self.

If adopting our definition of reality as that which can boast of an unbroken continuity of existence, we wish to determine whether the Self or the percept it is that deserves the name. We find people harbouring singularly preposterous notions concerning the point. The Self which is the source of all our knowledge about an existence at all is fancied to be fleeting and transcient while the world its percept is supposed to be eternally capable of bringing into existence a successive number of what are called souls which come into birth in time and which therefore disappear in time. From the point of view of the System we perceive that objects alone are capable of destruction while the latter can never be predicated of the subject which ever accompanies us through all our experience as the seer or the observer. It is this ludicrous mistake committed by all that Saṅkara calls '*the illusory imposition of mutual attributes*' The self of which we predicate existence in the first instance, on which we inevitably assume in all our calculations and operations, being conceived to be short-lived and momentary while the world whose existence is presumed without sufficient authority is believed to be without a beginning or an end. This idea of eternity is inborn with us and when it is

associated with the proper thing is quite significant, but when we call the universe eternal while in the same breath we admit our ephemeral nature, we thereby betray our own want of evidence or authority to guide us to establish the eternal existence of what we see only during the shortest period or portion of time. The fact is when we are asserting the eternity of the world we are attributing eternity to ourselves and conversely when we come to think of ourselves as only existent through a short period of time we are precisely describing the evanescent nature of the world.

The Problem of Perception how solved

The problem of perceptual knowledge may be started in the following words : If the objects I see lie outside of me, how am I able to perceive them directly, that is without becoming conscious at the same time of the operation of the senses through whose medium I notice them ? And yet in all normal vision such is the case. We never think for instance of the changes going on in the eye as we direct it to perceive a new object but we see the latter directly and yet as though they were outside of us. This could be explained only on the supposition that the world that we see directly is one of our own creation.

The Senses an Inadequate Guide to Truth

Supposing we enquire what is the evidence that I can look upon as final in leading to truth, the reply that a realist can give is by no means satisfactory or conclusive. For going on the common sense principle he would say 'You may rely on your senses'. But if we push him further and ask what credentials the senses possess to make them authoritative on points of truth or accuracy, the realist is nonplussed. He could only reply that we have no other means of ascertaining the truth, if we ignore the senses. In the next place if we put the query whether the senses are not often proved to have been at fault even in dealing with facts of the phenomenal world, and ask how they could be relied on to faithfully represent truths of the metaphysical sphere, he would either acknowledge no such higher existence or, if he does, still persist in the trustworthiness of the senses, our observations being supposed to be generally under correction.

We now turn to the distinction that we maintain between dreaming and wakeful experiences. In both cases we feel or fancy our senses are acting, and we are no less sure of the certainty of the one series of phenomena at the time of their occurrence, than we are of that of the other

as soon as one state gives place to the other. Here then is a strong instance of the senses being an inadequate guide so far as concluding about the reality of the phenomena they represent is concerned.

CHANGE OF WAKEFUL AND DREAMING STATES, WHAT IT IMPLIES

22-3-1900

Now there is such a thing as change of states of consciousness, the dreaming and wakeful experiences being inexplicable otherwise. And beyond doubt they succeed each other, producing the unmistakable contrast. Their points of difference seem to be that the dreaming experiences are wild, momentary, changeable and unstable owing to their not being subject to any laws of regularity or even of possibility, while the wakeful are so systematic and orderly that their comparative stability gives rise to our belief in their reality. But their common character is, and this deserves the attention and scrutiny of the Realists, that during their respective periods, they are stamped with an appearance of reality so wonderfully and so deep that some Realists

hold that whatever things happen in our dreams are all real. The fact seems to be that whenever the human mind is thrown into the attitude of representing, it naturally bears with it or begets the feeling of reality, as without this feeling representation itself will be impossible. When the mind in the period preceding our waking first rouses itself and puts itself in communication with the inner organs of sense and starts them working, the dream-world is created. When it protrudes its feelers out upto the outer or external organs of perception and sets them going the wakeful world is brought into existence.

Thus the reality of the world being a fiction of ignorance its creation, preservation and destruction depend entirely on our states of consciousness which in their turn are also the result of not possessing a right apprehension of the true nature of the soul.

KANT'S ANALYSIS OF THE MIND

28-3-1900

Let us here state the Kantian method of mental analysis in a clear manner. He proceeded as follows: ' If Time, Space and Causality

were elements insuperable of the external world, and had absolutely nothing to do with the mind, then since the latter is only an organ of perception it should only be able to cogitate in this wise: as the external world is independent of me, its nature, individuality and character are quite accidental to me. They cannot and need not conform to my expectations. Neither should any experience of mine about them induce in me a feeling of absolute or apodictic necessity. In other words the mind must be able to operate with its concepts in all manner of fanciful or possible ways, and on this mental power no extraneous attribute of the world should be able to put any restriction. But in reality we find the mind enjoys no such absolute liberty in its conception of the external universe, as it is hopelessly bound down by these fundamental forms: Time, Space and Causality. For instance we may think of a house as big or small, high or low, existing in a place or not existing there, but we have no option of excluding from our notion of a house, its Space, Time and Causality.

Independent Existence what

If it is argued that our experience as regards all objects being uniform in these respects and as our mind can work with only the materials sup-

plied by experience, these three factors by constant habit we have come to associate as the inseparable elements of our notions of all objects making it inconceivable otherwise, then the futile nature of this view can be very easily made apparent. Now our inference can be correct only in connection with the examples we have considered. With reference to those we have not seen or observed and those we never can see or observe or use any of our senses by way of apprehending we are warranted only in making surmises. Our ideas should be therefore, most vague and imperfect concerning them such as the most distant stars, the seen and the unseen. It is thus quite hopeless for any two men to entertain an uniformity of opinion about their nature. Nevertheless we are all agreed that wherever these worlds may be or whatever they be, they must have assumed their present form at some particular time and they must be filling some portion of space necessarily. Now, how are we justified in such dogmatic assertions? We are all conscious of the concession we are willing to make in regard to their differences in nature, position, condition and properties according to different peoples' fancy or credulity or conviction; but there is a limit we cannot overstep. We cannot allow of any of

these objects perceptible or as yet only conceivable to be independent of the laws of Time, Space or Causality.

The Conclusion :

Time &c. are the inherent Forms of the Mind

What does this deep-rooted, ineradicable dogmatism mean? Does it mean that beyond certain limits we do not wish to be reasonable or apply the laws of reason that on other occasions we are all so ready to do? What a wonderful unlooked - for result this is! Every one clamours for reason when he wishes to be convinced, as though her operations he considered to be universally available and conclusive, and yet if we push the human mind to an extreme we find there are somethings wherein it distrusts Reason and would fain cling to its own judgment all reason notwithstanding. What does it all shew? Only that here we have come to touch the boundaries of human knowledge and the key to the whole mystery lies in the plain fact that the mind cannot divest itself of these forms ultimately even though it may exert itself ever so willingly.

**Time &c. cannot pertain both to
the world and the mind**

If then it is maintained that on the one hand Time, Space etc., form the inseparable factors of

the external world and on the other they are also the inherent functions of the mind, we can only point out the extremely conjectural or presumptive nature of this assertion to uphold which no researches carried on in any department of science can ever be made auxiliary or subservient. At best it will be investing the world with but a chimerical reality of no immediate or mediate consequence.

**Two instincts of the human mind,
the true and the false**

Again a realist must necessarily be a materialist. For if matter is real it is equally certain that there is nothing else than matter in the whole universe. Those that cling to a real spiritual world at the same time, simply follow the inclination of their own instincts without being, however, prepared to accept all the consequences it involves to be consistent. The instincts are two, the false and the true. The true is that which points to the inner Self in contradistinction to the outer body and in fact to the world, and emphasizes its existence before that of all others. The false is connected with that fundamental law of mental representation by which the perceived object is conceived to be real.

**God also bound by Time etc.
if He be external**

It is another unpleasant necessity that we should confess God himself as bound by laws of Time etc. If the latter circumscribe all objects, God also among others, there is nothing at least for reason to bring forward to lay claim to the eternity etc., of a Supreme Being.

Perception no proof of reality

Again is perception a proof of reality? In that case, our own self should be set down as unreal, for it is never perceived. But if perception is not sufficient, what other proof is available for alleging that the world is real? A real thing (Self) may be unperceived, while a perceived thing such as the mirage, may be unreal.

**REGULARITY AND UNIFORMITY OF SENSATIONS
NO CRITERION FOR REALITY**

29-3-1900

Supposing one still is inclined to justify his idea of the reality of the percept on the score of its giving rise to a regular series of sensations, which obey a certain law and can both be predicted and inferred with scientific precision, then

we reply that the sense of stability arises from our inability to take cognizance of every minute morphological change that takes place in things around us and consequently tacitly by assuming a certain group of stable elements in the midst of a set of more easily noticeable changes in other respects, and our sense of their regularity, uniformity and precision is all to be traced to the *apriori* laws of mathematics and science which are imbedded in our intellect. These laws are obeyed most implicitly both in our conscious and in our unconscious operations of the intellect. One piece of log, for instance, roughly looks as if it were twice the other and when we measure it with exactitude upto inches, we find that our rough estimate was quite correct. All the changes in the organic and the inorganic world are strictly corresponding to the causes at work and our connecting them in the form of a law is a constitutional necessity of our intellect. The latter may be compared not inappropriately to a Kaleidoscope the symmetry of form seen through which is its own and not foreign. Thus regularity, beauty of form &c. belong to the mind acting in concert with the senses and whatever might be the world, though entirely different from the present one, we should still be struck by the same uniformity and

exactitude because the latter are the figments of our imagination rather than of the world. In any case, we might, in distinguishing between the dream and the wakeful states, have to deal with stable and unstable worlds unfolded to us in those conditions, that is of appearances apparently unconnected and of those capable of permanent repetition with some show of comparative stability. This would by no means argue the existence of another entity, *the world*.

A misleading Analogy

If it be contended that we know our own self to exist because of its stability, or ability to persist through changes of condition, and an extension of the same logic would justify our conception of the world as another reality because of its unmistakable stability, then we reply :

“ Not so. The world shows no stability at all if we follow it through all the changes or modifications it undergoes through ages, cycles &c. except perhaps in a fanciful substratum of atoms operating in space through time and we have already seen that this substratum is delusive as it is subjective and not objective. In the next place even in our own daily experience we find the world nearly annihilating itself daily in our

dreams and completely so during sound sleep. So its stability is the result of a regular operation of the intellect with its *apriori* functions in conjunction with the senses and certain other secondary qualities of the mind such as retentiveness etc.

**The existence of our Self is felt,
not inferred, like that of the world**

In the next place we do not infer the existence of our Self from the fact of its running as a continuous or unbroken thread through our three states, but we feel it in a peculiar manner, because in the nature of things it is impossible we could ignore it as the consciousness of Self is the requisite for all experiencing and passive moods. In regard to the world its existence we do not feel in the same manner as we find we can dispense with it altogether in one state of our consciousness at least and play at pitch and toss with it in another. Hume not realising this difference in the modes of reasoning failed to appreciate the value of Berkeley's teaching. And there is no doubt that there are still many to whom this Berkelean method is imperfect or mysterious.

While on the one hand we recognize our Self in spite of ourselves, and without need of evidence, we, on the other hand, should infer the existence

of an external world from certain properties we notice, stability for instance. We thus see that the latter is at best problematical, while the former is to us the highest certainty. The absurd position of a realist would be, "What we see is not the world. The real world we cannot see, but still it exists. Why? Because we see what is not the world and from it should infer the real one."

INFERENCE OF THE WORLD ILLOGICAL

1-4-1900

But here we are passing beyond the sphere of logic and inference. All inference to be valid is based on previous experience and experience implies perception. We cannot be said therefore to have any experience of the external world for it is admittedly unperceptible. How then can we thrust our power of inference into a sphere for which it is not intended, where it is not valid?

If our experience of the percept, be resolved into its primary elements, we find every object to exhibit a number of attributes corresponding to our organs of perception namely, sound, form, touch, smell, taste, etc.;-that is to say, every object resolves itself into a mere bundle of attributes. If one argues that attributes imply a real thing wherein they inhere, that they are otherwise

supportless, and that every *gunam* (attribute) presupposes a *guni* (that which has those attributes), then we question him "Is your support or *guni* perceptible or imperceptible?" If the former it again is resolvable into mere attributes; if the latter, human experience will not warrant an inference touching it, as the sphere of inference is the perceptible and not the imperceptible world.

We have two radical means of knowledge: *consciousness* and *experience*. By the former we recognize the Self, by the latter we acquire a perception of the world.

Individuals composing the world no less unreal

If the world is a dream, so are the individuals composing it – the living and the lifeless. For what I see in men and things outside of me are a manifestation of myself and not a number of selves independent of me [and those (?)] that have embodied themselves in [each ?] instance. So the long and the short of it all is this: I am the Self the True; all else, the world, is unreal, is my own dream and nothing more.

Berkeley's Error

Berkeley whose genius to comprehend metaphysical mysteries is rarely overpassed has arrived

at every one of the metaphysical truths, but from the realistic instincts from which he could not shake himself free, he has formed a system of his own containing many irreconcilable elements. The fact is, his very primary belief in the unreality of the objective universe was considered so very wide a departure from the common sense, that he had not the necessary boldness to try the highest flight. 'The world you see', says he, 'is your dream; the world I see is my dream. The only peculiarity is that they agree in *many* respects.' Here it may be interrogated: "If the world I see is my dream, where is room left for any other world that is not filled with your world? Strictly speaking therefore there cannot be a number of dreamers or a number of selves, nor is there any validity to be attached to the feeling of their agreement that we may entertain.

**No uniformity &c. in the world
to be accounted for**

Berkeley and a number of idealists have been from time out of mind victims of one other realistic delusion which is not a little inconsistent with their bold position. Having proved, as far as proof is possible, of the statement that the world is a myth, a fiction, a dream etc., they have exercised their minds most woefully about the

regularity, uniformity and precision of the laws which regulate the universe doubting whether these were owing to the objective order of the world or the subjective laws of the mind. Now regularity and their train depend upon a number of points of agreement observed in things at one time or at different times in succession. These again depend upon their individual and objective existence in space and time. But we have conjured away space and time as the subjective functions of the intellect and have shown objectivity itself to be a fiction of the mind. Where then remains from this point of view any regularity &c. to be accounted for? The difficulty no doubt is felt by the idealist while on his way from natural realism to perfect idealism but it unmistakably points to his realistic notions about the reality of individual things etc. When once, however, the superior light dawns on his mind that there is no other thing than the Self, that otherness itself is illusive, the uniformity of laws etc., disappear from before him like mist before the sun.

**Reality of the world cannot be shifted
to the atoms**

If the reality of the world is shifted to the atoms composing it, then these should be consi-

dered as either mathematically or physically indivisible. If the former they cannot combine to form any *thing* at all ; if they are only physically indivisible then they must be conceived to be very small possessing some form and as filling some space. Now we observe that every thing becomes indivisible in proportion to its size as it then requires more force to divide it than we could command. There is no reason therefore to believe that when a thing is reduced to the least size possible, then it passes the limit of divisibility by any means at our command. Nor can it be comprehended by the laws of nature which act in a direct proportion so long as we are dealing with things occupying perceptible space and possessing form should, when we are fancying inconceivably small things, change of a sudden into the very reverse of the former. The burden of proof here rests on those who put forward such a chimerical hypothesis as the atoms.

The real cause for marvel is that when once you push your realistic brother to the fundamental points of his faith all obstinate clinging to reality vanishes and he takes refuge in a number of untenable incomprehensible mental vagaries which he calls theories (thereby indirectly evidencing the truth of idealism itself) without (in his

frenzy) mending their inconsistency or ridiculousness ; while the idealist notwithstanding the distrust with which he is viewed keeps his statements strictly confined to the data of experience and never once ravel¹ (?) beyond them, (to trouble himself?) about theories or webs of the latter's imagination.

**The so-called stability of a thing
due to apriori laws of the mind**

It is only the highest degree of stability or persistence of substance in the midst of surrounding changes that can be taken as a satisfactory proof of the thing's reality. But the stability that is broken by intervals, however much of regularity it might exhibit, is not worthy of the name in the highest sense. Besides, the so-called stability is simply owing to the power of prediction we have by reason of the immutable apriori laws of the intellect.

**THE WORLD CANNOT BEAR WITNESS TO
ITS OWN IDENTITY OR MIND**

3-4-1900

There is a curious question suggesting itself in connection with the identity of the external

1. This word is illegible.

world. Who is to guarantee to us that, so far as the world is concerned, it accepts my identity just as I conceive and believe it? The world that I commence with in one state of consciousness is different from that which I have dealings with (in?) another. That they are identical is to be inferred from certain impressions left on me by the previous world and from similar impressions being aroused in me by the present or the subsequent one. Whether we can explain even the least degree of agreement we witness in this respect, is another point. That the innumerable worlds passing before me at regular intervals like so many scenes in a panorama, cannot each taken by itself individually be accepted as evidence as to the oneness of the whole series, is the contention of the system.

**EXISTENCE OF ONE'S OWN SELF IS THE
ONLY THING MOST CERTAIN**

4-4-1900

If they cannot bear witness to their own unity much less can they speak to my identity, which therefore depends on my own immediate intuition or consciousness. People's notion of a man's self being short in duration, transient, as compared with the eternity of the outside world, is altogether founded on our error.

It is our identity that is certain to us, while that of the world is the result of a mistaken transference of what can strictly be predicated of me alone to it. Consider what might be the points of community that we might recognize in the world on the first day of its existence or creation and in the world as it might be conceived a thousand ages hence. We shall nearly be puzzled to find the total change in every one of its aspects as to make the act of identification altogether impossible, but for the inborn notion in us of matter existing outside of us in *space* through *time* and ruled inexorably by *causality*. Except in this respect the objective world must have an infinite variety of signification attached to us according to the particular age to which we might confine our observation. The above three elements are the final residuum of objective analysis and as they are known to adhere to the human intellect independently of all experience past or future, we conclude them to be *apriori* functions of the organ of understanding rather than inseparable elements of the external world. The phantom of a world – nay, of a series of worlds – is thus dispelled or exorcised away and what remains is the man's Self which by no such means could be whistled away.

Although absolute stability or persistence of substance when proved might be readily admitted as proof of its reality; this method is not available for the external world. For between its first condition (supposing it had any) and its last (simply suppositions) there cannot be found even a single common characteristic or unaltered element as the changes taking place in eternity of time may justly be taken to be radical and infinite. But as these changes of form and condition affect only the phenomenal world we might fancy an unphenomenal substratum to remain at their back unchanged and unchangable and at the same time ever to remain imperceptible. Whether we are bound or warranted to admit or allow of the existence of an unperceived world to explain the perceived, is a question which, from the law regulating human calculations and inferences at least, will never receive a favourable answer.

Mental Inertia ' accounts for our belief in the Laws of Nature

The next point of enquiry is how the laws of nature and their uniformity or invariability can be accounted for on the idealistic basis. This is not so very hard as it might at the first sight, appear. We have adverted to causality as an

apriori function of the human mind. This primeval mental energy appears often in the form of what may be termed the Inertia of the Mind. As inertia of matter presupposes a disinclination, as it were, in it to change its state unless owing to external force, so this Mental Inertia predisposes the mind to view things in particular relations and disinclines it to change its dictum unless on account of some further additional circumstance. Thus water is poured on quicklime. There is, of course, a new element introduced among the molecules of the lime. This change of surroundings is indicated to us by some characteristic phenomena, the rise of temperature, the hissing sound, the effervescence, the softening of the lime, change of form etc. To the unreflecting mind all this is accidental. But the reflecting mind will fancy (simply presume in the first instance, for without such presumption no experiment is possible, no advancement in science to be expected), there is some relation, most likely the relation of invariable antecedent and consequent between the pouring on of water to the quicklime, and the changes witnessed. So a law has already been, though dimly, formed in the mind simply through the causal function, being active in a higher degree. Subsequent experiments determine the

elements to be eliminated and the necessary elements required for the effect in question. But although the law may go on continually getting modified and defined, it will all be by reason of the mental inertia I spoke of, which will not allow of a change in opinion or in the defining of the law, unless for some extraneous circumstance hitherto ignored or not properly studied. That this is perfectly natural can be readily perceived by the innumerable superstitions that our mind easily falls a prey to, which are so to speak faint imitations of the causal activity rooted in us. I see a friend, the first thing early one morning, and connect all the good fortune I meet with that day to that circumstance not earnestly or seriously, but playfully though quite instinctively. . When I see the same man once again another morning, I say to him : “ A sight of your face is a bringer of good to me. It was so last time. I hope it will be so now too ”. Now the mental processes that gave rise to the above expression are the same in kind and origin as the causal faculty in men. A law therefore is simply a convenient form in which the human intellect essays to apprehend things. Their uniformity is the inertia of the mind by which it thinks certain sensations pre-determine certain other future sensations. When

the ideas are present to the mind of such an invariable connexion between one thing and another, we apprehend the law ; when the sensations are present, we apprehend the fact. As to why these sensations are so *regularly* succeeding each other, the succession is at first quite arbitrary and is not thought of as regular, then comes the mental inertia into play which makes it impossible for the mind to think of altering the order or the relation of those sensations and hence their invariability assured. The inertia must be granted to be divided into the sensory and mental. The former lands us secure in a world ruled by the invariable laws of nature and the latter in the laws themselves. The one is instinctive, creative and inexorable, stern ; the other is reflective, misleading and variable.

Why should there be sensations at all ?

The ultimate question is why should there be sensations at all-pleasant or unpleasant, ugly or beautiful ? We answer, because we live, that is to say we will or desire to live or indulge in representations. As our will at first is in the unintellectual stage, and afterwards so equipped with the organ of understanding, what happens in the latter stage is not wholly explicable unless what

happened preparatory to the organ being put into the activity is taken into consideration, which is not possible with our present intellect nor necessary for our redemption.

Is then your mind an external or an internal organ? Where do you place your senses? The former question can be easily disposed off as well as the latter on the admission of the identity of *externality* etc. The senses are in the objective view only appearing as the feeders of the mind, but in the absolute view the mind is quite bound up with the Self and is inseparable and undistinguishable from it. Hence again we come to a metaphysical unity which is a harmonious and undivided whole.

Vidyaranya's Argument

If matter is defined as something having attributes, then we question, "Do attributes inhere in a thing with attributes or without attributes? The latter is self-contradictory, the former is logically fallacious as it involves reasoning in a circle, begging the question etc.

Every law known *a posteriori* has an exception but not so the laws of Time, Space and Causality. Why? Because they are *a priori* necessities.

MISCELLANEOUS JOTTINGS

The world is known only as a Percept and Time is an indispensable form or condition of perception ; hence it appertains more to the perceiving mind than to the object whose independent existence is incapable of demonstration. On this, the idealists have argued that the existence of the world is coeval with that of the perceiving intellect and therefore that the world can be said to have existed only with the first mind, and thus reason that before any animal came into birth, that which perceived was the spirit of God, which will continue to perceive everlastingly. But this is an error of putting the cart before the horse. For, according to this school of thinking as time itself is a product of the mind as its *a priori* function to talk of anything anterior to it (even as embodied in an individual thinker) is ascription of precedence to the son in the order of generation. In the next place, if God is an individual object He is bound by time as all other objects ; that is, is perishable. Since perception depends on a mood of the human individual and there is not the same guarantee that matter (or the objective world) persists through all the changes of states of the ego, as

there is for the fact that the ego persists through its own moods – a self-evident proposition depending on one's own individual experience.

Scriptural authority not to be appealed to in metaphysical discussions

The realists (?) must thus give up their God as He, like every other object should be circumscribed by Time. But if they allege that their faith in a God is based on a revelation, this argument is bad on principle and cannot be allowed. *For the Universal rule in such metaphysical discussions cannot be too strongly or emphatically enunciated, namely no one should quote the scriptures till he has established his point independently on the basis of experience.* The Scriptures are of use only in authorizing or confirming human conclusions, which may be many, various and contrary. Hence the authority of the scriptures in sanctioning a particular conclusion is like the exercise of the president's privilege of the casting vote. But before such final appeal can be made, perfect consonance to reason and experience ought to have been independently established.

God is identical with the Self and absolutely one

Destruction is of two kinds – *Avasthaic* and *Formic*. The latter is not substantial but morphological whereas the former is substantial. Hence the unreality of the *Avasthaic Perception* (world). A substance is assumed to persist through the changes of its forms and conditions. This could only be subjective if free from destruction, as the objective world is destroyed by the *Avasthaic* change. The perceived world is destructible in both the above senses. Hence God cannot be an object. *Ergo*, he is a subject and as the subject can be only singular, is identical with that subject which we refer to as our own Self. Plurality, divisibility and attribution are possibility only in time. Hence God or Ātma is ‘one’ in the absolute sense.

The existence of God depends on the objective attitude of the soul, or on its egotistic condition. Hence individuality and Godship live and die together.



Learning and True Knowledge

There are moments when the Higher Truth (of the unreality of the world) flashes on the human

mind, when the earth and all its paraphernalia vanish and become airy (empty) nothings. These moments only the gifted experience and should be prolonged into minutes and hours. Then is the miracle of a man's living as if he were *in* but not *of* the world accomplished. Without much experience a man's argumentation is like the flower without the smell. Do not mistake his learning for knowledge.

Kant's Antinomy

According to the Atomic Theory the atoms should be either mathematical or physical. In the former case, their existence is knocked on the head. In the latter case, God loses his all-pervasiveness. For if God is all-pervading he must be so at all times and therefore at any particular time. But we cannot conceive all space at one time as space is infinite and hence neither can we conceive his all-pervasiveness at any particular moment. If, however, it is conceded that he is all pervading through a succession of time, two difficulties occur : first, he cannot be found in one place at all times, that is he loses his ubiquity ; secondly any other atom may equally be conceived as filling all space through a succession of time, only give it an eternity to do so. But if all-pervasiveness should

mean only omniscience then that could depend only on the transparency of an object, which again could be conceived as absolute or relative. In the former case, every one of us should have the power of omniscience, or there should be no object other than God, all otherness being illusory. In the latter case, God cannot be omniscient as he could know of various things only to various degrees of perfection according to their individual transparencies.

Existence is not limited by the senses or the world

There are moments when our senses though present are not active and yet we exist, but then we are not conscious of the existence of the world which therefore hangs on our perception. These moments are those of *inattentive* (उदासीन), Yogic (contemplative) and sleeping states. This proves that existence is not bound up with the operations of the senses nor with the world they represent.

The Unconscious Will and the Senses

All permanency or stability of the external world is owing to the operations of the senses, which under the same circumstances create the

same sensations unless countermanded by the *Unconscious Will*, whose biddings are subsequently made known to us in the form of some explanatory circumstance apprehended through the intellect. From this point of view all changes in the world are to be ultimately referred to the Unconscious Will, which according to the individual tendencies sometimes observed, often latent, goes on manifesting itself in the form of a sensory world perceived through the intellect. Hence, the power by which the senses give rise to the perception of the same world may be called 'sensory inertia'. The senses are thus the opposite pole from the Will, as it were, and that which appears most distant in the sensory world, for example the sun, the sky etc., is actually the nearest point to the Will. This is well experienced in going to sleep, for we are seen sound asleep if we keep thinking of distant objects, while when we confine our thoughts to the immediate present either in time or space, we cannot get sleep or absorption into the Will.

The sphere of individuality seems also in this manner most remote from the Will, as the immediate thing or event occupies that sphere. To contemplate the high heavens is thus to peep into our own depths and to concern ourselves

with our household cares is to fly off from that centre.

**The World and its Sameness are
both ideas**

If the world that I see is resolved into mere ideas, the sameness of the worlds seen is also an idea, and as we are afflicted with coexistent ideas or bundles of ideas at one time, so we are inflicted with repetitions or sameness of them in different times. 'The Why' is impertinent in either case.

3-5-1900

O Lord ! Thine is the Victory
None but thee the event desery
Man's boasts but often come to nought
You send relief unknown, unsought
In Thee I absolute confide ;
Be Thou my hope and comfort, guide,
Wherever I should be made to roam
Away from kith and kin and home.

12-6-1900

The unreal is of three kinds :

(1) The barren woman's son, where there are only words and nothing corresponding ; (2) The illusive snake where there is an actual perception disappearing on further examination and (3) The mirage which continues to be perceived even after we know of its nature. The world should be conceived as a mirage for even after finding it to be unreal (through philosophical analysis) it goes on to be perceived all the same.

¹Now the potness in clay is merely mental. The clay is all the persisting factor through all modifications of it. Whatever is not in the clay (the cause) namely potness, ought to be concluded as unreal and illusive. But in the pot there is the clay. Therefore the clay alone is real, that is to say, comparatively the clay must be conceived to be made up of atoms and the atoms are either perceptible or unperceptible. In the former case it occupies space and is therefore further divisible and consequently destructible, while if it were unperceptible and only inferrable, it transcends the sphere of logical inference. For

1. The connection of this paragraph with the previous one is not very clear.

all inference is confined to the perceptible world and has no credentials to be depended on to penetrate into the supra-sensible existences. Besides, if the atoms touch one another, they are divisible, if they do not they cannot unite to form the world of perception.

[It is very much to be regretted that the next leaf comprising pp. 87-88 is somehow missing. It must have probably contained not only the discussion of the unreality of the perceived world, but also the reality of the perceiving self – as might be gathered from the following conclusion.]

..... right apprehension. The wise one having destroyed the *avasthas*, and the wakeful and the dreaming worlds included in them and having overcome the ignorance characteristic of the third mood identifies himself as the Highest Reality free from all changes and enjoys the highest happiness that can ever be conceived or known, knowing neither fear nor pain, but ever-absorbed in his own undivided and eternal Self.

THE PERCEPTIVE WORLD IS UNREAL

13-6-1900

Change, that is, the idea of succession or death or complete destruction, can be predicated only

of the seen, not of the seer. Therefore whatever is subject to change or is observed to be totally dissolved into nothing, cannot be said to exist, except in the sense of the existence of the mirage, rope-snake etc., that is illusorily, not really.

The realist may take up a last position and say, there might be an unseen universe not subject to change but like the axis of sphere forming the centre of the phenomenal kosmos and so continue to exist for ever like the Self. In this case, we can only say that it is willfully departing from the paths of reason and argument, and launching into the boundless ocean of fancy and credulity. Anyhow it is enough if the realist will grant(?) that his world is invisible and that he lives in an invisible or unperceptible world. For this is tantamount to admitting that the perceptible world is not real. And as the question we started with was whether the perceptible world was real, we have arrived at the required answer. As to the imperceptible world being real or false we do not very much care to answer as no one can define or identify such a thing.

The Three Moods

There are three worlds or objective moods as it were. One is taken to be the standard of all

reality in contrast with which the second (the dream) shrinks into idle phantasy. In contrast with both of these the third is absolute ignorance.

The Wakeful State

In the first or what is called the wakeful state the Self wedded to the intellect and through it to the senses puts itself in the mood of making representations and as a fundamental necessity the Self gets itself entangled in the principle of individuation, sacrifices its purely intelligent nature and subjects itself to both pain and ignorance. Representation presupposes subject and object and the Self puts itself in the representative mood to perceive the amount of inclination or bent below its normally erect state. As Deussen puts it, at some time, or for some reason (or at no time and for no reason) there was a bent or the same is, and our self-consciousness of this degeneracy puts itself in the representing mood to observe itself. In so doing, however, it gets casually ravished at its own pictures and remains spell-bound by them till the awakening intellect informs it of its error and persuades it to regain its pristine perfection. All this nevertheless is only an attempt at theoretically explaining what is beyond the sphere of observation and hence is as false as the world we perceive. At each moment, and in every one

of feelings, we are just experiencing so much of the fall from the normal condition as is represented by our affections and sensations. But this fall being previous to the creation of the world it is absurd to cogitate about its cause or time, as these themselves started into being with the perception of the world.

THE FALL, OR IGNORANCE

14-6-1900

It is thus clear that Ignorance or fall precedes the perceptive stage and is the fore-runner of it. Ignorance here means absence of true knowledge. As to how or why Ignorance arose we do not trouble ourselves to answer, since Ignorance is a theory set up to explain everything else in the sphere of causality and therefore cannot explain itself. The sphere of Causality, Time and Space are all begot by Ignorance. The system is quite consistent, therefore, in refusing to explain Ignorance, all explanation presuming the thing explained to be bound by Time, Space etc., Ignorance itself will have to be bound by the same laws which again would be in turn binding the Self in a similar manner. Besides whatever is required to be explained becomes previously an object of knowledge.

But we use the word 'Ignorance' only when somethings have not become object of knowledge. To ask to explain it is to presume that it belongs to the sphere of knowledge which would be suicidal. In the next place such a question is contrary to all processes of human thought or enquiry. The Railways were invented, say a hundred years ago; that is to say for the last one hundred years The Railway-manifestation has been the subject of human knowledge. Before this period, the railways were not, that is to say they were in an unmanifested form. Very well, does anybody trouble his head about why there were no railways before they were invented or how there was that eternity of non-existence? The questioner on these points would be quite idle. So also the whole objective world can be traced back to Ignorance which is the boundary of our knowledge. To go beyond that, is impossible for knowledge. For the realm of Ignorance is not available for knowledge. In almost every instance similarly, there is a very narrow limit within which all our knowledge is confined. To find ourselves knowing a little but not knowing a good deal is precisely the result and characteristic of Ignorance, which again cannot be discussed since that would be assuming it to be not ignorance but knowledge.

Ignorance cannot be referred to a Cause

Time, Space, and Causality bind the phenomenal world. Ignorance begets Time etc. Therefore Ignorance cannot be referred to a further cause nor represented as operating in space through time. Ignorance here is identical with Deussen's 'Apriority of Time etc'. If our faculty of understanding namely the mind, had not been bound down by these forms, the question of the nature of the nominal world would have received a more distinct and more decided reply. But as it is, everything is dark and obscure and quite unlike the Truth or the Reality. Without an idea of perception, no representation is possible. Only this idea may be more or less distinct or capable of being disproved.

The Reality of the Senses in Waking is Unprovable

In dreams, we feel as if we were provided with wings as if we traversed extensive regions and transacted immense business. All this would have been impossible if at the time we did not believe our senses were acting. In the wakeful state we have the same experience founded on a belief in the operation of our senses etc. At the same time we are in the habit of contrasting this

with the dreaming state and concluding that that was a merely passive state, but wrongly or illusively appearing at the time as the active one. Thus representation always presupposes a belief in the existence of operation of the senses whether the latter be real or false. Thus there being no independent proof available of the existence of the intellect and the senses except through the fact of there being a representation and as in one representative state (the Dreaming) the senses are conceded to be only imaginary or false the reality of the same in the other state (the Wakeful) cannot be established either, since in this state also there is only the fact of a series of representations to vouch for their reality.

Why the Intellect cannot grasp the Self

It is thus clear that every system has two points, the destructive and the constructive, and that the former precedes. If therefore through the destructive process we have arrived at truth, however hard the constructive part might be, that might only indicate our human weakness but cannot throw any doubt on the validity of the results already arrived at. According to the system, for instance, the Self is Absolute Intelligence and the human intellect finds itself operating

in an imperfect manner upon an illusory world. The intellect thus cannot grasp the superior nature of the soul, but can use its acumen to disprove the phenomenal being the real world. In fact the intellect is not meant to serve any better function. Consequently the intellect would have served its purpose when it has pointed out the utterly illusive nature of all human experience. It cannot reveal the Self, first because the self is never absent and intellect is only a manifestation of it, and in the next place just as there is no objective world without a subjective mind, so there cannot be a subjective intellect without a perceived world, thereby proving to a demonstration that the proper field wherein the intellect could work is just the objective world bounded by Time, Space etc. And as the Self is not so limited it can never become an object of perception being in fact identical with the subject and the object both of which form indeed its single manifestation.

The Mind is as false as the World

If the Kosmos is false, so is the mind. For we never know of a mind when the objective world is abolished. In sound sleep not only is the world absent but the intellect itself is dissolved,

or is in a quiescent state. There is the further experience that "I knew nothing (in sleep)". And since this reminiscence comes to us in the wakeful state, the 'I' here must signify the intellectual manifestation of the Self alone and as referring to a recorded experience in the language of representation.

PERSISTENCE NO PROOF OF REALITY

15-6-1900

That which persists through all time might be supposed to be real ; but this definition would not do since time itself comes with our cognition only in two of our states and is entirely absent from the third. Not only so, but in passing from one state to another there is no perception of time, though we know we pass three states. Hence what we identify as ourselves is beyond the reach of time and can be known as only our own Self, the centre of all our thoughts and acts, the factor which is more certain to us than any other, doubting which is impossible, though we might doubt all else. Hence time itself being unreal what can persistence through all time mean ?

**Change of state shows that the
so-called Laws are illusive**

Or what is eternity? That which displays a regularity or uniformity of laws? Neither can claim any reality. For during one state all the feelings that rise are illusive. If the things are illusive the laws they seem to obey must be illusive also. That these so-called laws and their invariability of operation are purely fictitious, can be inferred from the fact that in dreams we are not struck with any departure from them (and) there is nothing revolting to our sense of appropriateness or rebelling against the notions of regularity we have conceived of the natural processes, at least while we are in that state. But once we change our state, or rather once it is changed, then in contrast with the world manifested in the wakeful state we remember the other experience to be all a confusion, a setting at defiance of all laws of order and naturalness etc. This should incontrovertibly prove that the perceived uniformity of the operation of natural laws cannot in any degree establish the reality of the objective world wherein they act.

**The so-called States as well as
their Succession are illusive**
Again Time is associated with the idea of

succession. When one event succeeds another, they are said to occur in time provided that we are there present to note the change and the succession. Stragglers of events that are not united by a common observer of both without a break, cannot be placed in time in any order of precedence. Now what we call our three states, the wakeful, the dreaming and the sleeping, are apprehended only in either of the two former. That is to say we have some ideas about them. In a dream we cannot identify that state, but believe it to be the wakeful. In the sleeping state, we do not operate with concepts or percepts at all. So the only logical summary of it is (that) we have a notion we pass through three states and that they are in succession, not simultaneously. But this notion is inaccurate as there cannot be succession in any sense where there is an interval in perception as we all allow between one state and another. We only cogitate about these supposed states in the manner in which we are bound to do by means of a time-and-space-bound intellect. If their succession is false, they exist only in our imagination, like so many other ideas we conceive during the periods of mental representation. Thus days, nights, months, years, cycles all disappear.

The Self is the only Reality

But the self now, ever, or never (in no time-bound condition) exists. In all the immense throng of affections of endless variety, now grouping themselves under different supposed states, now appearing to co-exist or occur in succession in an identical state, in all this representative aggregate the only Real Entity is the Self indescribable, unknowable and yet best known being recognized as the only existence.

An objection considered

The systematist says all things are bundles of attributes.

Objector : Take an unripe mango ; compare it with the same after it is fully ripe. If the fully ripe mango and the unripe one are each a bundle of attributes and you do not suppose there is a fruit or a thing distinct from these attributes, you must hold that the unripe (fruit) and the ripe one are two distinct things ; in which case where did the former go and when (whence ?) did the latter come ?

Reply : Both the ripe and the unripe fruit being taken as bundles of attributes, I have only to explain the idea of sameness we have regarding

them or 'it' as you please, I need not account for the change of attributes, I hope. For that is irrelevant ; and in the next place, how would you a realist, account for the ripening of the mango through time, except by dogmatically asserting ' It must be so ', ' It is the law of nature ' or one of these ' No-Go-Beyonds ' ?

When A states or starts a theory and B objects to it, it must be only in the way of showing an inconsistency of his position. Supposing we grant the premises, the objector should reason from the same view-point as the theorist ; otherwise the theorist's triumph is secured. If this principle is carefully remembered, most of the objections raised against the system would be found to be no objections at all.

The System summarized

The system now may be summarized as follows : " There is but one thing that is the Self ; the world is unreal ; and our soul is the Self " Now let us examine the objections generally started against this truth :

How can God's creation be unreal ?

Objection : If the world is unreal, its creation etc. must (?) be false, but God is defined as the

creator, etc. of the world. How can his act be unreal ?

Reply : There is no necessity that every thing other than 'Self' should be accepted as real. Therefore the distinction of the world and its creator and creation are all illusive. We are not bound by anything said in the *Sāstras* as they are themselves part and parcel of the unreal universe. If the idea of creation is accepted then all the corollaries about the cause and the effect being identical in substance etc., must necessarily follow and the party questioned would be non-plussed. But as that notion itself is held to be erroneous, the systematist is not bound to acknowledge any difficulty here. The only approach possible to the citadel of the systematist is by asking the elementary question "How do you prove the world's unreality ?" Then we repeat our grounds over again.

: The Illusive Nature of Uniformity etc., illustrated

The illusive and thoroughly untrustworthy nature of the uniformity, and regularity of the laws of nature was beautifully illustrated by **Mr. Ramaswamy Sastry** and although previously (?) mentioned in general terms his method of argument may be stated here. Suppose a lamp

is lighted in a room and a creature was born afterwards. The organism may continue to see the lamp during its existence, and may conclude from this ephemeral experience that the world though changing from moment to moment in every other aspect is still uniform in this respect that there is a lamp unchanging in its brightness of power. With such impressions the animal may die and the lamp also may be put out immediately after. Such are our notions of the permanance of the sun and other objects in the Universe and the supposed uniformity and invariability of all known laws.

Berkeley's view concerning perception of distance

Berkeley in proving that all vision is prevision advances a novel aspect of the question. Every object is perceived through rays of light travelling from it to the eye. Now *every ray falls and must fall longitudinally, so that its end alone comes in contact with the optic nerve*; but obviously no idea of the length or the distance of an object can be conceived when it is presented in this manner, that is, only the end is brought into contact with the senses of perception. How then can we be said to perceive distance except unscientifically and wrongly? The fact is distance is not

altogether mental as abstract ideas are, but is a secondary creation of special groups of sensations, so that we perceive distance in one sense, as we do not come to know of it till some associated groups of sensations are experienced, and in another sense, it is not purely external nor singly perceived, but is the result of the inter-action of primary sensations on each other and on the perceiving intellect. It is like the secondary light playing about brilliants placed in juxta-position, which cannot be traced to any one of the gems individually and yet which appears only when they are all placed in close proximity. The colours changing with the attitude of the eyes of the seer.

Spencer's objection disposed of

This view of distance saves the idealists from the smart criticism of **Herbert Spencer** who says " Ask an idealist whether a distance is long and tiresome or the idea of it is long and tiresome and the person will soon acknowledge the distinction between a real world and the idea we have of such a world ". The idealist never confounds sensations with purely intellectual creations or ideas. While these are in our perceiving or representative attitude quite distinct, there is no ground to assert dogmatically as the realists do,

that the sensations imply an external source of the same, different from sensations and therefore unperceived. It is the utterly illogical unwarranted assumption of this sort that the idealist would deplore and deprecate.

TIME, SPACE Etc.

The Realists' derivation of time etc, from experience

Bain, Spencer and Mill would derive our ideas of Time and space, from experience. Their line of argument is that things give you a succession of sensations or a permanent possibility of the same in a particular order. The mere succession gives the idea of Time, while the ability to reproduce the same in any order is the source of our conception of Space. Whatever can thus be acquired from experience need not be attributed to something else. Their apriority (the apriority of Time, Space etc.) is thus a needless assumption.

But the meaning of saying that Time etc. are *a priori* functions of the mind is just this, that the mind has got the innate power of grasping succession as time, and co-existence as space and is bound by necessity to conceive things only in these relations. Hence the apriority of Time, Space etc. as functions of the human Intellect.

Principles to be observed in disputes

One prolific source of controversial disputes, might be styled as the clashing of two lights. When the systematist argues from his standpoint of view and the objector strongly biassed by the realistic view disputes the position of the systematist, a careful arbitrator is needful to point out to each the source of their difference. If only disputants have an eye to their own particular view-points most of the vexations caused by endless controversies will disappear. One that would not waste his energy in such fruitless discussions ought to take care to secure this uniformity of view-points as the starting point. And in this case his aim ought to be to state the reasonableness and consistency of his position and shew that, that way the opponent cannot disturb him. If therefore the objector really wishes to score a triumph over the systematist he must first get a clear conception of the cardinal points of the system and endeavour to overthrow them if he can.

Another point one should bear in mind is to shew that his premises accepted as universal propositions would lead to absurd applications practically.

**Value of one's own experience
as opposed to others' opinions**

N. B. :— The following is found on the last page of the note-book but cancelled by a line drawn across it.

If the unreality of the world of perception is now fairly assumed to have been established, there is a mental discipline provided thereby for profiting by experience in one's search after the Absolute or the Self.

It must be once for all understood that whenever we appeal to experience it shall be rigorously restricted to an individual's view-point, quite independent of what the other people or the world might think of the same. For to the systematist or to one who proceeds upon the unreality of the external universe, other people or a world existing apart from or independently of him, *must* mean next to nothing unless it be all conceived as a manifestation of his own self to retire into the interior of which would be the surest way of deciphering the enigma.

SOME VIEWS ON PAUL DEUSSEN'S
“ELEMENTS OF METAPHYSICS”

—§0§—

FOREWORD

The greater portion of the following was submitted to Prof. Deussen for opinion. He immediately wrote to me concurring in all the views expressed. In printing the paper to meet the wishes of several friends interested in the subject, a few points have been added to render it to some extent complete.

8th Nov. 1910.

K. A. K.

I - The Standpoints of view

Prof. Deussen says that there are only two standpoints of view with regard to the totality of things commonly known as the Universe, viz., the Empirical and the Transcendental. The former deals with representations in consciousness; whereas the latter, treating them as such,

dives beneath to discover *that* which, reflected in consciousness, gives rise to the representations known as the Kosmos. The Empirical view assumes the reality of Matter and lands us in Materialism, while the latter leads to Idealism and paves the way to the Vedanta or Metaphysics. Now, with profound respect for the Professor's learning and clear exposition, I am of opinion that there is still a third point of view that has escaped the notice of most Indian and all European thinkers; and, whatever might be the facility afforded by Idealism for a right conception of Metaphysical truths, it can help to but a dreamy apprehension of the truth of truths; Oneness of Existence. I call this the *Vedic* or the *Avasthaic* standpoint, which resolves everything into the experience of the three states or *Avasthas*: (1) the state of dreamless sleep (*Sushupti*), (2) that of dreamful sleep (*Svapna*), and (3) that of wakefulness (*Jagrat*). The enquirer looks upon all other than his self only as occurring to him as percepts contingently. He then discovers that the plurality of things including his own body appearing in his wakeful state, connected with one another by the inexorable laws of Time, Space and Causality- in short, this *wakeful* world (or the world manifesting itself during the

wakefulness of the enquirer) composed of men, the lower animals, the vegetable kingdom and the inanimate creation — this whole panorama, vanishes altogether when he goes to *sleep* and only a mimicry of it, a mere shadow, is brought into his view during *Dreams*. When he thus grasps the entire experience of his three Avasthas, he is thrown into an attitude of reflection; and he passes them in review before his contemplating mind putting to himself the Metaphysical question: “Now, *What* am *I* that pass through the three states, or seem to pass through them?”, “I cannot” says he, “identify myself with the body that I seem to have during my *wakefulness* for this does not stick to me through all the states. Much less can I identify myself with the body that I experience in my *dreams*, for that is equally accidental and more changeable. Lastly I cannot consider myself enveloped in ignorance permanently, for the state of *dreamless sleep* in which I am aware of nothing is followed by one of waking consciousness, which is marked by active Intelligence. While these states are succeeding one another, are *flitting*, I find that as the perceiver of them, I am *persisting*; for *I* attribute *waking, dreaming and sleeping to myself*. Hence my *Self* runs through the states as an unbroken

thread. Now since, obviously, this Self of mine cannot be identified with things perceived in two of the states—which things bear only an *accidental, a contingent* relation to my *Self*, neither can it be identified with the Ignorance of the third state, since that Ignorance again has become an object of cognition to me in this present state of enquiry. Hence this enquiring *Self* is neither Ignorance, nor anything perceived or cognized in the dreaming and wakeful states. It is *real existence*, since all that is perceived to exist in the waking state depends for its existence on the *Waking Mood*, as it were, of the Self. It is *bliss*, since when the mood of perception is suspended, as in the state of sound sleep, experience of fear and misery is totally excluded. It is *consciousness* (not Intellection, or Mind) unaffected by the appearing subject or object, but spreading itself as the basis, the substratum of all experiences of the representative kind ”.

The enquirer now proceeds to interrogate whether the triad known as the *Avasthas* exists really. This is easily answered. The idea of plurality is pivoted on those of Time and Space. Now Time, Space, and with them Causality, appear only in two of the states and they are dissolved without a residuum in the crucible of

Sushupti (sound sleep). In fact they are seen in the wakeful and dreamful states to replace the Ignorance of dreamless sleep, in the following equations representing the three states:—

Self + Ignorance = *Sushupti*.

Self + Shadowy World = Dreamful Sleep
(with its Time, Space, etc.).

Self + World perceived during wakefulness
– Wakeful State (with its Time, Space, etc.).

Hence the only conclusion is that the World perceived, with Time, Space and Causality enmeshing the world as a net, is itself the product of, or evolution of, the Ignorance associated with the *Sushupti* state. This Ignorance cannot have an independent reality, since, with the abolition of Time etc. in sleep, there is no room for duality then. *Ergo*, the percepts of Dream and Wakefulness, as the evolved product of the undifferentiating Ignorance, must be as unreal as their cause. Neither can any *Avastha* or *Mood* be predicated of the Self which persists without change. Hence, since nothing else is real, the *Avasthas* incapable of relating themselves to anything real must be concluded as unreal. Again, Time, etc., appear only in the objective moods

(Wakeful and Dreaming) and disappear in that of sound sleep. Thus, produced by Ignorance, like all percepts, they too are as unreal as the Ignorance from which alone they can have sprung. Further, the plurality of *Avasthas* is unreal, as that would imply temporal or spacial relation between them, which does not exist, the interval between any two *Avasthas* being not perceived or experienced. Hence the Self alone is really *existing*, and all one's misery is due to one's identifying himself with the sufferer or enjoyer pertaining to the states. For in reality the Self outlives all the experiences of the states. The Self, also, is *immortal*, as death, which seems to operate on objects of the external world perceived in certain states, ought to be powerless over that which leaves these states behind. This Self is the *Brahman* of the Vedas. Such is the Vedic or the *Avasthaic* attitude altogether different from, if not opposed to, the Transcendental attitude. The latter leads the enquirer into an unknown region, and leaves him there for good, as in the instance of Kant; unless, from the glimpse of the truth that it enables one to attain to, one begins to dogmatize and lay down metaphysical propositions in the language of the mystic, as Hegel, Fichte, Schelling and others

did. But my contention is that Vedanta or Metaphysics is a *rational* science; and, unlike, other sciences which confine themselves to the observation of facts of one state, *viz.*, the Waking (and this is sufficient for their purpose), takes notice of the totality of experience spreading through the three *Avasthas*, and by close reasoning, and direct appeal to the experience of the enquirer, leads him to an understanding of his own Immortal Self.

All disputes and misconceptions have arisen from the great founders of Schools having failed to realize the third or the Vedic attitude, and the qualification of one for the study of Metaphysics depends entirely on his being able to put himself in that attitude.

That this is the right point of view is proved (1) by experience, (2) by reference to the Vedantic traditions and teachings. Gaudapada's commentaries on the *Mandūkya*, Śaṅkara's writings, the *Sūta Samhitā*, Vidyaranya's *Panchadasi*, the *Māṇḍūkyaopaniṣad* itself, and the *Aitareya* will bear incontestable testimony to the correctness of the view expressed.

I might add a word here as regards the testimony of experience. When a man has been

able to put himself in the required attitude, he comprehends the truth at once, his doubts all disappear; and whatever may be the influence of the world on him, he cannot, if he will, shake off this experience of Metaphysical oneness. It will cling to him like his own nature. Also, it can admit of no doubt or dispute. For, the dispute must arise from some one other than the *Self*, i.e. from an integral part of the world perceived, and the enquirer, by his very attitude, is sitting in judgment over the *World*. All doubt is destroyed, since the *Self* by its very nature cannot become the object of doubt.

It must also be borne in mind that the above is merely rigorous reasoning applied to observed facts; or, better, the sum-total of experience subjected to logical analysis. There is no attempt at any explanation of the *world* or *Avidya*, or the apparent state of *bondage*. That would land us in endless theories more or less plausible and absolutely baseless. The qualified enquirer is enabled to draw the only possible inference by bare facts testified to by his own experience. *Vedanta is the Science of valuation of facts of experience in terms of existence.*

II - Materialism

I do not believe that the Professor has overthrown Materialism. In this age the enlightened scientist openly confesses to ignorance of the nature of Matter. Neither has he succeeded in explaining the genesis of Consciousness from Matter however subtle. Although, therefore, the Materialistic sciences may pronounce their dictum on the sequence of phenomena and the laws underlying it as final, their methods are imperfect, and the results unsatisfactory, since they refuse to turn back towards the Consciousness in which their *matter* being reflected appears as objects. While no material world can be conceived without Consciousness pre-supposed, Consciousness is experienced to persist, independently of a world perceived (as in Dreamless sleep). It will not do to suppose that *Consciousness* which survives the perceiving mood is derived from any material object (brain or nerves) which only *occurs* or is taken notice of in the Mood of Perception. Vedanta thus overthrows *Materialism* without much difficulty.

III - The Will

Deussen undertakes to prove that *Will* is beyond Time, etc., By Will, he means Atman, or

the Self. Now, his method of proof seems to me not convincing. It asserts or assumes what has to be established. The *Avasthaic Analysis* is, on the other hand, the time-honoured method, and the only effective and infallible means of knowledge. But the identity of Deussen's Unconscious Will with one's self has to be inferred or assumed, as it cannot be directly experienced.

IV - The Mentality of Time, etc

Deussen claims for European thinkers the credit of having mathematically demonstrated this truth. He considers Sankara's method of procedure as dreamy. Here again I would differ from Deussen. Not that Kant and Schopenhauer do not deserve all the honor claimed for the astuteness of their genius, but I regard the Vedic solution to be the more convincing. From the observation of the *Avasthas*, Time is found, like the World manifesting it, to appear and disappear with the *Avasthas*; while in the interval between them, *no time exists* as no time can be perceived, though the time-bound Intellect may *assume* its persistence through. In the *Sushupti* state, Time and the World are both abolished. According to Vedantic reasoning, Time has no existence

apart from the World (including the Mind) and the World apart from the *Avasthas*, and the latter apart from Ignorance. This proof is both simple and conclusive. S'aṅkara *proved* all, assumed nothing and came at the Self as the only Reality.

V - The Self as Consciousness

The Professor maintains that the Self is unconscious as Death takes away the Intellect. This position seems untenable. Holding as he does that the Intellect is only an Organ of the Self, he cannot deny Absolute Consciousness being the Self. He can be right only in so far as denying the permanence of the Intellectual Consciousness. For, does it persist in *Sushupti*? But that *Basic Consciousness* which makes us aware of our persisting through Sleep when all intellection is suspended, and of our witnessing no objective world, must be identified with the Self enduring through all states. Like the sun's reflection in a water-pot, so is Intellection a reflection of the *Basic Consciousness*. To derive Intellectual consciousness from an Unconscious Will, is similar to the attempt of Science to derive consciousness from the nerve. Both are inconceivable and

impossible, especially as they are opposed to Vedantic experience. It is Basic Consciousness that enables the enquirer to conceive his Self as unconnected with the Intellect and the *Avasthas*.

VI - The Origin of the World

S'ankara quietly dismisses the myths of creation abounding in the Upanishads by explaining that they are intended only to prove the Oneness of the Self. For, what was before the Creation, and what would remain after the Dissolution, of the world, must be the only thing that exists during the stage of Manifestation. He carefully guards the Self from being conceived in any relation to the Creation. Professor Deussen, however, propounds a constructive theory on the principle of the objectification of the Will. Now, what can objectify itself once, can and may objectify itself many times, so that final release is hopeless even after acquiring knowledge. For, there is no radical antithesis between willing and knowing, as there is between ignorance and knowledge. Besides, according to Deussen, who quotes with approval the Vedic aphorism "From knowledge springs release", if Will is essentially unconscious, how can the knowledge of its nature emancipate

the soul from the fetters forged by the unceasing operations of the Unconscious Will? So, there is neither a way out of the *Samsara*, nor a guarantee against re-embodiment.

VII - The True Revelation

Although Deussen has nowhere clearly discussed the question,—‘ What is the True Revelation of Man’s Spiritual Nature ?, ’ yet it is evident from ‘ *The Elements* ’ that he finds it in the Vedic formula, ‘ *Tat tvam asi,* ’ ‘ That thou art ; ’ which, as he profoundly observes is the basis at the same time of the highest Morality and the deepest Philosophy. This sublime truth alone renders the study of Metaphysics on rational lines possible in the teeth of Positivism and Scepticism.

VIII - Metaphysics and the Empirical Science

Deussen, indeed, has shown that the Empirical Science by itself is imperfect. But it may be added that its method is vitiated by its narrowness, and its powers outstripped by its ambition. For it proceeds on the supposition that everything that can be studied can be placed before the mind as an independent object and subjected to

analysis and dissection. But it forgets that the very condition of its activity is Consciousness, which therefore, can never lend itself to the process, viz., to be treated as an object, and ' We murder to dissect '. The province of Science is unlimited within the region of Consciousness, but on the latter, much less beyond it, its jurisdiction is absolutely *nil*. Metaphysics on the contrary arrays all her facts around Consciousness as the centre of existence. It does not look at things from the point of view of the Wakeful State alone, as the Empirical Science does, but co-ordinates the experiences of all the States of the ego, from the view point of Absolute or Pure Consciousness.

Not realizing the distinction of the two spheres, people have often expressed their unwarranted fears about the dicta of Metaphysics being liable to be sublated by the discoveries of Science. This may be possible where merely generalizations based on partial observation of the facts of the Wakeful experience are concerned. But as regards reasonings founded on the experiences of the Self in their entirety, such fears are obviously unwarranted.

IX - Conclusion

Deussen, Schopenhauer and Max Muller are among the deepest thinkers of Europe to appreciate Vedanta as an unsectarian and rational exposition of the Mystery of Existence, and the Nature of Eternal Bliss. We bow in reverence and gratitude to these giants of thought. If I have touched here on some points which may have escaped their notice, or, at all events, have not been accorded deserved eminence, it is but to continue, to the extent I can, the good work begun by the western savants as Interpreters of East to West.

The function of Metaphysics is plain : to enable one to overcome the sense of Life's Misery, by recognition of Truths resting upon Reason and Experience. It answers in the affirmative the only two questions that can be pertinently put to it :— Are its statements verifiable ? Will the knowledge of its Truths lead to Right conduct and Happiness ?

THE FUNDAMENTALS OF VEDANTA

*(A paper read before the Mythic Society, Bangalore,
on 15-1-1917.)*

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I. The main difference between Vedanta and other systems of philosophy turns upon the views they respectively take of the sum-total of human knowledge and experience, the latter not as confined to the waking state alone, but as spread over the three states of the soul: the waking and the dreaming state, and that of dreamless sleep. Vedanta does not concern itself so much with the individual objects presenting themselves for cognition during each state as with the nature of the apparently successive states with which they are bound up, with which they appear and disappear. Thus the difference, in their views, between Vedanta and the other thought-systems or the sciences, is radical. What is called the world of things disclosing to our view in the waking state, is no more or less than an adjunct to that state of which it is an inseparable feature, and can have no existence apart from it. The

intellect, however, assumes its independent existence which is simply unthinkable, for the world and the waking mood of the self cannot and should not be dissociated. Still, the so-called world, to the ordinary mind, persists through all the states. Now, this elimination, wrenching away of the world from the state in which it appears, or can alone appear, is an act of intellectual abstraction, convenient for the purpose of life,' as Bergson would say, but none the less illusive, unwarranted by the totality of our experience. Vedanta determines the value, not of a single experience in one state, nor of a single object of cognition in it, but of the different states themselves with which the worlds are manifested and dissolved. If this fundamental fact is realized, it will become evident that what is called a thing either static (as the scientists posit) or dynamic (as Bergson takes it), exists nowhere. Time and space, along with the sense of duration and extension, are equally 'birds of passage', visiting with the states, and vanishing with them. The Self is thus felt - not inferred - to be unaffected by the flitting states; and the states, waking and sleeping, being radically opposed to each other, cannot be conceived or experienced to co-exist in the Self. In fact, in what is called

sound sleep the presence of an object is never felt, nor can be. It is not the study of things within the periphery of any state either that of waking or of dreaming, however infinitely pursued, that can lead to a comprehension of the nature of the Self as the unaffected spectator of the changing moods.

The simple truth set forth above merely requires in the student a change of mental attitude and no laborious study or deep erudition. There is no dogma to be accepted or abstruse doctrine to be assimilated. A pure introspection, on the basis of this Vedic suggestion, a simple intuitive effort, a clear grasp of the essential principle, realized as the Self in man emerging unsullied through the states, is all that is necessary to recognize this immortal element in him. Without tasking the memory or straining the imagination, every human being can rise, if he wills, to an understanding of this simple truth.

By a constant appeal to one's own experience, the ever identical nature of the Self becomes obvious. The Self cannot be conceived as continually changing or as mere change as **Bergson** affirms ; for his observation is confined but to what he calls life, whose sphere is restricted to, the waking mood. The sense of absolute duration

which he says we intuite, is strictly limited to the state (waking or dreaming) in which life is associated with the mind and the body ; and cannot relate to the state of dreamless sleep in which no experience of sense or feeling is possible.

In the light of Vedanta, the Atman, or the Self is of the nature of bliss, consciousness, and reality absolute. The right or wrong desire which every man instinctively feels for lasting happiness or fleeting pleasures, uninterrupted ease or freedom from toil and worry, is all in reference to the Self without which as the basis, the term happiness is void of signification. But instead of the lower self which leads to selfishness, one has to keep his eye on the higher which is the eternal fountain of all unselfish activities and deeds of self-sacrifice. This fact unfolds the blissful nature of the Self. The Self is also Absolute Consciousness, since the thread of our experience remains unbroken even when no objects are presented to it for cognition as in dreamless sleep. To imagine consciousness as of different degrees of intensity or faintness is to impose upon it, poetically — none the less untruly — the characteristics of material objects which are liable to variation (from solidity to subtlety, etc.). All the criticisms of Vedanta have been invariably levelled against

it solely from the view-point of the waking state. The point of the lance hence becomes hopelessly blunted or broken.

It may be urged, for instance, by an opponent that the waking is the real state of life. Dreams disclose a false or fanciful world, and sound sleep is a temporary suspension of life's activities. How can the world into which we wake, from which we go to sleep, and of which we are part and parcel, be considered as a mere mood of the self, whisked away with that mood and re-appearing with it in nearly the same condition and with the identical characteristics? We see a man going to sleep, we see him rising from the same bed on which he slept. His sleeping is a natural necessity, and the world's activities are uninterrupted by his moods. He is born, grows, decays and dies. He is thus intimately connected with this world. How can such a world be dismissed as an invariable concomitant of a mere mood of his? We do not sleep or dream with him, but we are all engaged or involved in the same sphere of activity.

‘ Besides, how can the waking mood be put on a par with the dreaming? As **Hume** says, the dream experience is stultified on waking, but the waking experience is never stultified in dreams.

Hence the only possible inference is that dreams are the result of a disturbance of the nervous system and the world imagined to be perceived in them is no real world, but a mere concoction of fancy. All human impulse and motives to action rest ultimately and solely on the waking experience, which thereby testifies to its own reality. A doctor can send a patient to sleep, or wake him from it. This would be impossible if the waking state were not real from which the experience of all the other states originated or to which they remained subservient.

‘ Further, what is the good of knowing the essentially pure and unaffected nature of the self? Either in the moral or material interests of man, such a knowledge can lead to no result. It might at best induce a state of quietism and that is not a “consummation devoutly to be wished.”

‘ Moreover, what is to become of science, morals and theology, if the world of the waking state is to be reduced from being the premier reality to the rank of a mere accompaniment or appendage to a state or mood of the soul? ’

The objections set forth above might in the eye of ordinary reason appear to have great validity. But Vedanta sees no force in them. The objector puts himself out of court by ignoring

the attitude which Vedanta enjoins on him before sitting in judgment over its pronouncement. 'The world is real.' Why, which world? For we perceive one during the waking state and a myriad in dreams. If the former is meant, then admittedly, it is seen to come and go with the mood. It will not do to assert that the world that I can perceive only when I am awake, continues to exist even when I am sleeping. Such a supposition would imply that I am waking and sleeping simultaneously. The world in question is an inseparable adjunct to my waking, and the belief in the continuity of its existence even when I am not waking, only points to the natural tendency in man to attribute reality to any experience appearing as the present. This is actually the case in dreams. We perceive many things in them which for the time being we take to be real, and we are moved by hate and fear just as if the causes were quite real. The fanciful nature of the dream-world is recognized not at the time, but after the state becomes past.

But if I am not waking all the time, are there not others awake that perceive the world? Their testimony to its persistence, is it worth nothing? This is another amusing objection arising from want of an accurate understanding of the term

‘ world ’. What is called the world includes everything other than the self of the enquirer. It will thus be evident that if I say, ‘ I don’t perceive the world when I am sleeping, because I am not then waking ’, I simply mean that the waking world does not exist then. Also, the Vedantic position is not one of Solipsism, as it does not confer absolute reality on the I, but on the changeless Witness of the three states which is neither I nor not-I, all distinctions being lost with the world perceived.

As the world is every moment created, even according to Bergson, the idea of its sameness is an intellectual balm supplied for purposes of life, but all the same, illusory. Our seeing a man, go to sleep or wake from it is just a part of our waking experience. It does not enable us to comprehend the nature of sleep. We realize its nature only when we sleep and then the world is, as it were, nought. So also the sight of other beings being born, living and dying, and that of our own growth and decay are integral parts of our waking experience. Apart from it, we can know of no second thing. We all seem, it is true, to act together in the company of innumerable beings awake. But we have no direct proof of their wakefulness as we can experience only our

own. The experience in dreams is on all fours with this. There also so long as the state continues, we seem to be communing with a number of individuals, but we wake to find that the plurality of subjects was a mere illusion created by fancy. While the subject, namely, the dreamer was but one and secondless.

Although it may be repugnant to the last degree to admit that the waking state is just analogous to the dream state, every one that has attempted to distinguish the two has hopelessly failed. Every explanation of dream or sleep as the outcome of nervous condition is vitiated by the mono-static view, viz., the view taken on the basis of the waking experience alone. A dream is defined as the state in which the senses are quiescent, and the objects absent, but the nerves being excited somehow create a mimicry of both. Here it is plain that the senses, objects, and nerves referred to are those of the waking state; and necessarily so, as the explanation itself is offered not during the dream but after waking from it. Hume's solution of the difficulty is equally wide of the mark. A dream is no doubt stultified in the succeeding state of waking. But how can this fact invest the waking state with reality? For, we call that the waking

state which we feel as such, but the feeling itself is the result of a contrast with the previous state. If we had no previous state, we might not call the present state either waking or dreaming.

There are also dreams within dreams which elucidate the point still further. When we dream that we had a dream, the succeeding dream (known as such only on waking from it) is felt to be a waking from the previous one; and this illusion that it is a waking state is not dispelled till our mood changes to waking. The waking experience is never stultified in dreams for the simple reason that the notion of waking never deserts even the dreamer.

Besides, we do not know which is the waking state. To say that the present is the waking is to beg the question. Neither is it true that in dreams we refer to any particular series of waking states. Now, as then, it is memory that behaves as the custodian of the past and what it arranges in a kaleidoscopic order with its impress on it as the past is assumed to be the real series of past waking states. There is no other evidence to their reality than the pronouncement of memory. If then we wish to accord absolute trustworthiness to memory, we again become dupes. For, with a freakishness peculiar to it, the all-powerful memory awakens in our dreams a thousand

reminiscences of a supposed past which was never experienced and yet which we unquestioningly accept at the time. Still, on waking, we discover that the false memory created in the dream, and our conduct based on it, were all mere phantom-play. For example, I see a stranger in a dream, and in my conversation with him, I find he was my old friend with whom I had lived in intimacy for several years. I wake and realize the falsity of the whole circumstance, and with it that of the memory. The illusions of memory and its trustworthiness except for the purposes of life — *Vyavahara* — are too well known to psychologists to claim a serious consideration. As it gives the stamp of wakefulness to the present, so it creates, to consort with this present, the notions of a beginningless series of past waking states and an endless series of future waking states. It always does that even in dreams. If one can, with this special mark as the basis of distinction, distinguish a dream as such at the time — not the waking as such during waking, which everybody does, simply by contrasting it with the past dream, — then one's argument may be worth something. But then his dream would lose its genuineness. For, the character of dreams in general is that they appear at the time as terribly real, and we hate, we love, we flee. One should, in case he identified the nature of a dream at the

time, remain but a passive spectator uninfluenced by any of the passions that stimulate activity even in a dream. Such a state, in the view of Vedanta, is not impossible ; and the highest Vedantin is expected to be a mere passive witness of the unreal scenes of life enacting before him, either while dreaming or waking. Evidently, it is the mono-static bias that induces a man to subordinate dreams and dreamless sleep to waking and derive the two former from the last. In any case, it is enough for Vedanta to establish one central fact which cannot be blinked : *A dream can mimic or re-present every element of the waking experience, either internal or external but it can do so only on the basis of the Absolute Consciousness which admits of no break or change or spurious imitation.*

Why do we not refer the waking state to past dreams ? For the simple reason that we consider dreams as contrasted with the so-called waking to be unreal. The tendency is ingrained in the human intellect, somehow, to believe that the present is the waking state, and that the waking state alone is real.

We have thus undoubtedly two independent series of experiences one of which begins with the sense of waking, and the other contrasted with it appears as dreaming. But which is which

it is impossible to determine as the feeling of being awake invariably accompanies the feeling of an experience being present. Since the waking state is just that which is felt as such, it is self-contradictory to expect the stultification of the waking experience in any state which is not recognized at the time as dream. In other words, since in dreams we believe we are awake, we cannot conceive the stultification of a waking state at the time, for no waking state stultifies itself while it lasts, or is believed to last.

It thus appears that every active state or states in which the experience involves a subject and an object is characterized by a sense of the present which invariably gives rise to a sense of waking and which, with its unfailing auxiliary of memory creates a kaleidoscopic order, always sorting the present waking state with a beginningless series of past waking states, the sense of reality never ceasing to associate itself with them all. This explains why in dreams we are never aware of an absence of the order that ought properly to mark off the waking state, if there were really one such.

Impulses and motives to action prevail in dreams also. We love, we fight, we flee. The waking state is not the only sphere in which they

come into play. As to the case of a doctor sending a patient to sleep and waking him from it, the objection is, as usual, based on the mono-static bias. The patient appearing to sleep and to wake are just parts of the doctor's waking experience.

II

The practical effect of Vedantic knowledge on man in respect of his moral and material interests is profound. When he learns to identify himself with the unchanging eternal Self and not with his physical body – heir to a thousand ills – he is inspired with courage, truthfulness and a spirit of self-sacrifice, the most inestimable assets for individual and social well-being.

The moral phase of Vedanta is seen in the restraint it places on every unrighteous tendency, since the latter arises from one's wrong attachment to his physical body – non-self improperly looked upon as self – and to the goods or enjoyments of the waking state which are altogether contingent and impermanent. Thus although the moral influence of Vedanta, however powerful, is passive, yet in the man who wants to indulge in desires, it impels him to action towards their fulfilment with an amount of courage and doggedness which no other motive principle can evoke. Nevertheless, his desires cannot be of the

unrighteous sort, but limited to such morally permissible gratifications as are not calculated to deepen his attachment to the non-self. His acts can be virtually but acts of self-sacrifice. If Vedanta in the highest stage leads to absolute passivity, it can do so only in the case of one who has really conquered all and every desire ; and no system of morals or philosophy can impose duties on such an individual. Such instances, however, are extremely rare and no anxiety need be felt as to the future of the world on the impracticable supposition that all men might rise above their desires. We may possibly meet with men turning ascetics or shaming renunciation not because the flame of desire has been put out in them, but because they find no way of gratifying it, or feel too lazy to exert themselves in order to realize it. Practical Vedanta (the portion of works) rightly condemns their hypocrisy or self-deception, and urges them to incessant activity till their desires are extinguished by disappointment or disgust arising from gratification or enlightenment.

The study of Science has to be pursued by one till the tendency ceases in him by which he seeks outside of the Self that bliss which one intuitively feels he can claim by his very nature.

On a normal man the realistic tendency has so strong a hold that for all that Vedanta may assert he will not cease to have unending interest in what surrounds him. Science helps him by systematizing his knowledge of the outside universe for useful action. Even a Vedantin cannot reverse the so-called laws of the physical world and if he expects any effects there, he must first create the cause. To that extent, science must have permanent validity for the Vedantin also who purposes to act in the waking world.

Theology protects the moral instincts, and people wish to be good without caring much for the basis of ethics. The principle of good, which to the Vedantin is the Self, appears to the devout man as the God whom he worships with all the zeal and earnestness of his soul. The value of theology is materially undiminished so long as man keeps his eye on the moral, not the philosophical, side of existence. A Vedantin cannot be immoral as he can have no selfish motives to action.

I have thus put in a small compass what, to be understood thoroughly in all its bearings on life's problems, has to be expounded in a bulky volume. But I believe that most of the main

points have been touched upon clearly enough, at least to create an abiding interest in the Science of Reality.

Literature on the Subject :-

The *Brihadaranyakopanishad* — Chap. 4, Sec. 3.

The *Mandukyopanishad*.

Gaudapada's Karikas on the above.

The *Panchadasi* by Vidyanaraya,
translated by Dr. M.S. & K.A.K., Chap. 1.

Sankara's Comments on the Brahmasutras,
Chap. 3, Sec. II, Sutras. 1 to 10.

„ „ Chap. 11, Sec. 1, Sutra 9.

The *Sutasamhita, Yajna-Vaibhava-Khanda*.

UMA'S MIRROR*

(1923)



1. Uma's quarrel strange with Siva
I invoke thee, Muse, to sing,
For to regions low or lofty
Soars alike thy golden wing.
2. Narada, the great musician
Leader of the Heavenly choir,
Bent on breeding godly mischief,
Went to Kailas with his lyre.
3. Uma kindly bade him welcome,
Siva smiled to see the sage ;
But her guest's design well shrouded
Uma did not guess or gauge.
4. Uma took him through the mansion
Showed him all the beauties rare,
Placed before him fruits and nectar,
Dainty and delicious fare.

* First published in the '*School Folk*', Tumkur,
under the pen name "O'non".

5. With the cheer the sage delighted
 Praised the hostess from his heart,
 Adding that a crystal mirror
 Would to the place new charms impart.
6. "Gates of fairy realms are mirrors—
 Entered by no God or Man ;
 Nothing will depict thy beauty
 As a small reflector can."
7. Saying so he soon departed,
 Fearing what would soon ensue ;
 And fair Uma for a mirror
 Straight to Siva eager flew.
8. "Long I craved, my dear," said Uma,
 "Craved a mirror, mighty lord,
 And no peace of mind without it
 Night or day can me afford.
9. "Siva, Love, grant me a mirror
 To behold my features in,
 Since thou praisest still my beauty
 That had power thy heart to win.
10. "All these ages I have longed for
 But my likeness to be shewn ;
 Yet thou heed'st not, Mahadeva
 How I languish pine, and moan.

11. " For the world's almighty maker
Is this hard, beloved, to get ?
Sure, thy love for me is cooling,"
And her eyes with tears were wet.
12. Worried Uma thus complaining
Siva could not brook to see !
Tender words he spoke, and smiling :—
" Do not lay the blame on me.
13. " Trust me, darling—for no falsehood
From my lips does ever escape,—
Mirrors can't return thy likeness
Too, too subtle is thy shape.
14. " Glancing through all spheres, my darling
Eying forms of gods or men,
I can find in wide-spread nature
None like thee within my ken.
15. " Range through forests, fields and cities,
Flowery gardens, glens or rocks ;
Turn to where the wavy ocean
'Gainst the shore unwearied knocks.
16. " Thou wilt find in all Creation
Nothing does thy image bear ;
Gross are gems, impure are crystals
None reflects thy beauty rare."

17. Unconvinced was Goddess Uma,
 Discontented still remained ;
 Fancy-prompted, she from Siva
 Leave to search the worlds obtained.
18. Winged with novel thoughts and feelings,
 Flew she down from Kailas Mount,
 Made her way to star and planet
 Gleaming as of light the fount.
19. But their sight no joy imparted
 To her eyes or heart divine ;
 Too inane the whole appeared,
 Lifeless all, they seemed to shine.
 " These are none like me " she murmured,
 Life and consciousness are mine.
20. What are ceaseless change and movement
 When compared with consciousness ?
 Blind and will-less stars are glowing,
 Void of cheer in loneliness."
21. " Profitless to stars is glory
 Burning each to ashes, O !
 Better far are life and spirits,
 Life with all its weal and woe."

34. Every nook remote and corner,
Varied scenes of human life,
Uma searched and still she wondered
At the teeming woes and strife.
35. " Lo, the Whites stand out triumphant
Over the Blacks, Yellows, and Browns ;
And by higher wit maintaining
Their dominion, wear the crowns.
36. " With their forms, so fair, angelic,
Sweetest manner, finest grace,
Enterprise and skill and courage,
Here behold a gifted race !
37. " Manly are their air and bearing,
Chivalrous their cultured mind ;
Super-human their achievements
High their aims, and tastes refined.
38. " Long ago they broke the fetters
Superstitions still impose,
Free from narrow faith,—soul-strangling,
Bright their forehead ever glows.
39. " But within the bud is canker
Slowly eating into life ;
'Neath their love of creed and order
Lurks ambition, restless strife.

40. " What if Science and its treasures
Lie unlocked within their reach ?
What if holy priests and minstrels,
High-toned precepts daily teach ?
41. " 'Me' and 'Mine' divide and rend them,
Blissful else this brilliant race ;
Till one's higher self is wakened
Vain are hopes of Heavenly grace.
42. " For they seek not life eternal,
Too allured by joys of sense,
Who can thus avert the countless
Woes of birth and death intense ?
43. " If their wit and power and culture
Urge them not to the nobler goal,
How can mortals not so blessed
Taste the beauties of the soul ? "
-
44. Failing thus to meet her likeness
In the virtues of the mind,
Foiled Uma's glances eager
Turned to where lies ancient Ind.
45. Bowing to her hoary father—
Himavan, the abode of snow—
Sad she pondered on his wrinkles
Worn deep upon his brow,—

58. " Fie upon low aim and striving,
Selfish scheme, and soulless prayer ;
Where plain life and truth are honoured,
Powers divine are centered there.
59. " Give up greed and aggrandizement,
Give up ways uncouth and mean ;
Cultivate the heart and spirit,
Know in Love true power is seen.
60. " Love for all is truest freedom,
Love unwavering faith implies ;
And if Faith should prove defenceless,
God and Life are gilded lies.
61. " If the salt have lost its saltness
What can salt it, what can cheer ?
If thy mind's with passion clouded
The ship of life how canst thou steer ?
62. " Think of S'uka, Yajnavalkya,
Badarayana of old,
Has their fire become extinguished,
Are their ashes grown so cold ?
63. " Barter not the spirit's freedom,
Weigh it not 'gainst wealth and power,
Forfeit not the bliss eternal
For the advantage of the hour.

64. " Dream not that mere birth entitles
 One to meaningless respect ;
 Sad disasters must thence follow
 Unless the mad career is checked.
65. " Should thy brethren in blind fury,
 Threaten with the lance and brand,
 Still remember they are brethren,
 Lift not thy avenging hand.
66. " Virtue teach by self-denial,
 Patience by forbearance teach,
 Holy wisdom of the Brahman
 Teach by love for all and each.
67. " Love thy brethren, aid them, guide them,
 Strive not for vain mastery,
 Dear to me are all my children,
 To all the path of life be free !
68. " Immolate thy life for country,
 Muse not over child or wife,
 Skulk not, sneak not, philosophize not,
 Just to save inglorious life."
-
69. With her heart bleeding with sorrow
 For the ills of human kind,
 To retrace her steps to Kailas
 Goddess Uma now inclined.

82. " Earthly and celestial regions
Spurred by hope have I explored ;
Giddy sports of gods I pitied
And their vanity deplored.
83. " Can I not then find in Nature
Some reflexion true of me ?
Life and joys without self-knowledge
What advantage can they be ?
84. " Mahadeva, Lord of Mercy,
Why now wilt thou try me so ?
Have I been remiss in duty ?
O, deign a mirror to bestow.
85. " Where the heart is rude, uncultured,
Nature's bounties are a waste ;
In such soil can thrive no virtue :—
Where's my likeness to be traced ? "
86. With benignant heart did Siva
Hear her wail and sad complaint,
Deeply touched by her devotion
That forbade a stain or taint.
87. Soon before her stood Lord Siva
Hastening to relieve her woes ;
" Darling Uma," quoth he kindly,
" Cease to grieve, thyself compose.

88. " Life, analysis evading
 Baffles feeble sense and mind ;
 For the Light that these illumines
 Canst outside thee ever find ?
89. " Waking, Sleeping, or a-dreaming
 Still thy consciousness awake,
 Changeless witnesses all changes,—
 Witnessing without a break.
90. Ponder and reflect, my Uma,
 On the beauty of the soul,
 Far exceeding in its glory
 All the skiey orbs that roll.
91. " Maya throws on things a glamour
 that precludes a glimpse inside,
 Dazzles by her borrowed splendour,
 Drawing Mind from Truth aside.
92. " By her skill and machinations,
 Groans the world under countless ills ;
 Pierce her veil and know then truly
 Bliss all space unbounded fills.
- 93 " Writhing in her grip unyielding,
 Helpless man — as well as gods —
 Birth-entangled, stript of glory
 Slow, like weary pilgrim, plods.

106. " O, my lord, why did'st thou wake me,"
Murmured Uma when she woke,
" From a dreamless, blissful slumber
That thy fervid kissing broke ?
107. " Pain, and sorrow from me banished
'Twas a spell of ecstasy ;
I felt as if I floated on
A nectar sea from billows free.
108. " 'Me' and 'mine' were both forgotten
And the world was whisked away ;
Yet there was a bliss compareless,
Boundless, as asleep I lay.
109. " The azure vault with stars so studded,
And green-vestured earth so fair,
Objects all were clean out-blotted
Only Self was glowing there.
110. " Still for things outside or pleasures
Knew I no anxiety ;
Even sense of ego vanished,
All the rest dissolved in me.
111. " Time and space that waking calls up,
And with them unceasing change,
Birth and Death, all woes tormenting,
Disappeared. O, Lord, how strange

112. " What is kingship or a godhead
 When with blissfull sleep compared
 Waking joys are shortlived, hollow ;
 Nothing to what my slumber bared.
113. " Ne'er awake had I such feeling,
 Save when clasped in thy embrace,
 No conserve of sweets, soft-honeyed,
 Of its sweetness bears a trace.
114. " Words are dull and thought too feeble,
 What can tell that bliss supreme ?
 Only can the eye turned inward
 Undistracted catch its beam ".
-
115. " True, too true " said S'iva gladdened,
 Then, can Mirrors paint the soul ?
 Thou art subject and the object.
 Can a part reflect the whole ?
116. " What thou felt is bliss enduring
 'Tis thy nature sleep reveals ;
 Thou art all-inclusive Brahman
 As the enlightened truly feels.
117. " Nescience sows the seed of sorrow.
 Giving rise to otherness.
 Grasping now the one, the real,
 Thou art steeped in blessedness.

118. " But if still a mirror seekest
To reflect thy matchless charms,
Since impossible thy bidding,
What avail my might and arms ?
119. " Dreamless sleep presents thy likenes
When no mask the Brahman wears
Hence the print of bliss surpassing
That thy wakening memory bears.
120. " And in dreams a world illusive
Dancs fearless in thy sight,
But thou witness still remainest —
Unaffected witness bright.
121. " Who can draw thy likeness, Uma ?
Ineffable glory thine ;
And the rest, lifeless or living—
Broken lights of thee, they shine.
122. " And this Universe so lovely
Is but Brahman in disguise ;—
True, as Brahman, false as other—
Thus declare the great and wise.
123. For the things beheld in waking,
Into self dissolve in sleep,
Undistinguished ; and, at waking,
Into wonderous being leap.

124. " Every form of life and movement
 Truly has thee for its soul ;
 Time and space, these cleave the objects,
 While the Self remains a whole.
125. " Through the brooklet and the meadow
 'Tis the Brahman glistens bright ;
 From the self the star and lightning
 Still derive their warmth and light.
126. " Through the mortal, seize the immortal,
 Pierce the name-and-form disguise ;
 For the One appears as many
 To the Maya-clouded eyes " .
127. Words of love, and silver accents,
 Words revealing deepest truth,
 Facts profound of Life expounding,
 Yet on reason based, in sooth,
128. Changed the mood of gentle Uma
 Made her feel her quest was wrong,
 Made her to repent her wishes
 That in her till now reigned strong.
129. " Thank you, love, " said contrite Uma
 For thy discourse, priceless, sweet ;
 Pardon, pardon, O, my boldness,
 Importunity unmeet.

130. " Clear I see my Brahmic nature
Comprehending all that is ;
Thou and this unbounded kosmos,
We are one unbroken Bliss.
131. " True, my nature as the subject
Objects none can serve to show,
Mirror of the soul exists not,
This, my quest taught me to know.
132. " False delusion and sad error,
Woeful fancies, all have fled ;
Joy sublime and peace eternal,
In my heart now dwell instead "
133. Thus awhile conversing, musing,
Godly couple, one in two,
Hand in hand, they walked through arbours
And were soon lost to the view.
134. Blessings on fair Uma's mirror !
Blessings on her mirror-quest !
Blessings on the Lord of Mercy !
Narada the sage be blessed !

THE END

THE DRUM-BEAT OF ANGELS*

PART I



1. When sleep once sealed my outward sense,
And wrapt my soul in joy intense,
I dreamt – a distant drum I heard.
In human voice it spoke. Each word
Like honey-drop sank in my heart.
Its tone and tenor made me start :
“ All Truth is one, and God is Truth,
Beside him nought exists in sooth,
And Truth is Love, and God is Love.”
So angels beat the drum above.

2. “ All things existing, false or true,
Exist cognized as one of two :
The self, enjoying goods of life,
Or fretting over ill's so rife ;
And non-self, still the fertile source
Of joy and pain, which with their force
Constant assail and overpower
Embodied beings every hour.

* A free translation of ‘*Vedanta Dindima*’, an exposition of Vedanta by Nrisimha Saraswaṭi Tirtha.

The self is seer. all else seen,
 Their natures such have always been.
 The body seen is not the self ;
 And though the self feels weal and woe,
 This self is God ; the world, dumb show.

3. " Man's bondage is from ignorance ;
 And sensual pleasures - life's romance
 Are short-lived all. Seek knowledge pure
 That steeps the soul in endless joy,
 And brings release whose sweets ne'er cloy
4. " Who knows the knower and the known,
 He makes true happiness his own ;
 The knower he, the rest is known :
 To him who knows, no ills can come." -
 Even thus proclaimed the heavenly drum.
5. " Both bliss and pain we see around
 That lead to tendencies profound.
 The one we court, the other fly.
 'Tis Brahmie instinct in the main,
 For God is joy and all else pain.
6. " Lo ! God is whole and soul His part.
 Though under countless ills we smart,
 The soul is but a spark divine.
 To knowledge objects give their form,-
 To mental moods do acts conform.

7. " How then can one by acts know God ? -
 For will is under fancy's rod, -
 We do or this, or that, or naught,
 But know or see one only way, -
 As objects are, or seem they may.
- 8-10. " Know Brahman as He truly is -
 Your self - and thus obtain release.
 To him in prayer direct your thought,
 About Him hear, and meditate
 On him alone, whate'er your state.
11. " And would you fain control your sense,
 And self-denying life commence ?
 Renounce low joys ? Or plunge in them ?-
 No matter how you are inclined,
 Right knowledge aye release can find."
 The drum-beat ceased a while to sound.
 As I in wonder looked around,
12. Again the silver notes began,
 To this effect their purport ran -
 " Your castes and states of human life -
 A mere convention, be assured !
 Can these release the soul immured ?
13. " The world perceived, your life therein,
 Your service done to gods of tin,

Are all delusion, through and through –
 False joys ! Renounce them. Rather seek
 To know your self, – and bonds will break.

14. “ Some works and meditation try,
 On faith and worship some rely,
 And think by such device to buy
 The priceless nectar of release !
 Vain hope, inspired by phantom dance –
 Of dense primeval ignorance ! ”
15. The heavenly drum the angels beat,
 Singing aloud in voices sweet –
 “ Vain, vain are forms and ritual,
 Poor understanding’s edge they dull, –
 Give up vain talk, vain argument,
 Nor build high castles in the air :-
 To rend the veil of Maya, dare !
16. “ Behold that under guise of soul
 Lives God supreme, its final goal ;
 Know each is still the other and all,
 And golden fetters galling sore
 Of birth and death will gall no more.
17. “ The self once grasped as all in all,
 No ills of life need thee appal ;
 Thou art the self of even death,
 And thou as Rudra dread can’t slay
 The dark-browed god, thy easy prey.

18. " To fruits of action have no eye,
 For power or riches do not sigh, -
 All owning time's tyrannic sway ;
 Since earthly or celestial joys
 One moment please like baby's toys.
- " Proud kingdoms, empires, dynasties,
 That long afflict torment, or tease,
 Like bubbles on the hurrying stream
 Shall burst and vanish in the air -
 And pride shall kiss the ground, beware !
- " Put more of truth and love in life
 And less of falsehood, malice, strife ;
 Shun selfish creed, and harmful greed ;
 Nor boast aloud of wanton slaughter,
 Nor shed defenceless blood like water.
19. " By subtle grasp of all as one
 Alone can Brahmic bliss be won :
 How can the gross-eyed seize the truth ?
 Sweet love and tender sympathy
 Consist not with plurality.
20. " The men of holy works return
 To life. In them desires still burn,
 Subjecting them to birth and death,
 And all the woes that these imply ; -
 The wise are neither born nor die."

The air is filled with odours soft
 Of primrose, lily, borne aloft,
 On wings sweet-laden of zephyrs cool.
 I feel the presence of the gods :
 They dance and sing in heavenly modes.

21-22. "Lo, pious work and Vedic rite
 Lead to short joys depicted bright, -
 To joys partaken after death ;
 While wisdom's ceaseless bliss ye taste
 At once, unless this life ye waste.

23-24. "What then is thought centred worth,
 Delights of sense, or stores on earth,
 Compared with draughts of wisdom deep ?
 Vain, vain, is lore ; and works are vain ;
 None other can avert life's pain.

25. "Rik, Sama, Yajus, have their place
 In life's swift unillumined race,
 While yet the soul in mid sea sails ;
 But when is reached bright wisdom's shore,-
 They serve no more, they serve no more.

26. "Disinterested actions wean
 The mind from low desires unclean ;
 And meditation steadies will.
 But knowledge, true, deep-rooted, leads
 To sweet release from bonds of deeds.

27. " When in the fire the seed ye roast,
 Its power to sprout for aye is lost,
 Enlightenment restrains the will,
 Which then its tendencies retracts,
 Life's tragic scenes no more enacts -
 Thus when is shuffled off this coil,
 The soul has past beyond all toil.
28. " Until ye see desires are quelled
 By wrongs fought down and truths upheld,
 And, proving life's allurements all,
 Ye tear through tangle of hope and fear,
 Ne'er dream that peace divine is near.
- " The unenlightened man is bound
 By duty stern to those around.
- " Inaction but behoves the sage,
 In whom the fires have ceased to rage ;
 Nor good nor ill can him afflict.-
 The mind that harbours vaguest wish
 Must swim from shore to shore like fish.
29. " The unlent glory consummate
 Of radiant self immaculate
 Would brook no spot, or ugly flaw ;
 Its beauty can no sin obscure
 From him who knows his self so pure.
 What ills can him assail, or pain
 What can he know of sin or stain ?

30. " Thou seest all things both far and near,
Even death ; but who can see thee, seer ?
Can seer be more than one or change ?
Hence thou art Brahman e'er the same ;
The rest, mere glamour, - form and name.
While objects perish on all sides,
The Self as witness aye abides.
31. " Poor acting and enjoying souls,
Paying for pleasures heavy tolls,
Are Jeevas in Avidya clad ;
While God who spreads his Mayic veil
Unfolds this world of joy and bale.
- " Both Maya and Avidya false,
That serve as separating walls,
How can they soul from God divide ?
The spell of nescience broken, gone,
Ye learn to see that these are one.
32. " This formless attributeless Self -
Unreached by worshippers of pelf,
Of Moloch fierce, and Belial lewd -
All forms and attributes assumes,
As sun it gleams, as cloud it glooms.
33. " Why then among yourselves contend,
And loud the air with outcries rend,
Each sect claiming predominance ?

No one is high, and none is low,
 But as his life and conduct show. –
 With ston heart and brutish claw
 One is the worser Panchama.

“ Know Dvija by his holy life,
 But not by odious party strife ;
 And Vipra by his Vedic lore.
 In spite of sects of every hue,
 And high pretensions old or new,
 Who knows the self is Brahman true.

34-35. “ If all be Self, and Self all be,
 Behold complete identity
 Of cause and multiform effect.
 Existence, bliss and consciousness
 Comprise the world, no more, no less

36. “ An actor strange without a peer,
 Himself the actor and the seer
 Who acts all parts, devoid of fear,
 On stages, sleep, dream, wakefulness,
 This soul is God. Can he be less ?
 Who knows it, what can him distress ?
 Knowing thy Self runs as a thread,
 Connecting scenes of joy and dread
 All through the three succeeding states,–
 The scale that clouds thy vision falls,
 And nothing vexes or appals.

- “ Old time and space, causality –
O what can these but bubbles be,
That rise and float on life’s high tide,
While waking, or while dreams betide ?
But, wrapt in sound and dreamless sleep,
When memories no impressions keep,
Nor summon their terrific band,
Who feels, or can, plurality,
Time, space, or grim causality ?
- “ And change and movement—what are they,
Unless ye see or feel them, pray ?
Who sees or feels in dreamless sleep,
Immersed in waveless, blissful deep ?
The basic Consciousness that spreads
Through all the states of self, nor dreads
The moods of mind or Nature’s freaks,
From no external source it seeks
For aid, and can itself maintain
Till from itself all spring again.
- “ The luminous self, it thus is clear,
Resolves in sleep into the seer ;
And when, at will, it dreams and wakes,
Creates the worlds that all around
In panoramic views abound.
- “ The not-me is but me transformed –
A task in sport by me performed ;

One boundless sea of Consciousness
 Is all that is, is all we see,
 Is all we feel, is you and me.

“ With dreaming self the dream-world ends,
 On waking self *its* world depends.
 In sleep the worldless self persists ;
 And thus this world with radiant orbs
 The Self protrudes and re-absorbs.

“ Dost thou love life ? Then act thy part
 With courage and unselfish heart, –
 Since righteous acts ennoble life.
 Should higher wish in thee appear,
 Relinquish not yet duty's sphere,
 Fly not to woods, quit not thy house :
 Like Janaka, or Maitreyi, Yajnavalkya's
 spouse,
 Essay the God in thee to rouse,
 And God is universal love
 As sung by saints and powers above.

“ The self is real, self is bliss :
 Who knows not this but lives amiss,
 For quest of truth life's purpose is ;
 And till the dawn of truth the self
 Will ceaseless birth and death impose,
 Giving no rest or sweet repose.

The drum now quickly changed its strain,
In novel mood it beat again. –

“ ’But if the world sweet Brahman is,
Why all this pain, this want of ease ?
The bitter ills that on us seize ?

“ The plague, the pestilence and war,
That peace and beauty wholly mar,
The early death, the broken heart,
Thriving of vice and guile and art,
The signs of anguish, tears that start
From gentle eyes, the cruel pang
Of merit that in poverty
Plods on in sad obscurity ?
Is there no God, poor innocence
To shield, or strive in her defence ? ’

“ Enquirer, cease. All evils rise
From selfish views, unholy ties
Of self to bodies of the states.
Desire and hate are at the base
Of tragedy in every case.
And what is war but vulpine greed,
Of countless miseries the seed ?
And what are fell disease and death,
To whom the truth enlighteneth ?

“ O trust not in an alien God,
Pursue not fancy's paths untrod ;
'Tis ignorance that wishes breeds,
From folly vexing pain proceeds.

“ Why dost or good or ill ascribe
To Heaven, and try its grace to bribe
By flattery ? 'Tis in thy hands
To break the old, or forge new bands.
Let none for woes endured e'er blame
The world or God. All deeds of shame
Spring from desire and selfish greed,
Though masked beneath a lofty creed,
The ignoble plea who will believe,
The shining witness who deceive ?

Sing then the dirge of dark-browed death,
He's crushed , no more he frighteneth.
The world within his horrid hold
Writhing no more he shall behold ;
And thus the soul from bondage free
Ragains its pristine purity.
Lewd custom, superstition dark,
Now void of life, grown stiff and stark,
And privilege proud, of hue and birth
With all hypocrisies on earth -
All, all are quelled : they scare no more.

The soul has reached the blissful shore,
And dwells in peace unknown before.

PART II

37. " Origination, middle, and end, -
These all the stages comprehend
Of objects seen, or thoughts conceived ;
And what exists not at the first,
But on the view does later burst,
Dissolving soon in sleep at last -
To be by mind again up cast -
This world, including Place and Date,
Is myth, bound up with waking state.
- " For what at one time none could see,
And will at one time cease to be,
Though in the middle stage perceived,
Is fair or ugly phantom, sure,-
Lifelong, but still illusion pure.
38. " What at the first and at the end
Exists, and still its grace must lend
Ere Time or Space leap into birth,
Whose absence Mind can ne'er cognize, -
This Self is real, say the wise.
39. " Duty, wealth, sweet Love, Release,
Are fourfold means securing Ease.
The first three lend to transient joys,
Which men pursue with pomp and noise ;

But he who seeks not freedom dear,
 He leads a bestial life forlorn,—
 Better if he had never been born.

40. “ The wall, the pot — these are but clay ;
 And, spite of all that scientists say,
 The world is likewise Brahman, know,

41. Then quell the six, give up the three,
 Break through the two, and grasp the free—
 The One beyond the rest. Thus sure,
 The Bliss of Freedom ye secure.

42. * First cleave the six, then cleave the five,
 To cleave the four and three then strive,
 Shake off the two that chain the soul,
 Then cling to the shining one in you
 And taste the Bliss enduring through.

Note to 41. — The six internal foes : Love, Anger,
 Pride, Ignorance, Envy and Avarice.

The three, attachments to (1) Wife, (2) Son and
 (3) Riches.

The two, the dualities in life. Heat and Cold,
 pleasure and pain etc.

Note to 42.— The six, the gross body consisting of six
 tissues.

The five, sheaths.

The four, internal organs.

The three, states of the soul, waking, sleep and
 dream.

The two, the seer and the seen.

**ANALYSIS OF SELF,
ELIMINATION OF THE SHEATHS**

43. " Unmarked, unbound by form and name,
I cannot be this bulky frame ; -
'Tis mine, an object seen by me.
By nature free from birth and death,
I die not with the loss of breath.
44. " As Witness of the vital breath,
No hunger or thirst me tortureth ;
45. And me, descrying all her moods
Who can identify with mind ?
No ignorance or woe combined
Can vex me whom no wishes bind.
46. " The right-discerning intellect,
Whose judgments still our acts direct,
I cannot be, because I see
Its foible and its fallacy,
And hence no agent can I be.
The fatal notion that I act
Is false and contrary to fact.
- " The body, breath, mind, intellect, -
And ignorance - these in effect
47. Are sheaths ascribed to the sheathless soul
Deluding Maya wove ? The whole

Is Witness. Hence impervious
 To ills that human vigour drain
 I am, and so shall e'er remain.
 For ills affect the sheaths alone
 And cannot reach the Shining One.

48. " Discerning thus, who oft reflects,
 'No change in objects me affects,
 For I'm the eternal Witness pure, –
 A flow unchecked of consciousness,' –
 Is wise and free, whose happiness
 Innate, divine, what can repress ?
 All troubles from a second spring,
 Alone I am happy as a king.
- " The same three marks of Self abide
 In sheaths as in the world outside.
 Thus all is Brahman, Matter and Mind,
 The soul, too, such, one may remark,
 Which bears on it the three-fold mark.
49. " And Maya I can never be,
 Nor its effects, for ceaselessly
 I witness both as objects mine,
 And all that I conceive or see, –
 A hill or notion of a tree –
 Are alien things outside of me.

“ But as in sleep I see no more
 The objects that I saw before,
 My part as witness I can play
 Or cease to play, as please I may,
 Because in sleep dissolves the world
 That dream or waking had unfurled.
 The Lord that slept and is awake
 Does neither sleep nor wake, we take ;
 Dream, sleep, and waking are the inns
 Through which he passes every day,
 Like pilgrim sporting on his way,
 To win Release if win he may.

“ The real nature of the soul
 ’Tis sleep unfolds, which shows the goal
 Of Man’s ambition, heavenward bent,
 The source of Bliss pre-eminent.

“ But if the objects come to nought.
 And all are objects, seen or thought,
 Then, when we think of self, is not
 The self an object made ? ’ Oh, no.
 ’Tis self that speaks of Self as seen
 And self sole seer has always been.
 And, once this truth has been imbibed,
 The self, indeed, can be described
 In seeming contradicting words,—
 Which still no room for doubt affords.

50. " I am thus All, and yet not All,
 And likewise mine all things I call,
 That strictly are not me or mine.
 For one is all, and all is one ;
 In Brahman are distinctions none
 Of Time and Place, or gross or fine.
- 51-53. " Existence, Consciousness and Bliss –
 That are to sheaths ascribed amiss,
- 54-57 " Or to the five-fold elements –
 These rightly to the Self belong,–
 Of either group the basis strong.
 The thread of existence as one
 Through sheaths and elements doth run.
58. And evidences all agree,
 And prove that self is Brahman free.
 For Brahman is but Consciousness
 Existence, Bliss, and nothing more, –
 So teach the scriptures o'er and o'er.
- 59-63. And Name and Form, do these inhere
 In things ? But yet we hold them dear.
 Both daily change, while things persist ;
 And, hence deluding even kings,
 They are no real part of things,

“ While Self, devoid of Form and Name,
 Their witness still, is e'er the same.
 These marks of Self, of Brahman free, -
 Existence, Bliss, and Consciousness -
 Admit of neither more nor less :
 Three dwell in one, or one in three.

64. “ The Brahman is reality,
 Appearing as the world ye see,
 Thy inmost self is Brahman true.
 Who knows this is released in life,
 Though toiling still for child and wife.

“ Why is the self so loved, so sweet ? -
 Because of joy it is the seat,
 What pleasures can with it compete ?
 Such is the secret of the self.
 For love of Self is loved the rest
 And even the dearest and the best -
 High honour, fame, must be confest,
 Not for their sake but for the sake
 Of self, are loved and so esteemed, -
 More precious far than life are deemed. -
 What profit shall it prove to one,
 If soul be lost, and all else won ?

65-67. All clad in Name and Form that gleam
 Are Consciousness alone supreme.

Distinction, bondage, both are false ;
And Form and Name these still deceive ;
From past impressions they receive
Their import which does hourly change.
Good looks may oft a Syren hide,
And *David* prove a loon inside, -
'T is Maya spreads her nets so wide.

68-69. To quell distinctions is Release
From Name and Form that vex and tease
The cleverest in Samsara bound ;
No zeal for faith, no power of tongue
With wit eloquent though it rung
Divorced from knowledge leads to bliss ;
All other futile hopes dismiss.

70. No works to gratify desire
Consuming precious life like fire, -
Which lead to fruits, not lasting, dire,-
Or bridling the will to so refrain
From acts forbidden, Freedom bring,
But Grace Divine thy Ransoming.

71. If Brahman should remain unknown,
A life is lost. The bitter seed is sown
Again of endless births and deaths.
With knowledge is Life's purpose won -
No more travail, no sorrow, none.

While men will sail on roughest seas
 On others' wealth and power to seize,
 Committing wild, disastrous acts
 Securing selfish ends by pacts
 Unrighteous, means abhorred,
 And threatening with the brutal sword
 Unsheathed, - 'tis pity, yet we find
 Them loth to turn inward their mind
 And grasp their nearest Self, the seat
 Of Bliss entire, - beside which gold
 Is dross, and earthly joys but cold.

72. Of yore a party formed of ten -
 Too primitive, quixotic men -
 Happening to cross a flooded brook,
 Though all are safe on shore, yet look
 Aghast with doubt, if the current took
 From them a victim ; so they count.
 But each, alas, himself omits,
 And counting nine does lose his wits ;
 Then 'gins to weep and wail aloud
 And rolls in dust and beats his breast
 With fancied loss, finding no rest ;
 Till from among a pitying crowd
 A stranger straight the blunder saw
 Much wondering at their mental mould,
 And whipping each, his number told
 And proved no loss of young or old.

The numskulls' ten who thought the lost
 A comrade, soon themselves composed
 Rejoicing at recovering him,
 Though none was lost or saved indeed. -
 Thus none are truly bound or freed.
 The Jeeva sees the senses five
 And inside organs four contrive
 To make the fairy scenes of life ;
 And drawn still outward by these nine,
 Forgets like one who's drunk with wine
 That as their Lord himself does shine,
 And in illusion 'gins to pine.
 As witness, Self all else doth see ;
 No object seen, it e'er can be ;
 In vain ye look for bliss outside.
 This Self, the tenth, the wise discern ;
 And from the rest, their mind they turn.

73. What though the threatening bees might
 And with their buzz the air might ring ^{sting,} ?
 The brave still seize the honey-comb.
 Unminding thus the objects seen,
 And, gifted with a vision keen
 The wise the Brahman seize I ween.
74. And small are sensual pleasures all,
 On noble natures soon they pall ;
 But Brahmie Bliss is endless joy.

75. And mansions, patrons – bounteous men
Wealth, Brother, spouse or child, again, –
They wring our lives, in thraldom pen.
76. In waking mood, from early morn
When golden tints all earth adorn
Till night when silence lulls to rest,
Reflect on Brahmie Bliss alone,
Cease under fancied ills to groan.
For Death, he threatens all on earth ;
And men of high or humble birth;
Must, to his sway relentless, yield ;
Uncertain is Death's hour or date.
Be warned in time, quell ruthless fate,
Before ye find it all too late'!
- 77-79. The Mayic sheaths to ills are prone,
With dawn of wisdom these are flown ;
But Self the seer from them is free,
As when the tenth is found, the nine,
With beams of joy their faces shine ;
So when himself the Jeeva knows,
He turns in Bliss from earthly shows.
80. The vehicles of cognition nine
Through which the eternal Self does shine,
Discard them. For the Self at will
These organs into being calls.

On Self, rid of these shadows false,
In silence rest from pain that galls.

81. He who dissolves the world around
In Brahman thus, in joy profound
The Bliss of oneness feels, and sings ;-
“ Ha, Ha, I am now one, now all,
Me nothing vexes, great or small. ”

Daily from Brahman souls proceed,
In him they live, to him recede.
The elements too from him evolve
And into him again resolve.
The vanishing, returning world,
Now on, now off, constantly whirled,
Melts, – like the snake one spies in rope
When trudging darkling down a slope –
Into its real essence, Self, –
Bright, bright, beyond all power and pelf.

82. Dismiss the notion of the world, –
Which from the Self is still unfurled,
By false, imposing fancy bred, –
And Bliss as basis but remains.
The highest Truth one thus attains,
And farther shore of knowledge gains.
The Brahman and the Universe,

Each other's obverse and reverse,
They seem eternally to be.
The wise, the Brahman only see.

83. The love of Form and Name imposed
On Self, accounts for the ceaseless host
Of ills embodied creatures feel ;
Wisdom alone the wounds can heal
From blows that Fate unkind doth deal.
Until ye know your inmost self
As Bliss, Existence, consciousness,
To dream of Release is profitless ,
84. And further nought remains to know,
Since lasting Peace is gathered so.
85. Peering through all this magic show, -
Of jewelled beads a glistening row -
The Self might seem to need support ;
But, life to Self is merely sport,
It sees unmoved scenes worst and best ;
Supportless, still supports the rest
86. Reflect that all is Brahman pure,
Let no desire this Truth obscure,
To do or know in life any more
But stick to what position suits,
Engaged in innocent pursuits.

87. The cultured and the rude, amain
Are bound alike in Karmic chain ;
Each has his lot of weal or woe ;
The enlightened heart brims o'er with glee,
The other is crushed with misery.
88. The wise with doubts are never worried,
By acts or by omissions flurried,
Because they grasp the One in all,
And never into delusions fall.
89. " The soul in Nescience primitive wrapt,
With vigour and might completely sapt,
Is but the shadow of the Lord.
Stern karma, – that all things affects
And with its woes our life infects, –
Even on this shadow has no hold,
Much less can drag into its fold
The Lord that all else does uphold.

The world is consciousness all mine,
And though this may not sound so fine,
Ye cannot spy the smallest flaw
In it, argue by any law
How then can fire or wind me hurt, –
Me with quenchless splendour girt ? –
Or how can objects with me flirt, –
Who know that by my life they live

And cannot, else, a moment thrive ?
 For you and he and they around
 But to my consciousness are bound,
 From me as Subject ever rebound.

90. O, wake we then from woeful trance
 Of deep pernicious Ignorance !
 The Self is truly Brahman free.
 The ravishing sounds of Vedic drum
 That strike the wisest mortal dumb, -
- These, in our ears, are ringing still ;
 And uttering words that glow and thrill
 Low cravings cure, and doubts dispel.
 Then hear them daily, pondering o'er
 The saving truth, and ills no more
 Will-real, or fancied - ye annoy ;
 Your heart will ay vibrate with joy.
 And whether ye dwell in hut or hall,
 May Peace divine be with ye all."

With this, the Heavenly Drum-Beat
 Then from the singing Gods there ^{stopped,} dropped
 Rare dulcet symphonies unheard ; -
 To deepest depths, my heart they stirred.
 They danced and sung in circles gay
 In mystic cadence flowed their lay : -

ALL IS SELF

“ There is no Prince of Darkness, Devil,
 There is no Principle of Evil, -
 No fiend or fairy can thee ail,
 Behold thyself behind the veil !
 There are no flowers that bloom or fade,
 No dazzling light, no dismal shade,
 No trees weighed down by golden fruits,
 Or wilderness that swarms with brutes,
 No streams that flow o’er yellow sands,
 No damasked dale that praise demands,
 No world of harrowing ills so full,
 Or scenes surpassing beautiful ;
 No princess with her lovely face,
 No horrid sprites or monstrous race ;
 No power without that gladness brings
 To the Self within that ever sings ;
 No sun, no rainbow tints above,
 No stars, no azure vault you love ;
 No friend, no foe, no hope, no fear,
 No youth, no age, no hill, nor mere ; -
 But all is Self, transmuted so
 By Maya still that gilds the show.

If Power and Love to Death must yield,
 And from his darts no art can shield,
 But a dainty dish is Death to Self ; -

For all is Self in deep disguise,
As know the unattached, the wise.

And what if some thy schemes oppose ?
O, murmur not against thy foes,
Designing 'gainst thy life or state
Egged on by unpropitious fate
For 'tis desire that weaves the veil, -
Behold thyself behind the veil.

And evil springs from ignorance
That pierces life as with a lance ; -
All, all is Self transmuted so,
'Tis Mayic veil supports the show, -
While foolish wishes weave the veil,
Behold thyself behind the veil ! "

The hymns on which my ears had fed
Now ceased. I woke, the vision fled.
Delicious was the Dream I had,
With holy joy it made me mad.
If dull the Drum-beat prove to be
Ah, gentle reader, bear with me ;
And more I need not say, but pray
Thet none from path of wisdom stray,
And every soul embodied haste
The Bliss of freedom straight to taste !

HEROES OF ANCIENT IND.



Gods of youthful fancy,
Heroes of lofty mould !
My memory fondly lingers
On your deeds of old.

Raghu, Rama, Lakshman,
Of high Ikshvaku line,
And selfless Hanuman !
Your names eternal shine.

And Bhishma, Drona, Bhima,
Abhimanyu, artless, bold,
And Arjuna the Archer,
In thrall my mind they hold ;

While Krishna, wise and brave,
He sung the immortal soul,
Whose nectar-dropping accents
Guide us to our goal.

These be the warrior throng,
Their brows with laurels crowned -
Laurels that never fade,
That brows no worthier bound.

Droupadi and Seeta,
Models of virtuous wives,
Brave to do and suffer,
Stainless in their lives.

They showed what India's daughters
Can do in stress and strain ;
They shared Life's joys in plenty,
They shared its cureless pain.

Now, rise ye galaxy
Of virile thought and high,
Who charm away life's ills,
Who kiss our tears dry !

Vedic Yajnavalkya,
Janaka, Royal sage,
Vasishtha, Visvamitra,
And Vyasa of golden age !

Ye toiled to uplift our Ind,
Ye looked for no reward,
Nor power, nor pelf, nor praise,
From king or sweet-voiced bard.

Our Homers, Miltons, Kants
In legions we can number ;
Alas ! who them remembers ?
In vaults of Time they slumber.

Awake, my youthful brethren,
Your blood still flows untainted ;
Toil and strive for Ind,
Under spell of names so sainted.

O, Gods of youthful fancy,
Heroes of ancient Ind !
My memory fond recalls
Your deeds and peerless mind.

THE SPIRIT OF VEDIC IND.



A spirit broods over Ancient Ind.
With golden wings outspread ;
It fills our heart with holy joy,
Dispelling fear and dread.

India's glowing skies and flowers,
Her birds of every tint,
They mark her as the abode of gods
Whose bounties never stint.

Her coco palm and mango groves,
Her fragrant jaji bowers,
The balmy breeze from Ganga's wave, -
Draw down celestial powers.

The Vedic gods surround us still,
Their mystic chants we hear ;
Romance and fairies fill the air,
And every scene endear.

The Gayatri, of Rishis old,
And rites which seem so queer, -
Who says that these can ever die,
Which all so much revere ?

Usha like a just-wed bride
 Can still be seen to blush ;
 To greet her with a kiss, the sun
 Does fast behind her rush.

Great Indra, thousand-eyed, around
 Directs the raining cloud ;
 His mighty bow of heavenly hues
 Declares his prowess proud.

O, Mitra, Lord, - and Varuṇa,
 O gods of Vedic lore !
 Ye watch our lives, ennoble them.
 And bless us evermore.

Indra great, Brihaspati
 And Rudra, Lord of Ire -
 Trivikrama, - to ye we light
 Our sacrificial fire.

Who taught the world that all is one,
 Distinction but illusion ;
 And human pomp and power and pride,
 Short-lived, though sweet, delusion ?

That Truth, Eternal Truth, should be
 The object of our quest ;
 Stern path of Righteous Duty leads
 Alone to Peace and Rest !

That He but truly sees who sees
 The Self illuming all ;
 Whose heart o'erflows with love
 Whom nothing can appal ? ^{unfeigned,}

It was our Ancient Indian seers ; -
 Uddalaka the sage,
 And mother Gargi and her spouse
 Adorning Vedic age.

Can such a faith sublime be blind
 And India's past a dream ?
 O think not so, for glorious Ind
 Is Brahman's Blessed Home,
 Where sages turn from sense - delights
 And muse on the Mystic Om.

A spirit broods o'er Ancient Ind,
 With golden wings outspread ;
 It fills our heart with holy joy,
 Dispelling fear and dread.

WAS SANKARA A CRYPTO-BUDDHIST ?

(The 'Vedanta Kesari', Aug. 1932)

—§O§—

Some critics who ought to know better look upon Saṅkara's system as Buddhism in disguise. This is due to an inaccurate appreciation of facts. The two schools are as opposed to each other as the poles. A mere surface-dip may give rise to a belief in their fancied identity. But, in the first place, like all Non-Saṅkara speculations the Buddhistic view is closely restricted to the Waking experience. In the next, it affords no explanation of Time which is a logical implication of the doctrine of momentariness and cannot be absorbed by the latter. It is a Philistine notion that since Buddha declares that the world, as depending on consciousness, is unreal, his teaching is identical with Saṅkara's. We shall show briefly wherein the two systems seem to agree and wherein they differ.

BUDDHA'S POSITION

(1) The world is unreal. For it is only a concept. A concept can create its own object, and the object is unreal as in Dream.

- (2) Consciousness which produces concepts is itself momentary, arising and disappearing every moment. Nothing persists through any two moments.
- (3) The Ego is a momentary notion or concept and has no existence apart from the momentary consciousness.
- (4) To believe in any permanent entity or essence, like the Ātman or the World, is Avidya from which springs up desire, the mother of all ills including Rebirth.
- (5) The removal of Avidya roots out desire and leads to the end of suffering, —to Nirvana, whatever that may mean.

S'ĀṆKARA'S POSITION

- (1) " The world is unreal ". Yes, says Saṅkara, but with a caveat. It is so because it is bound up with the state in which it appears and which it cannot transcend. But within the state both the subject and the object are real and are the inevitable correlates and counterparts of each other. The world with all its manifold elements, is, however, only a

manifestation of Pure Consciousness which it presupposes. Life is not a sum of concepts merely, for a concept without content commits suicide, and contradicts the practical distinction between a dog that can bark and the *idea* of a dog that cannot. A concept cannot do duty for a feeling or a volition. An actual feeling can by no means be reduced to a concept of the feeling.

- (2) Mental life unfolded in the Waking state is no doubt a stream of ideation. Consciousness *does* change every moment and the current of ideas ever flows. But this consciousness is only empirical, and, like the external world which is its invariable concomitant, is but a manifestation of Pure Consciousness. To talk of a current without a spring-head is devoid of meaning, and the source must be an abiding one, a changeless Witness, without which our memory of past states or our cognition of change would be impossible. Memory connects the present with the past, and change involves the experience of two moments. Both demand a persisting witness. Buddha's denial of the Witnessing Consciousness causes his system to collapse like a house of cards.

Besides, Buddha's idea of momentariness presupposes Time as its eternal background. His 'consciousness' originating and dying each moment must emerge from Time and be swallowed up by Time, and it would be preposterous to extend this momentariness to Time itself. The doctrine of the momentariness of all things thus knocks its head against Time and breaks to pieces. It cannot explain Duration which has both a subjective and an objective phase and is fundamental to Life and Action. We are not ordinarily conscious of fugitive moments which are an intellectual division of Time, but of the duration of successive single states.

Further, Waking, Dream, and Sleep are not events occurring in one time-series. For, then they would be experienced as parts of one continuous state. The idea of momentariness cannot be applied to them.

(3) The Ego is not simply a notion. To think so is to be untrue to Life. It is far rather, as the rock-basis of Life, an immediacy ; and though as a notion it may ever vary in content, it transcends Time, Change, and even the empirical consciousness, when it (the ego) objectifies the three states intuitively and enables one to say " I slept, I dreamt, I am

awake". The Ego in this instance stands for the witness beyond all time and causation. It is Pure Consciousness or Brahman. When this is realized, to what low depths of unreality is the Waking consciousness, upon which Buddha builds with such confidence, hurled down ! And to what sublime heights is the Ego elevated !

- (4) Avidya is indeed the cause of all ills. But its activity consists pre-eminently in this, that it causes the unreal like the world to be taken for reality and the real like the Ātman, which transcends the three states, to escape our notice. Buddha himself has come under its power in this latter respect.
- (5) The removal of Avidya leads not to Nirvana synonymous with annihilation, but to Vidya or the Knowledge of truth, nay, to The Truth *viz*, Reality. For, at this stage Truth and Reality become inseparably one. Vidya reveals that the Ego at the highest level is no other than Brahman, the highest all-inclusive Reality, of which empirical life is but an expression.

Buddha's position involves him, besides, in a dilemma. Does he stand for the momentariness

of all things or for their nature as concepts ? or for both ? On the first supposition, Time is left to domineer over all else and remains an insoluble surd. On the second supposition, a concept presupposes consciousness which there is no means of vanquishing and must be admitted to have eternal life. For Consciousness whose offspring Concept is is – with its adjutant Memory, cannot be included in its own effect. Consciousness is not a concept, for a concept cannot be conscious. Lastly, as to the combination, namely, a momentary concept, both universal time and consciousness are excluded thereby, and we shall have two entities instead of one claiming eternality and immortality, resulting in an inevitable annihilation of his theory of Annihilation.

Moreover, it is difficult to see how the knowledge of the momentariness of all things can include the Witnessing Consciousness, unless this is also regarded as an object, – an idea revolting to its nature as the eternal Subject. If knowledge is the final issue of Buddhistic speculation, how can it be destroyed ? If it cannot be destroyed, how can it also be momentary ? We may pass over his idea of Nirvana since, firstly, it is but an idea and as such momentary, and, secondly, since

he has taken no pains to describe its nature and has left it in impenetrable mystery.

It may be claimed on behalf of Buddha that that he arrived at his conclusion of the unreality of Life and all things, after a careful analysis of the three states, and that Saṅkara can score no point against him. The objective part of waking is known to be unreal by reference to dream-experience, and the subjective vanishes in Deep Sleep. Hence the whole is illusion. But this claim is invalid. Analysis implies consciousness to which objects are presented. The three states can be compared only by an indwelling, immanent, and witnessing consciousness which must persist throughout their sequence. Otherwise the *sequence* cannot be cognized. Hence a logical analysis discloses not the unreality of all things, but the undeniable Witness as the Basic Reality.

Thus when one, who professes to know anything of philosophy, with an intellectual supineness altogether inexcusable, supports the unenlightened view that Saṅkara's system is Crypto-Buddhism, he illustrates in his own case the double effect of Adhyasa. One need not rise above common-sense to distinguish between a system that denies essence to things including the

Soul (*Nirātmaka*) and that which affirms Brahman as the immortal essence of each and all (*Sadātmaka*), between undiluted Nihilism and Absolute Monism, between the universal Nay and the universal Yes.

VEDIC SUPPORT FOR NON-DUALISM



Before claiming the support of the Vedas for non-dualism or Advaita, it is necessary to sift the foundations on which the Vedic authority itself rests. The Christians, the Mahomedans and the Buddhists repudiate and reject it. The Arya-Samajists assume it, the Meemamsakas imagine they have established it, and the Dvaitins and the Visishtadvaitins of every shade confidently build upon it. But the naive question remains unanswered *viz*, why should we believe in the Vedas? The Meemamsakas, with an unconscious inconsistency resort to reasoning when they attempt to solve the problem. "Articulate sounds are eternal, the Vedas consist of words made up of articulate sounds, *ergo*, they are eternal. They are likewise authoritative as they cannot be traced to any personal being, not even God, as their author. Their distinct identity, besides, which entitles them to a special consideration, depends on the invariable order of their words and sentences. The sentences being thoughts made up of

eternal concepts, disclose absolute truths demanding our implicit acceptance, since there is no personal factor to taint them. " These arguments are supposed to have a cumulative force which is logically irresistible. Now even if these reasons, some of which are obviously too wide, were admitted, the net result would be to enhance the status of Reason and lower that of the Vedas. If on the contrary the Vedic truths are alleged to be self-valid, so might those of other revelations be similarly claimed to be. If they are to be validated by Reason, they must be harmonised with life and experience from which all reasoning draws its breath.

. This is a question of central importance to us, Hindus, for it vitally affects the very root of our beliefs. In this age of universal and unrestrained questioning no prescriptive right or traditional authority will be left untouched, and if we failed to settle the question now, we should be prepared to meet a dismal future for our religion and philosophy, a future of rampant scepticism, irreligion and chaos, or of drivelling and degrading superstition. No theology, however well fortified by ancient beliefs, by scholastic learning and by supernatural miracles, can stand the persistent attack of reason and enlightenment;

and our renowned strong-hold of religion and philosophy must yield to forces which are relentless in their work of destruction. Most of the creeds holding sway at present over human minds, were founded many centuries before the dawn of modern science, and the rapid progress of the latter is an increasing menace to the continuity of their influence or prestige. Old idols along with mystic rituals and unchallenged dogmas, cease to inspire faith in men of culture, and the claims of special Revelations must follow in their wake, never again to be advanced or admitted. The founders of religions never could spy in the sweep of their vision the possibilities of a scientific era, and coolly believed that the dogmas which satisfied them would also satisfy future generations without end. Hence if we are earnest and loyal in our allegiance to the Vedas, we must ransack every means of proving their claims for an assured place in cultured life.

In tackling this problem we shall derive no help from a reference to ancient writings. Their authors believed instinctively in the Vedas, and so long as there was no formidable opponent, it was easy enough to dispose of all opponents as atheists or unbelievers. Yet, two of our adversaries may be mentioned as remaining unvanquished,

the Buddhists and the Jains, against whom no reasoning has been hitherto successful.

What then is our present duty ? Since the validity of the Vedas must in any case be made good, the mere citing of the views of great men of the past would be futile ; and by elimination, we arrive at Reason and Life as the only arbiters of the destiny of the Vedas. Now since obviously the portion of Works relates to effects to be looked for only in the future after death, they cannot carry their own evidence with them, and it is only the portion of the Upanishads which treat of the nature of the soul that allows of their being subjected to a rational examination. Even here if the realization of the truths concerning the soul and of its release were only after-life events, we should be left with nothing positive to be discussed or verified ; and, as in the dark all cows are black, so all eschatologies would be of equal or no value because they would be equally incapable of verification.

Fortunately for us there are these remarkable words of the Upanishads ever ringing in our ears : अत्र ब्रह्म समश्नुते । 'One enjoys Brahman here.' This vibrant voice of the Upanishads cannot be ignored. The challenge must be taken up and the reasonings examined with all care and caution. The

angle of vision is provided by the verse, साक्षी चेता
 केवलो निर्गुणश्च । (He is the Witnessing Consciousness,
 one and without attributes) and the angle covers
 the three States. If the enquirer can adjust him-
 self to the angle, see through the three States of
 waking, dreaming and deep sleep and arrives at
 the conclusion 'I am Brahman', then the truth
 of the Upanishads is placed beyond all dispute.
 It is inconceivable how a conviction so arrived at
 can ever be affected by all the changes that cha-
 racterize the *inside* of the States. Even if one
 should provisionally adopt the position he would
 feel that he was left without an opponent. The
 truth becomes absolute to him, though it may
 require some time to sink into his blood, so that
 every moment of his is coloured by it and confirms
 it. This is the bed-rock of experience that we
 have reached in seeking for the basis on which
 Vedic authority can stand for all time, and Vedic
 pronouncements be fearlessly proclaimed from
 the house-tops. In other words the Vedas are
 the highest Revelations of the true nature of man
 because they reveal a fact which goes to the very
 root of our life. Their authority becomes un-
 impeachable because the truth they unfold is
 verified *in life* and so precludes all doubt or
 controversy. While the Upanishads thus rise to

the rank of unquestionable authority, they also at the same time contribute to elevate the rank of the portion of Works, since both constitute parts of an integral whole. The promises regarding after-life must be true and acceptable, for the general veracity of the Vedas has been placed on an incontrovertible basis in *the* only case in which the challenge can be verified, and that confessedly the most essential, *viz.*, the nature of our soul. Thus the Meemamsakas who fancy that they can rely independently upon a system of their own are lost in the quicksands of dogmatism and superstition, unless they subordinate the Works to *Jnana* by which their own position can be ensured. Similarly, with all Hindu theologies. God can be proved to be an undoubted entity only on the basis of the Upanishadic method which takes the aspirant to the very Reality of all life, *viz.* Brahman.

The authority of the Vedas being shown to turn on their declaration of the one principle of existence, whenever by interpretation the Vedas are taken to teach a dual principle, the conception saps the very foundations of Vedic testimony and becomes suicidal. For the existence of two or more ultimate and transcendent principles, can never be referred to common experience, and

God as well as the individual soul as distinct entities can never be established except by a reasoning which dissolves their separateness. Hence if the Vedas are assumed to teach theological distincts, they are not entitled to superior claims – superior to those of similar scriptures of other nations. Whatever is imagined to be peculiar to the Vedas will be sure to be confronted by features similarly peculiar to the other Revelations, so as to result in a hopeless ruin of all.

We shall now turn to the next point. How far can the Vedas be alleged to support Non-dualism? The truths being expressed in an ancient tongue, we have necessarily to derive help from early commentaries. The older these are, the nearer they take us to the original import. But another difficulty now rears its head. If these commentaries differ, which are we to prefer and on what principle? This is a real objection. While to discover the meaning of an ancient passage we inevitably depend on the help of scholars, it is possible that their explanation receives the tinge and the complexion of their private conviction. How should we know what the import of the text is apart from the personal predilections of the commentator? This gives a picture of the narrow and dangerous strait we

have to pass through, but I believe the picture is overdrawn. For, it cannot be maintained that there are no sentences in the Upanishads which one who knows Sanskrit cannot understand without the commentary. That would be to constitute the commentary into a fetish – a disposition which has arrested the growth of independent thought for several centuries in India. Surely, एकमेवाद्वितीयम्, तत्त्वमसि. जयमात्मा ब्रह्म, नेह नानास्ति किञ्चन, प्रवञ्चोपशमं शान्तं शिवमद्वैतम् । (‘One only without a second’; ‘That thou art’ ‘This Self is Brahman’; ‘There is not the least multiplicity here’; ‘It is worldless, Peace, the Good, and the Secondless’) – these short, simple, transparent sentences do not stand in need of any abstruse comment to expound their meaning. An emphasis on oneness with an embargo on plurality furnishes us with a positive and a negative proof as to the Advaitic import of the Vedas. If in all the various, sometimes, vague, teachings of the Upanishads we come across any equally clear statement opposed in tenour to oneness, if oneness were interdicted and pluralism were upheld or commended, then we should despair of ever harmonizing Vedic truth with life and of finding impeccable grounds on which to defend the authority of the Vedas. The commentators, therefore, who employ these subtle

scholarship in interpreting the Vedas so as to favour Dualism, do it at their peril. Although life abounds in duality, this duality characterizing a portion or an aspect of experience, must be sharply distinguished from *Dualism* which posits an *ultimate* dual principle to account for experience, operating behind the phenomenal sphere and at the same time immanent in it. If Philosophy's function is to explain the duality of common life, the formulation of duality again as its source or basis is not to explain duality *as such*. It is to admit a non-plus. Duality can be traced only to non-duality. The prevailing tone of the Vedas is monistic as is evidenced by the fact that Ramanuja, the great supporter of real distinctions and of the individual identity of the souls and objects, was obliged to provide for a concept of Unity in the fancied *embodiment* of the principle of Reality, a figure admirable as rhetoric, but certainly inappropriate in the region of precise thought. Even this interpretation is made possible only by excluding from consideration the claims of the States (waking, dreaming and sleep) as the more inclusive elements of experience. For, the examination of the States lifts us to an angle of vision in which the plurality and the reality of individual things have to be confined to the individual States

and cannot be raised to an interstatal value, while the witnessing consciousness is realized as the one and secondless principle, the changeless entity before which the great and unique drama of Life is enacted in the shape of the States with their contents, never appearing together, never succeeding each other in one and the same time-series, and never absolutely identical in any of their individual aspects. We then discover that the pure undifferentiated consciousness of deep sleep is the basis of all manifestation, remaining itself unchanged and unmodified throughout. The manifestation of every State is the manifestation of the whole of Reality, as, otherwise, we cannot explain why the States are not experienced in juxta-position of each other, or why they are not externally connected by time. The truth is that Reality transcends all time, space and change. If now by this method of pure introspection and observation we find that Life or Reality is one indivisible whole and all the variety of things and occurrences cannot affect the integrity of Reality, we have every reason to be reverential in our attitude to the Vedas which declare this truth and point out the unique method of its realization. Besides, if all that is witnessed within the States is only a manifesta-

tion, a creation of the Reality, the Vedas themselves must be admitted to be such ; and as this highest unifying truth is to be found only in them and only by later adoption, if at all, in other scriptures and systems of thought, the Vedas have an exclusive claim to be regarded as an infallible authority, not only on what they have brought within our experience, but on what they postulate as future possibilities.

But it is wrong to think that Vedanta as the Science of Reality is a sectarian dogma, a scholastic basis of Hinduism. All Theology in fact stands on uncertain ground so long as God and the Soul remain unproven affirmations, and so long as the universal instinct which makes men crave for a higher and more perfect life and bliss cannot be satisfied by an ex-cathedral injunction, " This shalt thou believe or perish " On the contrary the Vedic System of Monism must be welcomed by all theologians as that which supplies the living principle on which they all stand or fall. It proclaims not a sectarian but a universal truth endorsed by the nature and experience of all humanity That is its claim to supreme authority, not resting on authorlessness or antiquity, but on an analysis of life within the power of every one of us to make for himself, unfolding

an immutable truth indubitably verified. It is therefore to me unaccountable why it should rouse antipathy or hatred in the bosom of the Theists.

S'aṅkara, the greatest exponent of Hindu Monism came, like Christ, to build up, not to pull down. Under the auspices of his system, Theology, Ethics, Freedom and Immortality are endowed with a new and unending lease of life. Opposition to it is not merely futile but disastrous. Do the critics realize this? S'aṅkara, indeed, appears, in different capacities, as a theologian, mystic, and scholastic, but the dominant and unmistakable tone of his writings is that of the philosopher, of one seeking the Absolute Truth. In fact, even the Upanishads from which he quotes and on which he comments, are cast in a rational mould. When they deduce the ultimate truth, they lean on no authority, either their own or of God, but on positive experience, and this contrast is striking between them and the theologies. In the latter, stress is laid on dogmas like the original sin of man, the need of a saviour and of faith in him. The Upanishads on the contrary speak of the Divine nature of man and set out the ways in which it can be realized, by works, by meditation, but immediately by knowledge.

In the Brihadaranyaka and Chandogya, the secret truth is revealed through a strict course of reasoning on the States and no external authority is invoked to confirm it. Yagnavalkya and Prajapati are rational thinkers, and Saṅkara following in their wake cannot have turned theologian needlessly. Although he seems to follow the texts very closely, remember the doctrines that he ultimately enforces : “ The creation is illusory. The Reality is the resting place of the self in sound sleep. Knowledge alone can bring about release. Works only purify the mind and qualify the aspirant for enquiry. Meditation which culminates in trance is only for the ignorant who cannot rise to a direct realization of oneness. The enlightened are immediately set free. Those that practise meditation on God, a personal being, may be taken to Heaven, God’s abode, but must still await the dawn of enlightenment for ultimate Release. The abodes of all gods are only a replica of the dual conditions prevailing here. They are not the final haven of rest. Rebirth and Karma again are true only in the illusory stage. Truth puts an end to all phantasies of a second being, second to the Self.” The effects of works or meditation, says Saṅkara, are problematical, that of knowledge is

immediate.* In his majestic introduction to the Sutras, he starts with the concepts of subject and object and proves by reference to universal usage that this empirical life is a bubble floating on a sea of illusion, and even the structure and activity of our mind presuppose it and flourish on it. The supreme fact that he never begins with a prayer, as a theologian would do, is never anxious to adduce scripture for his opinion, but makes the premise that the Upanishads, of which the Sutras

* The following excerpt from the *Sutra-Bhashya* may be studied with profit in this connection :

“ कर्मफले हि स्वर्गादौ अनुभवानारूढे स्यादाशङ्का ‘ भवेद्वा न वा ’ इति । अनुभवारूढं तु ज्ञानफलं ‘ यत्साक्षादपरोक्षाद् ब्रह्म ’ इति श्रुतेः । ‘ तत्त्वमसि ’ इति च सिद्धवदुपदेशान् । न हि ‘ तत्त्वमसि ’ इत्यस्य वाक्यस्यार्थः ‘ तत् त्वं मृतो भविष्यसि ’ इत्येवं परिणेतुं शक्यः । ... तद्वैतत् पश्यन् ऋषिर्वाग्मदेवः प्रतिपेदेऽहं-मनुरभवं सूर्यश्च ’ इति च सम्यग्दर्शनसमकालमेव तत्फलं सर्वात्मत्वं दर्शयति ॥ ”

S.Bh. 3-3-32.

In this passage S'ankara points out that whereas it is possible to doubt the effect of religious works, since it is not within the perview of human experience in this life, the effect of the knowledge arising from understanding the meaning of texts like ‘ That thou art , ‘ Vamadeva became all this as a result of realizing that he was Brahman’ is immediate and simultaneous with the dawn of knowledge. The meaning of the sentence ‘ That thou art ’ can never be twisted into ‘ Thou wilt become that after thou art dead ’. —*Editor.*

are but brief summaries, only teach what he has established from a study of life and human nature, ought to point eloquently to the philosophic cast of his mind, capable of the widest grasp, but turning to its own purpose, every ancient belief and tradition, every phase of life and experience. Brahman is simply our self, the highest Reality.

Dr. Otto relying on a mere will-o'-the-wisp concludes that Sankara was essentially a mystic. He is said to teach oneness of trance. Still his mysticism is inferior to that of Eckhart, for India is not Palestine. Such assertions are only worthy of that type of self-complacent Christian critics to whom any statement torn from its context is sufficient to warrant a predetermined conclusion. "Sankara does not undertake to explain Avidya, *ergo*, he is not a philosopher." This is something like the statement "The king wears a beard, therefore he must be a monk." In the first place, every writer of a book of any kind, every speaker, whatever his subject, that has figured on the different stages of human life, *presupposes* the ignorance of the reader or the listener on the subject-matter of his treatment, and has never once, poor man, thought of explaining the origin

of that ignorance. All the scientists, philosophers and sages come under this universal indictment. If Dr. Otto be right, there never was a philosopher born. Neither Plato, nor Kant, nor Hegel can pretend to that privilege, let alone Jesus, Luther or the Popes. For, they have invariably assumed the ignorance of the world on the points on which they strove to let in some light. Dr. Otto himself who has read their works must confess his previous ignorance of them, and if he is a philosophic critic must account for it in his own case. In the next place, it is one thing to use the word ignorance in common parlance, but it is quite another to employ it as a philosophic term. In the latter sense, Saṅkara clearly proves our common ignorance of Reality, and our mistaking the unreal for the real which runs through all life, as an inevitable thread. Time, space and causality are amongst its products and the tendency to ask for the cause of any thing is itself rooted in this original perversion of truth. All un Atman, being unreality, dissolves completely when the truth about the Real is known, and as the oneness of Reality precludes a second entity, even Avidya evaporates with Knowledge. To assume a cause for Avidya under the circum-

stance is to betray a mind impervious to reason, for Avidya giving rise to time itself cannot have originated in time. It is that with which all intellection, all empirical life starts. 'Why' or 'how' are questions valid within the walls of Avidya. They cannot and, in strict logic, must not overleap them. If S'aṅkara were a mystic, his insistence to the end on reasoning would be an anomaly. He could have simplified his labours by emphasizing *Samadhi* which, on the contrary, he classes with dreamless sleep. सुषुप्तिसमाध्यादौ, 'in deep sleep, trance, etc.,' is a recurrent phraseology with him.

A scholastic is one who takes up a theological dogma and justifies it by clothing it in the form of an Aristotelian syllogism. The doctrine of Christian Trinity, Resurrection, the Messiah, the Ascension, Reappearance and Millennium—these are the topics that exercise the ratiocination of the scholastic, who invents new articles of belief to support the old. But S'ankara, to whom similar Hindu doctrines are bereft of any value from the higher standpoint, makes no secret of his real purpose which is to guide the human soul to a recognition of its *oneness*, and treats these incidental matters as strictly pertaining to the sphere of Avidya - 'अविद्यावद्विषयाणि सर्वाणि शास्त्राणि' (All

Scriptures are meant to enlighten the ignorant). But, with a merciful regard for the average minds he does not think of explaining them away. For if the fundamental truth is known, what do the forms of faith signify ?

I might appear to have digressed far from the subject into questions not directly connected with it. But it seems to me that the issue raised by them is vital to the cause of truth and to a right understanding of Sankara.

I hope that I have clearly shown that both affirmatively and negatively the Vedas inculcate the truth of non-Dualism and their authority is thereby ensured. To avow that they teach Dualism is to bring them down to the level of other Revelations and plunge into a conflict with these and with Reason, a conflict which shall remain doubtful for all time. So long as no text can be put forward which clearly and expressly states that Dualism alone is true and that non-Dualism is un-true, so long as there is no positive and negative support in the Vedas for Dualism as the final truth, such as we have for Monism, there is every justification for us to affirm that non-dualism alone is the teaching of the Vedas. Besides, if texts known are to be met and superseded by texts unknown, if fact is to be

borne down by fancy, then the contest will be unfair and unequal. For, while the realm of fact has a limit, that of fancy will have none. The mere circumstance that the Vedas are couched in words, and that words imply concepts, and these plurality, is meaningless. For, all expression must conform to conditions of empirical life which appears real during the continuity of the same State, but is sublated in another. The meaning of the Vedas is evident from their own statements 'नेह नानास्ति किञ्चन, एकमेवाद्वितीयम्' (There is no multiplicity here in truth, it is one) which both negatively and positively inculcate oneness. Plurality is not pluralism. Further, the dualist or the pluralist has necessarily to explain, if Dualism were the real drift of the Vedas, why Non-Dualism should be mentioned or extolled even for once, and why Dualism should be positively condemned in unambiguous terms 'मायामात्रमिदं द्वैत-मद्वैतं परमार्थतः' (All this duality is but illusion, in truth it is one). The alternatives, it seems to me, are clear and coercive; either give up the Vedas or give up Dualism. As to the invectives and anathemas shot at the monists, the effective answer is that monism carries, on its very brow and in its very name and concept, the badge of security from all evil and suffering. 'द्वितीयाद्वै भयं भवति'

(Fear proceeds from a second). Dualism on the contrary must raise in us an eternal and inevitable presupposition that what is offered by it as the final state of release must, reasoning from the known to the unknown, abound in all the struggles of empirical life multiplied through endless time. We have the unquestionable logic of thought and life on our side, while the dualists have their interpretations and unfounded faith on theirs.

THE SYSTEM OF RAMANUJA WITH SIDE-LIGHTS ON THOSE OF MADHYA & SANKARA*

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INTRODUCTION

The controversy between idealism and realism is as old as philosophy itself. In the West, Idealism scored a number of notable victories under the leadership of Kant, Hegel, Locke, Berkeley, Mill, Croce, Gentile etc., while Realism although it often sustained defeats, never altogether lost her hold on the common minds. The pendulum of thought is again swinging towards realism, mainly as the result of the marvellous advance of physical science. In America Pragmatism, New Realism and Behaviourism have become the cultured cults ; and in England, the decisive views of thinkers like Bertrand Russell and others are distinctly opposed to Idealism, which is rapidly retracing its steps before the aggressive march of its opponents. Realism and

* The substance of a paper read at the 8th Session of Indian Philosophical Congress, Mysore-1933.

Pluralism have once again regained their lots influence ; and, supported by the dominant voices of the scientists, are likely to hold the field for a long time to come.

In India the history of philosophic movement presents a similar spectacle. Sankara's monism was keenly opposed by Ramanuja and Madhva, and after these and through the influence of their writings, a number of scholastic thinkers reopened the polemical warfare between Illusionism and Realism which has continued down to the present day. Between Physical Science and Philosophical speculation a most intimate relation exists, and new discoveries in the one must lead to inevitable repercussions in the sphere of the other, affecting more especially Realism and Realistic theology. The old notions of substance, cosmic time, infinite space, and universal causality must undergo revision, and the world of science recede farther and farther from the world of ordinary perception. The claims of consciousness as a basic or independent entity must be re-examined, and many sanctified myths of religion abandoned once for all. The idea of revelation must submit to modification, and its authoritativeness limited and narrowed. Every form of faith must pass through a fire-bath of fact and verification ; and no

one school, however ancient or numerous, can afford to stand still, if it is to convince culture or influence life. The inner realm (psychological or psychic), as well as the outer, spread before us in Time and Space has to be studied with care, and the new truths so discovered must replace the old dogmas. The very slogan of the modern thinkers is 'no absolute truth'. Truths emerge in experience, and are tentative, subject to verification. The universal laws so-called are only generalized experience condensed into formulas, which are not eternal, but enjoy a brief vogue. Experience must continue to determine knowledge, and observation cast it into inevitable new moulds. Modern thought denies its finality.

Philosophy is thus driven into a corner by science, and its power and ambition relentlessly confined to a very narrow groove, the dubious and dangerous groove of sheer faith or assumption. It would therefore be not only profitable but necessary to re-examine the foundations of theologies and systems of Thought which have long enjoyed popularity and to re-assess their strength and firmness; and more than any other the pretensions of Vedanta as the Science of Reality.

Hinduism, as a Religion or a philosophy, must face the storm of modern research and mere

old shibboleths or papel bulls can scarcely help to lengthen her life by a single day. Beliefs hid in the dark corners of the heart must be dragged out in the open arena of discussion, and their basis, either scriptural or traditional, subjected to the severe scrutiny of reason and experience. Facts must overthrow fancies; and faiths divested of their imaginative elements, be reinstalled in the hearts of men.

Idealism is comparatively more secure against the deadly onslaughts of Science. As it deals with mind and its creations, – the ideas, – it need not come into serious conflict with the progress of empirical knowledge. On the contrary, for Realism the contest is unequal and fatal. In India it is hard to distinguish between a religion and its philosophy. They are so intertwined that theological doctrines are defended on philosophical grounds and philosophical truths are assumed on theological authority. In Europe secular thought was long ago emancipated to a large extent from the leading strings of Religion, but in this country we have yet to achieve that independence, without, of course, prejudice to the interests of truth, and in perfect harmony with the declarations of Science. I consider it therefore a necessary, though not a light task to review

the position of Hindu Realism as it prevails at present, and I choose the School of Ramanuja for my purpose, not only because it is typical of all realistic thought of our own day but because it has a philosophical importance of its own. Many of my observations may equally apply to Madhva whose Realism is less compromising, and far more developed in detail than Ramanuja's. Few modern concepts have advanced farther than Madhva's in pushing Realism to its ultimate issues.

RAMANUJA (1019 — 1139 A. D.)

Ramanuja's interpretation of the Brahma-Sutras marks a schism from the long-established School of Sāṅkara. Like Madhva after him, he rejected the theory of Maya or Illusion and fought for the maintenance of the realities and distinctions of common life. The majority of people had suffered the doctrine of Maya to sit like a night-mare on their beliefs. On the one hand, the Vedas declared in unambiguous terms the Unity of Brahman, and Pantheism seemed to be the sanctioned creed. On the other hand, facts of experience eloquently demanded recognition of multiplicity and real distinctions. The spirit of the times cried for a teacher who could

release the human mind from the horrid grip of Illusionism, and rehabilitate life with joy and beauty. Neither the dicta of the Vedas should be disallowed, nor the pronouncements of common sense denounced. Ramanuja came to fulfil these conditions. By his extraordinary intellect, skill in dialectics and wide learning, he succeeded in giving a new orientation to the Vedic teaching, and his Sri Bhashya is the remarkable product of his extraordinary intellect. He agreed with Sankara that the prevailing tone of the Upanishads was Monistic, but denied the Monism that necessitated Illusionism as an inevitable drag.

The History of Southern India shows that the Hindu community during this period was in the midst of a religious ferment. Sankara's doctrines, pitched too high for the common mind were misunderstood and misapplied. Rare scholars mused in corners on the etherial oneness which nearly benumbed their faculties. The metaphysical truths were thrown into syllogistic forms till they were reduced to intellectual abstractions. Fervently religious natures found in them nothing to comfort or cheer them. A reaction followed. The Puranas and the epics were read with avidity. Idol worship and temples acquired a new interest. Miracles were readily believed

in, and every diety was clothed with attributes most agreeable to the devotees. Theism triumphed and mataphysics amused only the erudite few. A new society known as that of the Bhagavatas which must have long existed in the country unknown and secluded, now suddenly became popular and active.¹ Its members were still not numerous but they were scattered over large areas, and the cult broke through all barriers of caste and custom. In important centres like Conjeevaram and Sri Rangam, men belonging to this group formed organizations and held private meetings at which belief in a Personal God was expounded; devout songs were sung, and stories were related of extra-ordinary religious experiences. Every one was encouraged to hold communion with God, and eagerly believed that his life was under the personal care of the deity he adored. This class soon became a brotherhood, a set of freemasons, who, though all poor, were ready to fly to the help of their brother when he was in trouble and even to lay down their lives for their glowing faith. They were known to the outside world as Vaishnavas.

1. Their faith was really an adaptation of the Pancha-Ratra faith, which was already well-known during the times of S'ankara. See S'ankara's Bhashya on the Vedanta Sutras 2-2-42 to 2-2-44. -Editor.

Among the members of this faith, the most renowned at the time for the purity of his life and the loftiness of his teaching was a poor Non-Brahmin called Tirukkachchi Nambi (Devotee of Conjeevaram). He was reputed to be so holy as to be able to hold *tete-a-tete* talks with God *Varada*, the idol representing Vishnu. It was but natural that Ramanuja whose devout nature sympathized with the beliefs of all pious men, irrespective of birth and denomination, soon became an admirer of this holy man, and was admitted to the secret brotherhood. It was equally natural that when he found his mind torn between his allegiance to the Vedas and his craving to re-establish the realities of life, he communicated his doubts to the Nambi ; and obtained from the latter a promise that he would place the question before the deity at his next meeting, and report the result. This was no sooner proposed than carried out. Ramanuja to his infinite relief learned that the deity upheld the distinctions of life, and that of the soul from Brahman. This incident in the life of Ramanuja might appear insignificant to us, but the times were peculiar and highly charged with the spirit and enthusiasm of theistic revival, when visions, prophecies, oracles, dreams and miracles were the order of the day.

Meanwhile, things were taking a new turn at Sri Rangam. Yamunacharya, the Head of the Vaishnava brotherhood, who was on his death-bed sent a messenger to bring young Ramanuja, to Sri Rangam. His intention was to utilize the intellectual gifts of Ramanuja for the advancement of the cause of the Sri Vaishnava cult, which he was sure would be safe in Ramanuja's hands. Ramanuja hastened to Sri Rangam only to find himself, alas, a few hours too late. The saint had died. Ramanuja keenly regretted the loss of a chance of meeting the saint while still alive, but he noticed a remarkable circumstance. Of the right fingers of the dead body three were bent. What could it mean? Did the saint intend thereby that he had three objects to be fulfilled by Ramanuja? Believing in the probability of his conjecture, he cried out aloud with all the fervour of his soul: "O Great Saint, I am ready to carry out your commands. I make this vow to that effect, before all. Is the writing of a commentary on the Brahma-Sutras, according to the Bhagavata School, one of your wishes?" He paused for a response. One of the fingers slowly straightened out. He then put two more questions and the other figures similarly straightened out. Ramanuja's highest ambition was now realized. He

found himself at the head of a community of religious men whom he could serve with all his zeal and capacity. He unreservedly placed his genius and learning at their disposal, and the Sri Bhashya was the glorious outcome.

To understand clearly the causes that led to the promulgation of the three different systems of thought and belief on the part of S'ankara, Ramanuja and Madhva, it is fundamental to bear in mind their several attitudes towards Truth. Sankara relied on experience and reason as the only guides to an understanding of truth and found his conclusions marvellously confirmed in the Upanishads. Ramanuja and Madhva on the other hand, started with an implicit faith in the Vedic utterances interpreted in the light of practical life, and employed reason to justify that faith. Their procedure was diametrically opposed to and their conclusions poles asunder from those of S'ankara. To ascertain truth, S'ankara studied life with a perspicacity sharpened by learning. He thus cleared the ground for an original and courageous interpretation of the Upanishads, laying aside even tradition¹ when it clashed with his direct

1. It is evident, however, that he had himself a tradition which handed down all the cardinal tenets of his own System. See the Editor's Introduction to his "*Vedanta-Prakriya Pratyabhijna*" in Sanskrit.

derivation of Truth from universal experience. The other two thinkers assumed their Principles, *God* and the *Individual Soul*, as revealed by the Vedas, and troubled themselves no further to place them on a rational basis. They both interpreted the scriptures so as to harmonise with the realities and distinctions of common life. Madhva supported *Pluralism* while Ramanuja agreeing with him substantially, invested his system with a monistic garb by explaining that the souls and the material world are the body of God, so that there is one only Reality, God, of whom the rest are parts. Reality is one organic whole. In this respect Ramanuja's idea comes nearer to the Vedic teaching which constantly lays emphasis on Unity, while Madhva has to explain away the Unity as figurative.

Much of the reasoning employed by Ramanuja and Madhva to establish the superiority of Vishnu over Siva is un-interesting to a modern. The Brahma-Sutras treat of the Nueter 'Brahman' and the commentators may break each other's heads over the question whether Vishnu or Siva was meant by the term. Bādarayana the author of the Sutras, coolly leaves it as a bone of contention among the succeeding theologians. S'ankara finds that it serves his purpose admirably, as in his

system both personal and impersonal concepts of Reality are provided with their proper places. On the whole, all the three agree in the following points : (1) that a man should not be decoyed by sensual pleasures ; (2) that life on earth is at the best, full of woes ; and (3) that freedom from birth and death is to be won only by control of passions, acts of devotion, self-sacrifice, renunciation and True knowledge. All the three stress the need of securing Divine Grace by a holy life free from attachment.

DOCTRINES

Stripped of sectarian dogmas, Ramanuja's teachings may be summed up as follows :—There is one God and he is a Personal Being. He is the only Reality. He must be regarded as embodied, the individual souls and inert matter forming his body. As, in common life, the soul is connected with a body, so is the Supreme Being wearing in his turn the souls and matter as his body. He is all-powerful, omniscient and all-merciful. He has infinite auspicious qualities, and He and His constituent body are, down to the very atom, eternal. By Himself He is changeless but His body undergoes periodical swelling and shrinking which correspond to *Creation and Dissolution* - pro-

cesses which He allows for His sport. The soul, as well as matter, is subject to this expansion and contraction. During the expansion, each soul becomes embodied; and, according to individual Karma, passes through birth and death till, through knowledge of the soul's relation to God -which is one of complete subordination- and through the aid of His grace, the soul attains Release from Samsara or embodiment. Although all-pervading, God has His special residence in the highest world known as Vykuntha and the released souls gain admittance to it and may optionally stay there or move through infinite worlds, enjoying the beautiful vision of God's magnificent creation. The souls then partake of all the power, wisdom and bliss of God, with the exception of the ability to create the world, or control it. The idols in temples are not stones, but God Himself who has assumed that form for the convenience of his devotees. At the inception of creation souls and material objects are invested with name and form, which they lose in their subtle form at dissolution. While God is greater than the greatest and smaller than the smallest, the soul's size is atomic.

The soul retains its individuality eternally, even after Release. One soul differs from another

in its special qualities, but, not *qua* soul. All souls are of identical nature but individually, every soul differs from every other, and the distinction is eternal. Knowledge that qualifies it for Release is not the simple removal of Avidya or ignorance but is of the nature of meditation on the great qualities of God, accompanied with self-surrender and service. Salvation is effected through God's grace so obtained. Inanimate matter is distinct from the soul and God. Each object is real and distinct from the rest.

The Vedas are the only sources through which the existence of God, and His nature as the Creator, Destroyer and the Moral Controller and Saviour, can be known. Scripture is similarly the source of our knowledge of the eternality of the soul as an entity distinct from the body, of its transinigratory life, and of Release. Evil and suffering are the effects of Karma and can be overcome only by Devotion, Prayer and Meditation, and by pious works in the Service of God.

To Madhva (1128-1200 A.D.) as to Ramanuja God and the individual soul are transcendent entities to be known only from scripture. Agreeing with Ramanuja in the reality and distinction of God, souls and matter, Madhva differs from him in the following respects : God does not wear the

other two categories as His body, but pervades them. The souls are distinct from one another, eternally, by their individual capacity or characteristics. Hence in Release, though each is filled with bliss, the degrees of bliss enjoyed by the souls will never be identical. Each released soul will have a natural conscious body and senses, which enable it to enjoy every kind of imperishable joy. The bliss of Release depends entirely on the soul's consciousness of its distinction from God and from Matter, and of its dependence on God for its salvation. The souls of the Monists or Mayavadins, according to Madhva, are destined to undergo endless suffering in Hell. Even God cannot avert the penalties due to their nature. A third class of souls will be sweltering in the eddies of Samsara helplessly through all time. The fates of the last two classes are irrevocable. To both Ramanuja and Madhva the soul is atomic in size. Both rely alike on scripture to establish God as a Personal Being, and the soul and matter as independent and real entities. The soul is morally free, but this freedom is a gift of God's through mercy.

CRITICISM

Although Ramanuja started with the aim of re-establishing the real distinctions of life, he has

opened no new avenues of thought by which they can be established on a rational basis. His reliance on the Vedas and on common sense robs his utterances of any philosophical value, while his denial of all illusions makes one stare and gasp at his assurance. In ordinary life we do observe distinctions and we do assume their Reality, but a simple appeal to this common belief will not help to invest them with a speculative significance. Objects are cognized by the senses, and the latter usually do not deceive. But how are the illusions accounted for? To say that there are no errors, no illusions is to be untrue to life. Besides, a dream is a palpable *hallucination*; there is nothing outside of us to support or survive it. Dreams are everyday occurrences, and the objects beheld in them have no pretensions to reality. The explanation that they are momentary creations of God is the device of a theologian, and not of a thinker. Quotations of texts and interpretations are out of place, and dream experiences being unquestionably real can be shoved aside only at the cost of philosophical solidarity. Similarly, the illusions of waking life have to be reckoned with if the absolute reliability of the senses has to be placed on an unimpeachable basis. Illusions and hallucinations are not detected as such

at the time. They appear real and natural. The discovery of their nature comes later and explanation *follows*. The mind and the senses behave alike in true or in false perception. There is no blunting or quickening of the faculties in the one or the other case. Besides, how the senses which only serve to effectuate perception, should also guarantee the reality of the objects presented as well as their own, must be made to rest on a philosophical principle which determines the nature of reality, instead of the senses being saddled with the double function of aiding perception and at the same time testifying to the reality of the percept. Ramanuja has failed to furnish such a principle, nor has Madhva succeeded where Ramanuja has failed. Ramanuja cannot be said to have demolished the position of the Idealist. The objects of common life presuppose consciousness for they are known to us only as percepts which imply a perceiver. Their reality is thus not independent of consciousness. Further, their individuality, distinctions and multiplicity, which would entitle him to reality, are only relative, not absolute. An object, as Gentile remarks, is individualized by its position in time and space, by its *where* and *when*, not on account of any virtue in itself.

(vide Page 324 "*Vedanta or the Science of Reality*"). Its distinction from the rest is due to qualities each of which is a universal, referring to a class, and therefore communal. When we say that a man is *tall*, his tallness is relative only. If all men possessed absolute tallness, distinctions would disappear. As Caird observes: "An absolute distinction by its very nature would be self-contradictory, for it would cut off all connection between the things it distinguished. It would annihilate the relation implied in the distinction and so it would annihilate the distinction itself." (P. 135 Hegel). Similarly, multiplicity implies number, and number inheres only in an individual belonging to a class, thus pointing to their common character. A horse and a dog are two animals. A dog and a stick are two things, entities, beings. Hence even plurality or multiplicity is not an independent concept, but depends on that of community. Thus the conception of a multiplicity of individual and distinct objects cannot justify their claims to absolute reality. They are real only for practical purposes. If individual things were absolutely distinct, their multiplicity would be robbed of all signification. If, as Ramanuja contended,

there were no degrees of reality, but the world, the soul, and God Himself were reduced to one level or order of reality, then the reality of God as well as of the rest would be inter-dependent and relative, never absolute.

But Ramanuja might be imagined to urge that the triad namely, the world, the soul and God, is one, as God owns the other two as His body ; and since God is the Highest Reality, the rest also must partake of His nature and be equally real. Here we knock against his other concept namely, the embodiedness of God. He reconciled the unity of existence declared by the Upanishads, with the multiplicity required by common experience, by conceiving God as including the souls and matter as His body. This solution appeared to him as the triumph of common sense. But it presents an insuperable difficulty. Without establishing on unimpugnable grounds the soul as an entity distinct from the physical body, and God, as the Moral Ruler of the Universe, his position does not admit of a rational justification. In the first place, what is the relation between the soul and the body ? A relation is seen to exist between things of the same kind, between one material body and another. But if the soul should be connected with the

body, even temporarily, the connection is unimaginable. Conceding however the possibility of such relation between the two, how can we extend the relation so as to conceive it between God on the one hand and the souls and matter on the other? A body is an object cognizable by the soul and the latter cannot by its very nature play the role of an object except to itself. If, therefore in the sense in which we speak of a soul and its body we refer to the soul as God's body, the term 'body' becomes meaningless. I can regard God as the object of my meditation or thought, but ever retaining the nature of a subject, as I must, I cannot regard my soul, as the object of God; and even if I force such a conception on my mind, it resists the coercion and regains its subjectivity. Both God and the notion of my being His object become simultaneously turned into an object of my present consciousness, proving thereby the futility of my endeavour to conceive an impossibility. A relation can exist only between two distinct terms or objects. Between the soul and God who is all-inclusive no relation can be conceived as neither is essentially an object.

Ramanuja anxiously discusses the various connotations of the term 'body' and decides upon adopting it in the sense of (1) complete subordi

nation or control (2) a means of activity and enjoyment to the soul, as the possessor of an organic body. This parallelism between God and an organism has its own pitfalls. An organism can have freedom to act only when it possesses the corresponding member or limb. Its own happiness and preservation depend on its members. In the next place, although externally an organism may boast of its control over the member of its body, it certainly cannot direct its own digestion, circulation of blood and secretion of vital juices, which are due to a higher power, Nature to which the organism in all its respects is but an unquestioned slave. Reasoning from these known data of experience, it is unintelligible how God can retain His control over the souls or matter, if they are His body, and how in that case, He can escape the predicament of losing His independence if His integrity rests upon His connection with a body. Besides, if God is a conscious being, the individual soul must affect Him only as an object and if still the soul is His body, the soul might with a parity of reasoning, claim God for its body, because He is *its* object. In any case, God cannot realize the subjective nature of the soul, cannot be to the soul what the soul is to itself. Moreover, a body individualizes spirit, and is a clog on its freedom, as Ramanuja himself admits

in his comment on the Brahma-Sutras III 2 and 5. A soul is turned thereby into an individual among individuals. Invested with a body, likewise, God is individualized, and He finds Himself in a realm comprising but His own complex unity, and not in a realm comprising other individual spirits opposed to Him as a *whole*. Further God ceases to be an all-inclusive Reality, since He cannot include me to whom He is an object. The make-up of the system is thus poetical, and cannot stand the test of reason. For when this imaginary cement of God's embodiedness is dissolved, and the mask is uplifted, Ramanuja's position betrays its unmistakable identity with the undiluted Pluralism of Madhva ; and the surviving entities God, souls and matter are left to stare helplessly and eternally at one another in all their mutual opposition, without a single principle to unite them, left in a chaos of independence and plurality.

This indissoluble tie between God and His body is inconvenient to God Himself. If the body depends on God for its existence, so does God depend upon His body for His life. Logically, a relation affects both the terms that it unites. If the body is said to be only a mode of God, but a real mode, then all the changes to which the mode is liable must affect God Himself.

There is no possible escape from this logical necessity. Spinoza indeed postulated modes to God, but they are unreal. They are limitations that we impose upon Him.

There is an intrinsic weakness likewise in Ramanuja's explanation of Creation and Dissolution as arising from the contraction and expansion of God's body. In the first place, of the souls and matter which form His body, the souls cannot be conceived to swell and shrink, -processes confined to material bodies. In the next place, a relation between God and His body being admitted, God cannot be free from the effects of the changes to which His body is subject. Either the relation must be thinned to a vanishing point or the immutability of Divine nature must be wholly abandoned.

In the third place, to God a body is either natural or necessary. In the latter case, He is Imperfect ; in the former, helpless. Either way, God deserves our sympathy more than our admiration or adoration.

Moreover, an organic being with its body, -an idea which has furnished Ramanuja with the ground for his theory- is seen extended in space, and develops in time. That is to say, an organism lives in time and place. God as an embodied

being must similarly be bound by time and space a condition to which Ramanuja's system must submit, as he regards God to possess the souls and matter as His parts. Now parts imply space and contraction and expansion, time. It is regrettable that Ramanuja has not attempted to tackle time and space which he seems to have looked upon as elements extraneous to the world and not demanding an explanation. Creation and dissolution of the world he describes as God's sport which laughs at causation.

The relation of God to His body might be explained not as that between the whole and its parts but as that between the Universal and the Particular. In that case, the individual object resulting from their combination must be admitted to be an unreal existent. For the Universal and the Particular are equally concepts ; and as Hegel claims, are both real as objective concepts, while an object of perception which is an existent is unreal, being nothing more than a bundle of Universals. This view, however, cannot be acceptable to Ramanuja from whose system all unreality is banished. Besides, the notion of expansion and contraction which is advanced to explain the creation and dissolution of the world will not allow of the relation between God and

His body being conceived as that between the Universal and the Particular. For the two latter as concepts cannot swell or shrink like a material object.

Unfortunately Ramanuja did not start with a clear idea of reality. In his eagerness to claim reality for the world and the manifold, he went to the opposite extreme of denying all errors and illusions. These he resolved to dispel from God's Universe. His notion of reality seems to be based on four assumptions: (1) The senses are organs of true perception. (2) Things are real as they produce real effects. (3) A thing to be real need not be found in every place and time. Whatever exists is connected with space and time and is by that circumstance made real. (4) Whatever is not sublated by subsequent experience is real. We shall now discuss the validity of these criteria.

(1) The senses behave in the same manner in false as well as in true perception. At the time, they give no indications of the falsity of an experience. A shell appears like real silver, and the mistake, when detected, is invariably referred to a past experience. This would not be the case if the senses always guaranteed true perception. In an immediacy of presentation

the eye cannot detect the falsity of the appearance. If it can show the real to be real, then to be a safe guide, *it must report the false to be false at the moment* and not wait for a subsequent experience to comment on the first. This it can never do. The illusion is an after-discovery. In Science, History and Mathematics, errors of observation, of narration and of calculation are continually shown up by subsequent thinkers, and progress means elimination of errors, and revelation of new truths. To say that there is no illusion or to explain it afterwards on scientific principles is to overshoot the mark and does not help to remove actual errors or illusions from life. When, for instance. I stand before a mirror at the distance of say three feet, I find the reflection at the distance of six feet from me. Is the space between the mirror and the image real? In which part of real space can it be located? It must be admitted to be purely illusory. The mirror may be useful in a hundred ways, but the reflection is clearly illusory. The authority of the senses cannot be final in apprehending reality.

(2) The argument that things are real because their effects are real, as if effects were not things, is obviously untenable. A child, and even some

grown-ups run screaming with terror from the figure of a snake though of lacker-work. Besides, causes and effects belong to the same order of existence, and the reality of the cause cannot be inferred from the assumed reality of the effect. They stand or fall together and the reality of the effect demands the same explanation as that of the cause. In dreams, we meet with causes and effects both sublated by waking.

(3) The next point to be considered is whether the mere fact of being in space and time can confer a right upon a thing to be admitted as real. Now, what are the credentials of time and space to pronounce on the reality of an object? On what grounds does their own reality rest, since they do not themselves exist in time and space? We have instances of dream-objects existing in unreal space and time, and of unreal space and motion in all reflections in mirrors. This test fails also.

(4) The test of sublation by subsequent experience has the disadvantage of not being serviceable at the moment of actual perception, and the possibility of later sublation ever threatens every experience. Practical life would be impossible if we were not to act, till all chances of sublatability of a present experience by a

future one should be exhausted. In life we assume perception to be real till it is proved to be otherwise. It is this universal tendency that makes dream-perceptions "terribly real" and stands as an irremovable obstacle in the way of one's being convinced of the unreality of waking perception while waking lasts. Ramanuja, however, seems to waver in adopting this criterion wholly. While, on page 75 of his comment on Sutra I, i, 1, he concedes that the dream objects are unreal, because of their sublation in waking life, he claims reality for them in III, 2 and 3, for they are God's creations though of a short duration, and God cannot create anything unreal. (Vide Thibaut's translation of Vedanta Sutras, Part III)

It would thus seem that none of the aforesaid criteria are adequate to define reality.

Sankara contrived to leap over these speculative hurdles by his illusionism so-called. Reality he defined as that which cannot be denied, that cannot be conceived to non-exist ; and to accommodate practical life, he postulated three degrees of reality. His philosophical cabinet, accordingly, contains three shelves. On the highest he placed the Self or Pure consciousness, whose non-existence can be *never* imagined. It is absolute Reality.

On the next lower shelf, he placed the objects of waking life, which cannot be denied while waking lasts, but which are concomitant and conterminous with waking. This is the sphere of religion, science, speculation and action. Into the lowest he shoved *dream objects* and illusions of *waking*. The reality of these cannot be denied till they are known to be such when sublated by later experience.

Madhva brings forward no new reasons why the external world should be regarded as real, and the remarks made on Ramanuja's position apply to his. *pari passu*.

Ramanuja's as well as Madhva's explanation of Evil as the effect of Karma, though it may have a dialectical value is far from satisfactory. It is a sore place in his uncompromising view of God as a Personal Being. For it is the paramount duty of every theist to safeguard the interests of God, to preserve intact His Power, Wisdom and Goodness ; and the permission for Evil to enter the region of mortal life, is a libel on His Power, or His Mercy, or both. To introduce an alien element, Karma, as a real inevitable curb put on God in His exercise of those divine virtues, is to dethrone God, and to blast the tender hopes of poor humanity. Though

Sankara, too, drew upon the theory of Karma, he dropped it the moment he felt its real inadequacy. (*Vide* his comment on II, 1, 33 Br. Sut.)

As a religious system, however, offered to the hungry souls, Ramanuja's must be admitted to be as great as any other conceived by man. Its insistence on self-surrender and service ennobles life and spiritualizes it. His love and sympathy for all, irrespective of caste or denomination, the great social reforms he initiated, the spirit of universal brotherhood with which he leavened his doctrines, and his selfless labours for the uplift of man, in the face of persecutions and privations, must place him in the first rank of benefactors to the human race. The defects in his philosophy are not traceable to any want of clear vision— for his intellect was of the highest order, but are obviously due to the inherent difficulty of the problem which he ventured to solve, — the problem of reconciling Theism with Reason, for the proper realm of Theism is Faith. He has not succeeded in a task in which no one is likely to succeed. Nevertheless it detracts nothing from the glory of his life and endeavour.

THE SYSTEM OF SANKHYA



The Sankhya posits two independent real entities, namely, spirit and matter. The soul or spirit is eternal and of the nature of consciousness and bliss, and is free from all activity, but being embodied, it suffers from not discriminating its own nature from that of matter. Hence a man superimposes upon himself the results of action due to his connection with the body (matter) and is subject to the joys and woes of phenomenal life. So long as his desire for sensory or mental pleasures is unsubdued, he passes through birth and death continually and his release can occur only when the primal cause, namely desire through want of discrimination, is removed by reflection and by consequent realization of his really unattached nature as the soul or the spirit. Kapila was the founder of the School (date about 500 B. C.)

The primordial condition of matter, which is also eternal, is called *Pradhana*, which is a state of equilibrium of three *Gunas*, its consti-

tments. Matter enables the soul (1) to experience joys and sorrows, and (2) to obtain Release from the cycle of births and deaths. It provides him with a mind which originates feelings, volitions, and cognitions. Without the help rendered by Pradhana, neither our ordinary life with its emotions and activities, nor our power to reflect and understand would be explicable. The three Gunas of Pradhana are elements of which it is made up. Of these the *Sattva* is that which tends to goodness, knowledge and enjoyment ; the *Rajas* to action ; and the *Tamas* to ignorance and inactivity. These tendencies are rooted in the respective Gunas. The mechanism of the mind as well as the structure of the external world proves that both are the effects of the all-pervading Guṇas.

The creation of the world begins when the exactly balanced state becomes disturbed and the Guṇas start their activity by combining with each other in all possible ways. When at last the activity ceases, the effects are re-absorbed in their ultimate causes, the Guṇas, and a primordial condition, namely Pradhana, is reached. This is the state of dissolution, a complete rest of the Gunas, to be followed as before by disturbance, activity and the resultant creation.

The individual soul, however, has during the subsistence of the world infinite chances not only of experiencing perishable joys and sorrows but also of exercising its power of reflection and judgment, and realizing its really unattached and pure nature, of effecting its escape from the Samsara. Thus eternal Matter works only to subserve the highest purpose of Life, namely, Release and Salvation.

CRITICISM

This School of Thought leaves us helplessly in the conception of two equally abiding entities; the Soul and Matter. It is not intelligible why *Matter* should spontaneously work only in the best interests of the soul as if by an original contract, or why there should be *Matter* at all, an *embodiment* of the soul. Even if these entities are admitted to be beginningless and causeless, there must be some law by which the *relation* between the soul and matter and the behaviour of each can be defined and determined ; and that that relation is one of ultimate benefit to the soul seems to be more a pious hope than a rational necessity. Besides the theory cannot satisfy the philosophical instinct in man which seeks a *single* principle that can explain all life.

When we dive into details, there are many important points craving an explanation. How is the equilibrium of the Gunas disturbed? Is the first shock communicated from without or from within? It cannot emanate from the soul which is pure consciousness not yet embodied, or from another source besides, as none other is admitted. Nor can the motion proceed from an impulse within the Guṇas without a special change in them which presupposes a stimulus extraneous. If activity is an inherent tendency in the Guṇas, then they must be eternally active and a state of rest or equilibrium with which we start is inconceivable. Moreover, a permanent activity would obviate all chances of Release. Thus the initial activity becomes inexplicable, and without it the evolution of the world process is impossible.

While *Causality* is assumed, it is singular that Time is never taken into account or even recognized, which makes the system less precise than it could have been. Space likewise remains a grim uninvited guest demanding an adequate treatment. The original Avidya or *Aviveka* (want of discrimination) which is an inevitable death's head at the banquet of all systems of

thought, Eastern or Western, is of course, left unaccounted for.

To make the first activity possible, which we found an insurmountable obstacle in the way of the Sankhyas who denied a transcendent Being, such as a God, another School arose known as the *Sesvara Sankhyas* who posited a Supreme Being in addition to the individual soul and primordial Matter. God as a conscious being was supposed to effect movement in the Gunas and release their tendencies to combine and evolve. This strategic position, however, brought no advantage and failed to heal the defect in the original conception. In the first place, the first School proceeded strictly on the basis of positive knowledge and the introduction of the transcendent entity ran counter to its spirit. In the next place, according to their theory, there cannot be a conscious being which is not embodied, and embodiment presupposes the activity of the Gunas to create the intellect or the physical body. For both the latter are products of evolution. Thus nothing is gained by positing a supreme conscious being or God beyond human experience. The first School, therefore, rejected the new idea altogether.

Although the system fails to be completely intelligible, it discloses many remarkable features.

It is the first attempt made by the Hindus to steer clear of all allegiance to scriptural authority. It is the fore-runner of the modern scientific desire to give the fullest scope for unaided effort towards grasping the first principle of life and piercing the veil of mystery surrounding it, armed only with reason, proceeding alone on the basis of experience, and carefully avoiding the pitfalls of sentiment and tradition. As the origination of life from matter was felt to be unimaginable, they rejected Monism with its time-honoured credentials, and boldly formulated two independent principles, the Soul and Matter. Still they could not get over the ancient idea that Life is a stage of suffering and they adopted the doctrines of Karma and rebirth which they admitted because the soul is eternal and the inequalities patent in life demanded a belief in them. Similarly they accepted the notion that Release was possible and desirable and they agreed with the Vedic dictum that it can be obtained by true knowledge, or discrimination between the nature of the soul and that of the Pradhana. They have wisely abstained from painting the joys of Release in flaunting colours of fancy, by the simple statement that the soul's final destiny is to enjoy its own pure and unalloyed bliss which it can claim by its very nature.

We should be unfair to the Sankhyas if we failed to say a few words on the perfection of its ethics. Since the soul is of a blissful nature, and its temporary joys and sorrows arise from a wrong attachment to the body and the senses, a wise man, realizing the purity of his nature, must overcome the attachment and the resultant selfishness. He must subdue his passions and live a life of self-denial, for he has a goal to attain to, *viz*, complete detachment from everything which is a creature of the Guṇas. With this self-discipline, evil ceases to be evil; and when life ends, he departs with gratitude for the kindly services of Matter, hurrying to taste the bliss of his disembodied nature. In this respect, one must observe that to the Sankhyas—the ancient scientific thinkers of India—Life presented an aim and a purpose. While the reality of Matter was unquestionable, its existence was regarded as something to be thanked for, not regretted. In the speculations of the modern scientist, we miss altogether the formulation of a similar aim.

Sankara seems to have been indebted to the Sankhyas for his idea of *Adhyasa* or Superimposition. But to suit his undiluted Monism, he has improved upon it. To the Sankhya superimposition begins with the embodied soul, and

the really pre-existent Guṇas are fully active in the anterior stage. This would not do for Sankara who admitted no reality besides the Soul or Atman. Hence he lifted superimposition bodily and placed it over the heads of the Guṇas themselves on the Pradhana. He alleged that the Pradhana itself was an unproven hypothesis, simply superimposed on the Atman. This speculative feat set a new line and direction to Indian Thought.

THE SYSTEM OF THOUGHT REVEALED IN THE BHAGAVAD GITA*



I look upon it as a great honour and privilege to be asked to address the members of the Sanskrit Academy on the system of thought in the Bhagavad·Gita. The Gita forms an integral part of our scriptures from which all our notions of Vedanta are derived and takes equal rank with the Upanishads and the Brahma-Sutras. Each of these sources has unique virtues of its own and they confirm or supplement one another. The Upanishads lay stress on Knowledge and Meditation. The Sutras give a systematic and rational exposition of the Great Truths and the Gita discloses the spirit in which they are to be applied to practical life, the spirit of love and devotion which ought to inspire our acts and purposes. While the central truth is never lost sight of, we find in the Gita no

* A Lecture delivered before the Sanskrit Academy, Madras in December 1933, by Mr. K.A. Krishnaswamy Iyer, Author of '*Vedanta or the Science of Reality*'

abstruse principles elaborated by subtle reasoning, no conscious attempt to justify every point by reference to a higher scriptural basis, but an insistence throughout on the control and purification of mind, on single-hearted devotion and on righteous action, in a tone of absolute authority warranted by the situation. Its teaching is modulated to suit the capacity of all and the popularity it has won is due to its theological aspect and the prominence it assigns to devotion, above all meticulous and mechanical performance of works and a passive absorption in abstract speculation. The generality of men and women delight in concrete images and crave for a Personal Being to whom they would offer worship in all meekness of soul.

In dealing with the subject of this paper, namely the system of thought expounded in the Gita, I know I am sailing not on "smooth seas" but on tempestuous billows created by the numerous and powerful interpreters whose conclusions are at open war with mine. A word on interpretations will not be out of place. Now, interpretation of scripture is no doubt necessary and helpful to comprehension, but its guiding principle must be furnished by Life, not by Scripture. Otherwise we shall be involved in

the falacy of mutual dependence. One part of the scripture cannot be reconciled with another part, apparently opposed to it, except by subjecting both to interpretation. Surely there must be an external standard by which we judge the statements. We are not unthinking machines to accept the arbitrary doles from the hands of the interpreter who, as a man, ought also to depend on some objective criterion on which he relies for common acceptance. What is this objective standard? It cannot be tradition which is many-tongued, being subjected to change by time and social contingencies and divisions. It cannot be individual predilection which will not appeal to all minds. It cannot be perception or inference, as these are confined to a narrow part of Life, while the Truths disclosed by the scriptures relate to all Life. The only trustworthy point of reference, the only basis on which all interpretations must take their stand, if they are not to be of a merely scholastic sort, must be Life and Experience as a whole. The dicta of Texts must be checked by experience which includes our intuition of the three states, waking, dream and dreamless sleep. A harmony between these two terms of the equation establishes the authority of the scriptures, whose service in enabling us to

realize the highest Truth becomes thereby invaluable and incontrovertible.

In my work entitled "VEDANTA OR THE SCIENCE OF REALITY" I have endeavoured to show by reasoned steps that the voice of Life is clear in pointing to the unmistakable unity which it presents, and which is in perfect accordance with the teaching of the scriptures. The system of Truth is known as Non-dualism or what I call 'Vedic Monism'. Its main doctrines briefly are (1) the empirical reality of the Non-Self, (2) the absolute reality of the Self, and (3) the identity of the individual soul with the Supreme Spirit or Pure Consciousness. To explain the appearance of the Non-Self a principle is assumed known as *Māyā*, and a ruler known as *Iswara*. Since this implies the reality of Maya and God as distinct entities, the reality so granted is only of the empirical grade, for all assumption of empirical life is due to ignorance of our real nature, to realize which is to dispel that ignorance and get rid of the fancied second element. All then, which appears to favour multiplicity, God, Maya, the external world and the human soul—are both collectively and individually, in the highest sense, Reality which abhors a second entity. This knowledge that we are essentially

Brahman, or Reality, strikes at the root of narrow views based on selfishness and is the foundation of ethics. This Higher Self is of the nature of Bliss, as displayed in our instinctive love of Self; and to recognize it in others is to bring about social harmony, for no one will be inclined to harm himself. It paves the way for spiritual and moral perfection, and no higher destiny can be conceived for man. Action based on desire leads to pain; and the soul is visited with repeated births and deaths, so long as desire originating from ignorance is unextinguished.

I shall now proceed to show that the divine utterances of Lord Krishna inculcate beyond doubt this doctrine of Vedic Monism. To imagine that they endorse Dualism or Pluralism or Qualified Monism, is to seek the pitfall of grammar and misapplied logic, and ignore the straight road of facts and reason. The path of devotion which the Gita emphasizes, demands, not that the manifold must be absolutely real, but relatively so, is real for the time being; and devotion is not only perfectly possible but only possible on the supposition that the soul and God are essentially identical, as otherwise no reason can be shown why God must be merciful to man, or how man can cultivate the deepest love to an alien entity. The popular figures of

speech by which God is represented as Father, Mother, Protector and Grand-father, would still leave a chasm of distinctness unbridged, and no real comfort or consolation can be achieved by an afflicted soul, or depressed heart, from metaphorical conceptions. God is our Saviour, because, in truth He can never cease to be our Self. We can never cease to love God, for He is our own Self.

Some scholars are of the view that the Gita teaches mysticism. The stress laid on meditation on God and the reference to *Samādhi* would seem to support the position. But this meditation is simply a theistic form given to the various meditations dealt with in the Upanishads, and is evidently meant for those that wish to be engaged in some kind of mental activity sanctioned by scripture which they regard as the practical way in which to intuit metaphysical truth. If they attain to Samadhi or trance, they feel their end accomplished. But as all meditation presupposes duality, the activity is still within the region of Karma and therefore of ignorance, and can never take the place of direct knowledge. In the Gita, accordingly we find knowledge elevated to the first rank, and the Lord identifies Himself with the Jnanin.

We may here dispose of the question how far Sri Krishna's system was influenced by (1) the Upanishads, (2) the Sankhya, and (3) the Bhagavata systems. As to the first, verbal reproduction of the views of the Upanishad Seers, is an incontestable evidence of their influence, and I believe that the fact is indisputable. As to the second, references to *Prakriti* and the *Gunās* place it beyond controversy that the Sankhyas can claim a reasonable share in determining the position of Sri Krishna. One pre-eminent feature, however, should not be lost sight of. Whereas the Sankhyas declare the independent reality of *Prakriti*, side by side with that of *Purusha*, so that their view is plain, unvarnished dualism, Lord Krishna concedes to it but a subordinate place, and makes it subservient to the Will of *Iswara*. And as He claims that the whole phenomenal world, dyed in the different colours of the *Gunās*, proceeds from Himself and is absorbed in Himself, He becomes the only Reality, and Monism is left intact. Coming now to the Bhagavata system, I must insist that its existence previous to Sri Krishna has got to be wholly discounted. It is putting the cart before the horse. Although in the uncertain condition of Hindu chronology, it would be dangerous to dogmatize, yet having an

eye to facts, I must say that in the Gita there is very little justification for the view that the system known as the Bhagavata preceded it and influenced it to any sensible extent. On the contrary, the omission of Sankarshaṇa, Aniruddha and Pradyumna, which are names imbedded in the technics of the Bhagavata system, and the absence of the doctrine of God's embodiedness¹, are irrefragable evidences of Sri Krishna's system being totally innocent of the Bhagavata touch. "All this is Vasudeva" is too wide a statement by itself to support that system exclusively. In the Vishṇu Purana, incidents in Sri Krishna's life are pointed out in which He acquired the various names by which He is now known and the names Sankarshaṇa &c., as those of members of His family, occur in it. The more probable view is that Sri Krishna Himself is the origin of the Bhagavata system which developed after Him into all the details which characterize it. Its popularity was increased by its emphasis on the independent reality and

1. There is no stress on the embodiedness of God or even a hint suggesting that embodiedness of God was a cardinal tenet of the original Bhagavata system. S'ankara in describing the system in his Sūtra-Bhāshya, declares that according to the Bhagavatas, Vasudeva is the only Reality, without any specific features. (*nirviśeṣa*). See SBh. 2-2-24. — Ed.

distinction of the souls and matter¹, and on theistic devotion which appealed to the emotions, and demanded no intellectual strain, in any high degree.

To determine the system of Truth advocated by Lord Krishna we have to bear in mind the epic setting in which it is disclosed. Arjuna placed between the two forces, marshalled on opposite sides, casts his eyes on the figures of the Great Heroes who were to take part in the fatal fight. There were Drona, Bhishma, other relations and friends ready to sacrifice their lives in the struggle. Naturally, Arjuna is overcome by humanity, throws down his weapons and exclaims, "How can I, Oh Lord, think of slaying my preceptor and my own grandfather who are entitled to my reverence and affection? How can I knowingly commit this atrocious sin? I should sooner die myself than engage in such a brutal act. I feel I am confused. I know not if it is preferable to retire from the field, even at the cost of my life. My sense of duty is disturbed and I would fain withdraw from the contest. Do tell me, O Lord, what I had better do." The poet's sense of humour is notable here. Although the smoothness of the

1. This is of course true of theistic systems of Ramanuja and other Vaishnavas.

flow of Sri Krishna's words pregnant with wisdom is never ruffled, He is shown to have been rather warmed to a mild heat on two remarkable occasions. This is one of them. "Whence", says Sri Krishna, "this wretched hesitancy at the wrong moment,, which no self-respecting man would approve, which slams the door of Heaven in the face of the hero approaching it and which would redound to your eternal infamy ? " The second occasion presents itself at the close of the Lord's teaching. " If you fail " the Lord warns, "to follow my directions, you will surely make your way to perdition. " With these exceptions, the current runs smooth and deep throughout.

Now let us ponder the situation. Arjuna does not wish to kill Droṇa, Bhishma and others. He does not solicit a discourse on philosophy. But the Lord knows that Arjuna's error lies deeper. He has confounded the physical body with the Spirit. Droṇa is not the figure standing before Arjuna's eyes, but the Spirit which lies within. Now Arjuna has to learn that though the physical appendage may be subject to change and destruction, the Spirit is eternal.

If so, Lord Krishna's first care must be to disillusion Arjuna of his grave error and unwarranted sorrow. The soul was to be shown to be eternal

and the body perishable. Accordingly he addresses himself to the task, and throwing himself into the common category of souls, denies the non-existence at any time, of himself, of Arjuna, or of the royal heroes. He then makes an axiomatic statement that the real can never cease to exist, nor the unreal ever have being. In illustration of this truth, he says that the soul, which is a reality, can never perish, and the body, being unreal, must be subject to destruction. The terms in which the soul is described – immortal, all-pervading, uncognizable, constant, immutable – are such as can be indifferently applied to the finite soul or the Absolute Spirit. This indiscriminate depiction of the soul would have created the greatest confusion, if Sri Krishna meant to draw a sharp line of distinction between the individual soul and the Supreme Self. Besides, it would not be pertinent to the occasion to refer to the Divine Nature at all. Arjuna showed no solicitude to know the nature of Īśwara. His anxiety lay with the fates of Droṇa and Bhishma, who were but individual souls. Lord Krishna's directly launching into panegerics on the glory of God's being would have been particularly out of place. Yet the Gita is called Brahma-Vidyā or the Science of Brahman, and there are many texts in which Brahman is named and identified with

Sri Krishna Himself. In the whole work we never meet with a question from Arjuna relating to the nature of Brahman except incidentally at the beginning of Chap. VIII, arising from the Lord's suggestion at the end of Chap. VII. This fundamental fact must receive our first consideration in disposing us to affirm or deny the identity of the soul with God.

Besides this circumstantial evidence, there is that of the intrinsic nature of the soul itself, which is the basic argument, a clincher, on which its eternity is founded. Lord Krishna describes the soul as '*Aprameya*' (II, 18) uncognizable, '*Drashtā*' (XIV, 19), the Seer, and Himself as '*Sākshin*' (IX, 18), witness, '*Atman*' (X, 20), Self. Now the concept underlying these terms does not by its very nature admit of plurality. It baffles all the commentator's ingenuity and learning to smuggle plurality into the concept. '*Aprameya*' is that which cannot be an object of knowledge, being the eternal subject. The mention of this characteristic feature of the soul within the body is portentous. It knells the conception of plurality. "There is no other Seer than the Atman," declare the Upanishads, 'नान्योऽसौऽस्ति द्रष्टा'; '*Drashtā*' or witness can be but one. 'Self cannot be pluralized as, to the Self, all else is 'Non-self'. Hence if the soul is *Drashtā*, and God is the *Witness*, they can

be but one, for, a distinction between them is unimaginable. Also the characterization of the soul as '*Nirguṇa*' is just in keeping with its nature as the witness. For the soul as witness naturally isolates itself from all qualities and Gunas, of all attribution.

The third evidence is in the form of authoritative statements made by Sri Krishna Himself. In II, 45, the Vedas relating themselves, as they do, to the Guṇas, Arjuna is urged to rise above them. Now it is impossible to conceive plurality in the plane in which the Guṇas are wholly absent. In II, 72, Arjuna is advised to attain to a position of desirelessness by true knowledge which Sri Krishna calls the stand in Brahman, for, that would secure the Peace of Brahman. ब्राह्मी स्थितिः, ब्रह्मनिर्वाणम् (II, 72). In III, 42, a profound psychic analysis is made, in which we rise from the objects to the senses, from these to the mind, and then to the intellect and lastly to the Reality, beyond. The guiding principle is one of greater and greater inclusiveness, and of a nearer approach to Unity from multiplicity. From the infinity of the objects, we are led to the senses which are definite in number, from these we are taken on to the mind with its multiple functions, then to the intellect with its judgments, and

lastly to the unchanging Witness, the deepest element in man, the all-inclusive 'Self'. The realm of plurality is thus transcended and we are set down on the shore of Reality, Bliss Eternal. One commentator on this profound teaching which is a variant of what is to be found in the Upanishad, identifies the sense-objects, mind, *Buddhi*, *Mahat*, and *Avyakta*, with Parvati, Rudra, Saraswati, Brahma and Lakshmi; and intimates that Sri Krishna's aim is to show the superiority of Vishnu over all these deities. This unfortunate blinking of the real issue has frightfully punished itself. In an analysis of man's nature, his very soul fails to claim a place — a tragedy of scholasticism to which the history of thought scarcely furnishes a parallel. The pernicious tendency reappears in Chap. XIII where the division of all existence into Kshetra and Kshetrajna, is confined by the commentator to God and inanimate nature, to the utter exclusion of the individual soul. Another commentator regards the whole group of the senses, etc., to be foes to the struggling soul, and the greatest of the foes, greater than the intellect, is desire, which Arjuna is enjoined to vanquish. On this line of interpretation, we should expect the mention of *Rajoguna*, parent of desire, as the worst of the

lot. Besides, *Kāma* (desire) being a mental function cannot overpass the mind in its entirety. Such interpretations miss the essential truth conveyed by the verse, namely, the identity of the soul, as witness, with Reality.

LORD KRISHNA'S STATEMENTS

In IV, 10, the enlightened one is stated to have attained the nature of Sri Krishna or the Godhead. In IV, 14, those that realize that God is unaffected by acts or is unattached to results, are said to be themselves not bound by action (*Karma*). This is impossible unless the identity of the nature of both is presupposed. In IV, 24, it is said that he who identifies all accessories of sacrifice, the sacrifice, and the sacrificer himself with Brahman, attains to Brahman. In V, 7, the self of the Yogin, is identified with the Self of all beings. In V, 24, it is said that the Yogin, who realises the light within himself, being Brahman, attains to the Peace of Brahman. In VI, 15, Sri Krishna says, "The Yogin ever absorbed in the contemplation of Brahman, attains the highest bliss characterising Me (Sri Krishna)".¹

1. The correct numbers of s'lokas have been substituted for the misprints in the article. — Editor.

EXTRACTS

- IV, 35. Thou wilt see all beings in thyself and likewise in Me.
- VI, 27. The pure-minded Yogin, who is Brahman, attains the highest happiness.
- VI, 31. The Yogin who meditates on Me lives in Me, the Lord, for he is established in Unity or Identity.
- VII, 18. The enlightened is Myself (the Lord).
- X, 20. I am the Self residing in the heart of all beings.
- X, 37. I am thou among the Pandavas.
- XIII, 2. Know Me as the witness in the body.
- XIII, 16. I remain undivided among beings, though seeming to be divided.
- XIII, 18. Knowing this, one attains to My nature or essence.
- XIII, 28. He who perceives the one Lord dwelling in all beings as their Self cannot harm another, for the Self cannot harm itself.
- XIII, 30. Who perceives that the manifoldness of beings has its locus in the One, attains Brahman.
- XIV, 19. When the soul as the witness refers all agency to the Gunas and realizes what

is beyond them, he attains to My nature (Godhead).

XIV, 26. My devotee transcends the Guṇas and becomes fit for Brahmanhood.

XVIII, 16. He that looks upon the *Secondless Self* as the agent is deficient in understanding.

XVIII, 20. That is pure knowledge by which the undivided One existing in all beings is realised.

XVIII, 55. My devotee enquiring into My nature, and knowing Me as I really am, enters Me.

It may occur to one that the Lord's statement that the Jiva is a part of Himself,—in XV, 7—militates against the idea of perfect identity. But we must not overlook the fact that the Jiva spoken of is the Spirit individualized by the mind, the senses and the body, and acting in Time and Space ; and a Jiva is certainly one among many such. But the Spirit, which is the essence of the Jiva, which is not limited by the *Upādhis*, cannot be divisible or partible by Time, Space or any other circumstance ; and this indivisibility of its nature is explained in both XIII, 16 and XVIII, 20, particularly because, the witness cannot be conceived to allow of division. The

concept of Reality as the witness is thus the keystone of the monistic edifice and no arguments or interpretations can prevail against this fundamental law of thought.

The charge of Solipsism is easily met. When one realizes himself as Brahman, he identifies himself not as one being with another, but with all Reality. For Brahman includes all, and, as individuality is so transcended, there will be no unreality to be negatived or vetoed.

The opponents of Non-Dualism may set some store by the division of *Purushas* into *Kshara* (the Varying), *Akshara* (the Constant) and the Supreme Atman, the Highest, different from the two former. But this distinction need not present any difficulty, when Purusha in its primary sense is understood to be the witness dwelling in the heart. As there can be no other witness, the term Purusha applied to the rest is only by courtesy, and the Atman's title to it is established not by comparison but by its absolute nature. For there can be nothing common between the witness and the objective element. *Uttama* Purusha would only mean Purusha in reality. Thus the Gita indubitably teaches the identity of the individual soul with the Supreme Spirit. The reader who cannot break with his own nature

or cease to play the role of witness, must realize himself to be Lord Krishna.

Having dealt with the question of Identity, I shall proceed to the other points of the Monistic system which next claim our attention. First in importance stands the problem of *Māyā*. Sri Krishna identifies Prakriti with *Māyā*, for he derives the Gunas from either indifferently. In VII, 14, *Māyā* is described as consisting of the Guṇas. In III, 29, the ignorant are referred to as deluded by the Guṇas of Prakriti. In VII, 13, the Guṇas of Prakriti are described as deluding the ignorant. In VII, 4, Sri Krishna refers to His Prakriti or Nature as being twofold, the Superior which manifests itself in organic life, and the Inferior made up of the five elements, together with Mind, Reason, and Egoism. In VII, 14, the Lord says, 'Those that seek Me transcend My *Māyā*'. In VII, 25, He declares, 'I am enveloped in veiling *Māyā*'. In V, 15, the understanding is shown to be enveloped in ignorance which deludes all mortals. In XIV, 8, Darkness is traced to *Ajnāna* or ignorance which dwells in all embodied beings. In X, 11, Sri Krishna says He destroys the ignorance of His Devotees, out of compassion. From these extracts, it is evident that *Māyā* is not merely the Power

of Is'wara which may be exercised by Him solely for the good of the world, but is an agency of delusion which has its root in ignorance, and which has to be transcended by wisdom or True Knowledge. This is in perfect consonance with the system of Non-dualism, which refers all multiplicity to Avidyā or ignorance, by which we naturally transpose the qualities of the Seer to the Seen and *vice versa*. Arjuna's delusion itself is based on his confounding the physical body with Atman. When by Avidyā the Supreme Spirit is invested with qualities and is converted into the Creator, the same Pure Spirit passes over into the individual soul wrapped in ignorance, and the world as an appearance is born, with all its features of time, space and causation. Accordingly we read in VII, 24, 'Men devoid of reason regard Me, the Unmanifest, as having become manifest, for they know not My higher nature, which is not subject to change or destruction, and than which a better cannot be conceived.' The notion of Iswara, then, as the Creator of the world, through the instrumentality of Māyā, is a product of ignorance, and He loses His separate entity, when ignorance is dispelled by wisdom. But this does not mean the unreality of God, of the world, or of the soul. Their reality and

distinction are not diluted in the smallest degree so long as wisdom has not arisen. With the rise of the Knowledge of Oneness, all these phantoms of the Māyā-ridden intellect must disappear and the soul come into what is his own by birthright. This disposes of the stock objection of the Realists, namely, why, if the Omniscient Lord knew that the world was unreal, did he address His teachings to Arjuna, as if he were a distinct entity? Now the whole picture of distinctions presented by the epic poet is of the empirical grade and is entitled to empirical reality. To the unenlightened reader, they have an empirical validity. When, however, he realizes his own nature, he becomes one with all beings; and the distinctions of life such as the Scripture, the Preceptor, Duty, Meditation, in short, the whole panorama of the diversified universe, becomes transmuted into the One Great Reality; and objections and answers are alike put out of court, silenced.

When S'āṅkara was similarly questioned, "Which is the locus of ignorance — the soul or the Supreme Self?", he replied unhesitatingly, "It is you, the questioner." "But according to you, I am the Highest Self," rejoined the objector. "In that case," answered S'āṅkara, "there is no ignorance, for all distinctions are extinct."

An explanation of the world now becomes easy. "All this is Vasudeva" in VII, 19,¹ is but a verbal variant of "All is Brahman" of the Upanishads. The antithetical terms in which Sri Krishna describes himself and the true Yogin, can be reconciled only if two points of view, empirical and transcendental, are admitted.

IX, 4 & 5. All the beings are in Me, yet they are not in me. Behold my Yogic power !

VI, 29. The Yogin sees the Self in all beings and again all beings in the Self.

IV, 13. I am their Creator though I create nothing and am indestructible.

V, 8. The Yogin, while he is seeing, 'eating, moving, etc., will, knowing the truth, think that he is not doing any act.

IV, 20. The unattached, though engaged in acts, does none.

VII, 26. No one knows me.

IX, 4. This world is pervaded by Me who am unmanifested.

IX, 15. Those that seek wisdom meditate on Me as the One and as the manifold.

1. Here 14 is a misprint in the original.

XIII, 14 & 15. Without the senses, I seem to shine with sense-qualities ; attached to nothing, yet supporting everything ; free from qualities, yet enjoying them ; not moving, yet moving.

Here a note is called for. In commenting upon *Guṇabhoktr* the master-hand of S'aṅkara laconically adds the necessary word 'iva' (as if), to intimate the impossibility of imposing the Guṇas or their enjoyment on the Pure Witness. In V, 19, which describes the immediate release from birth even in this life of those whose mind rests in the oneness of Brahman, S'aṅkara bases the purity of Brahman from the taint of the Guṇas, on its being of the nature of consciousness. *Samam* he interprets as 'one' (V, 18) so that *Sāmye* means 'In the Oneness of Brahman, a use analogous to that of 'Samāne' in 'Samāne Vṛkshē", on one tree (Muṇḍaka).

XIII, 16. Existing undivided in all beings, yet like one divided.

In these descriptions the one set relate to Empirical Life and the other to Transcendental Truth. To conceive that

the soul is atomic in size or forms the body of Brahman, is to convert it into a corporeal entity, to degrade Spirit to the level of matter. The idea is repugnant, even revolting, to its nature as the witness. There is no conceivable way of embodying the witness as such.

The *essence* of the world is declared to be the Lord Himself:—

XIV, 3. I impregnate the Mahat Brahman, the Material cause of the world.

XIV, 2. I am the seed, the Mahat Brahman is the soil.

IX. 19.* I am the object (percept).

VII, 6. I am the origin of the entire world and its dissolution.

VII, 12. The Gunas proceed from Me alone.

X, 8. All emanate from Me.

Arjuna says addressing the Lord :—

XI, 38. Thou art the Knower, the Known and the Highest Abode of Release.

XI, 40.* Pervading all – Thou art all.

* Numbers of the ś'lokas in the original are misprints.

The attributes of *pervasion* and *support* predicated of the Lord are imagined to favour Pluralism; but it is forgotten that the idea of all-pervasiveness pushed to its logical extreme, leaves nothing external to itself. For if a residue is left, then the Spirit ceases to pervade it, just as an angle continuing to widen infinitely ultimately attains to the form of a straight line in which no inclination of sides can survive. The idea of support, similarly, is sublated by the identity of the elements, supporting and the supported, before creation and after dissolution. If the Lord started with Himself, He must have Himself alone to manifest and relapse finally into Himself, though remaining ever the Unmanifest. Creation, &c., can thus be admitted only in an empirical sense. That the world is the body or the eternal wrap of the Lord is further untenable; *first*, because the Lord is essentially the Witness, and *secondly*, because the world is declared to issue forth from *Him* as the pre-existent, and *thirdly*, because time, space and causation, which are eternal and inevitable constituents of the world, and which all action presupposes cannot admit of creation, cannot admit of expansion or contraction. The mythicity of the world-process is further brought out in the likening of the world of Samsāra to the *Asvattha*

Tree, which Arjuna is exhorted to cut down by the weapon of unattachment. Surely, no real tree can be destroyed by a mere change in our subjective attitude towards it. In XVIII 20, the purest knowledge is declared to consist in the recognition of the One Reality in all being, which remains undivided. The idea of plurality, as of embodiedness, has therefore to be banished altogether.

The transfiguration of Lord Krishna described in the XIth chapter is of central importance in enforcing Monistic Truth. Krishna, who appeared as an individual person both before and after the event, suddenly grew in stature and power so as to include the three worlds ; and Arjuna beheld the transformation of the Lord into the whole universe and back again into Himself. How can we explain the miracle ? Did a new universe suddenly develop before the eyes of Arjuna, side by side with that which was familiar to him already ? Were the two identical and real ? If so how can there be a duplication of time, space and causation, all real, at the same time ? In the actual world, the heroes of the battle were still alive and kicking; in the other, some of them had their heads already 'crushed to powder'. We cannot make up our mind whether to believe the

prodigy as fact or fancy. All the miracles related in other sacred works dwindle into insignificance before this display of Divine Power. You cannot have possibly two different universes, the one representing an advanced stage of the other and both real at the same moment. All realistic commentaries are tongue-tied. The only explanation lies in the truth of Vedanta. The supernatural occurrence is intended, as in the calf-miracle of Bhāgavata, to take a concrete hold on our soul, to appeal to our realistic instinct and produce in us the conviction that we, every one of us, is the Lord Himself, and the multi-coloured, multi-tongued realm of objects and events spread before us is but an exhibition of His Eternal Magic, neither real nor unreal (XIII, 12) being the effect of His Māyā, who is pre-eminently the Lord of Yoga.

The theory that God is an embodied being, all else forming His body cannot hold water for a moment. The fact that Arjuna stood out as spectator to behold the Divine Thaumaturgy before him ought to show that he was not the body of the Lord. Otherwise he must have been taken up and wholly inserted *in* the show. Besides, His (Lord Krishna's) identifying Himself with Śaṅkara, Viṣṇu, Vāsudeva, and Rama, cannot be under-

stood to mean that they are His Vibhūtis or highest instances of His Power or Splendour; for, one of these, Vāsudeva, happens to be Himself. To invent an ever-varying and precarious principle by which identity can be evaded is to betray the inadequacy of the comment and the futility of the commentator's device. The sentence 'Behold in My body, the whole world of Gods, men and other beings' distinguishes between His body as the container and the Gods etc., as the contained. In truth, the picture is but an empirical representation of the All-inclusive Reality. God as the Witness, cannot be cumbered with a body. The idea of all-pervasiveness breaks to bits, when an independent distinct entity is let in. For, however porous it may be, it must still retain the threads of its individual texture. Hence the explanation that God pervades all and is therefore said to be all, will not rest till the all is dissolved in God and nothing is left to exist, besides. Finally pervasiveness is a material concept, and will do only for an empirical description of God.

The identity of Sri Krishna's teaching with the Vedic Monism of the Upanishads being established, I shall on a future occasion touch on the ethical and devotional elements which are the unique characteristics of the Gita. I need not

discuss whether the Gita is a medley of various and divergent systems of thought, as held by some modern scholars ; for after showing that in all the essentials, the teaching clearly gravitates towards Monism, I feel that other considerations are rendered unprofitable and fanciful.

It is not only the metaphysical value of the truths of the Gita - Immortality, Freedom, Bliss, and Oneness of Reality - that has made it so irresistably attractive, but its sublime ethics, its insistence on devotion, its universal tolerance, and the correct guidance it gives to conduct in practical life. These, however, demand a separate treatment.

Non-dualism or Advaita is often anathematized, dreaded, abominated, avoided, evaded, repudiated, compromised and apologized for. But it is a simple, innocent, undeniable view of life, which need not evoke any pain, terror, or opposition. Put into modern words, it is the doctrine of the Sole Reality of Spirit. The world is Spirit, the individual soul is Spirit, and there is really nothing but Spirit. It is often offered, accepted, or believed in, not in its full strength but considerably watered and scented with theistic forms. I hope I have shown that this venerated Scripture of the Gita inculcates from beginning to end this

Unity of Spirit, and makes an irresistible appeal in diverse ways to the modern mind, torn by doubt, uncertainty and despair. One of the most serious problems we have to face in India is the religious. Fanaticism awakens in men the most destructive forces making for social disruption and disaster. The Nationalist who neglects Vedanta will deprive himself of the most effective means of educating order out of chaos, of replacing ill-will, hatred, suspicion and discord by love, sympathy, trust and harmony, in an atmosphere seething with antagonism and dissidence. India, the birth-place of warring creeds, is also the spring-head of Truth and Peace, supplying a heavenly balm for distracted souls.

Vedic Monism is not opposed to devotion, but is its truest nursery. For, a devotee, trusting in God as an alien power may, in times of trials and tribulations, be overcome by despair or serious doubt. But a Vedantin knows that he puts his trust in the Reality, in his own Higher Self, and will not, cannot, under any circumstances, give way to vacillation or uncertainty.

F. C. S. Schiller, referring to the rarity of really important novelties in the history of thought, says, "I find I cannot recognize more than nine of such (first class) discoveries. Of

these I should credit the first, the Absolute or One of Monism, to the Hindus, although a case may perhaps be made out for Parmenides for an equal share in this discovery. Still it was in India that the ethical and logical implications of the monistic line of thought were worked out in their completest and most consistent form." If Schiller had realized the value of the concept of Reality as the Witnessing Consciousness, which appears as a revelation for the first time in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka*, he could not have wavered in assigning the merit of the discovery wholly to the Hindu Seers. This concept is the highest to which human mind can rise, and is still unknown to the West. Its profound significance in the realm of thought remains un-appreciated to this day. The only other concept of the same rank must also be adjudged to the credit of India, for it is to the genius of Saṅkara that the world owes the idea of *Adhyāsa*, superimposition. Hence we may claim to have enriched world-thought by not one but at least two original concepts, which are destined to live for all time. But the greatest contribution to the Science of Reality, — the critical analysis of the Three States—dates from the Upanishads and has been developed and perfected by Gaudapāda and

S'aṅkara, the two incomparable lions of thought. By the less-gifted Indian Critic and System-builder it has been turned, alas !, into additional Puranic grist brought to the mill of Theism.

Thus Vedic Monism, originating in a keen study of life and experience on the part of the Upanishadic Seers, rationalized into an immaculate system by the Brahma-Sutras, and declared to be the highest Truth by Reality itself in the person of Lord Krishna, has in its favour all the evidence which can be adduced—Scripture, Life and Reason—and is an impregnable stronghold laughing alike at the destructive power of time and the uproarious voice of adverse criticism.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF ADVAITA OR NON-DUALISM*

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The philosophy of Advaita is the title under which the metaphysics of Vedānta will be treated here. The system of thought characterizing the Upanishads or the final portion of the Vedas is known as Vedānta. It is philosophy in the sense that it makes an enquiry into Truth and Reality; but, unlike pure speculation, it claims to arrive at positive results. In other words, the Truth it reveals is not a mere theory, liable to modification with the advance of scientific knowledge, but is positive and ultimate, verified and verifiable. It does not take its stand on the shifting facts of phenomenal life, but is firmly rooted in those of life in all its aspects and in the very nature of consciousness itself. Being the science of Reality it avails itself of all the sources of knowledge; viz. Experience and intuition, and embraces all states and conditions through which Life passes or is supposed to pass. Non-dualism denies that number can enter into the constitution of Reality.

* This is an article from ' *The Cultural Heritage of India* '.

“Great scientific discoveries,” says Mr. Wildon Carr, “are often so simple in their origin that the greatest wonder about them is that humanity has had to wait so long for them. They seem to lie in the sudden consciousness of the significance of some familiar fact, a significance never suspected because the fact is so familiar.” This observation particularly applies to the facts on which Vedānta is built up. The states which punctuate life are presented to us persistently and we experience them every day of our lives ; and yet it is the ancient Upanishads and they alone that have discovered their significance, which has enabled them to arrive at ideas of Truth and Reality defying time and change.

It may be questioned whether no thinker has hitherto subjected the states to his scrutiny and what is the peculiar virtue attaching to the Vedāntic method. Who knows not that sleep is a state of rest for the brain, and dream but a fantastic affection of the nerves ? Psycho-analysis is engaged in the problem of exploring the region of the Unconscious, and of accounting for certain maladies by referring them to repressed conations. There is indeed some kind of felicity which we experience in deep sleep, which otherwise is only a state of unconsciousness. What

more can the labours of scientists and philosophers reveal as to the nature of Life or Reality? How can observations be pushed into the region of unconsciousness except by studying the changes wrought on conscious life? Now we quite admit that some attention has been paid to these two states by scientists, and medical men especially; and we may justly hope for fresh additions to our knowledge as time passes. But Vedānta owes its significance to its unique attitude towards life, which it views from an angle of vision altogether its own. While others concentrate their attention on the world before us which is taken to comprehend all the reality that we can know, and while sleep and dream-experiences are utilized to explain the phenomena of waking life, Vedānta proposes to deal with life as it manifests itself in all the three states and so determines the nature of Reality as a whole. The two view-points differ fundamentally. In the one, the waking world represents all our real interests, and sleep and dream are gently shoved aside as the mere appendages of waking; but in the other, each of the states is given a right place and is invested with equal significance. The man contemplating them easily rises to a condition in which his individuality

and narrow views are automatically shed, and the time-place-change-ridden world ceases to molest him. In the one case we are hopelessly merged in a mysterious world which baffles all efforts to solve the enigma ; in the other the results are so grand that they exceed all expectations. Besides, in speaking of sleep and dream our intellect which can grasp things only as external objects plays a trick with us which we never suspect. Though they are independent of waking, we yet reduce them to the terms of waking. When did he sleep ? How long ?—are questions which hide the contradictions they involve. They are not like questions relating to waking acts, such as, When did he come ? How long did he stay ? In the latter case the acts are placed in waking time, and quite correctly. But we extend the same form of expression to sleep and dream, though these are *not* waking acts and hence cannot be measured in terms of waking duration. “ When did he sleep ? ”—is a plain contradiction, for it would mean, at what point of waking time did he sleep ?—implying thereby that sleeping is a waking act ! Similarly, the states are not external things which we cognize by means of our intellect. They are known to us as immediacies

by intuition. We intuit sleep and dream, and, what is more surprising, we intuit our waking also. For consider the dilemma—do we wake first and then perceive the world, or do we perceive the world and then wake to it? The latter conception is self-contradictory, since perception pre-supposes waking. The former is equally untenable as the order in which the acts take place—waking, perceiving—requires a basis of time, and waking time would commence before waking! It is thus evident that the sequence of the states in which we naively believe is no sequence in one time-order. If it were otherwise, the states would be continuous and their difference in character would be an inexplicable puzzle. Dream-events would then have to be placed in waking time and space, leading to a grotesque confusion by no means removable. A man lying on his bed would have to account for his being suddenly transported to a scene and surroundings thousands of miles away. Time cannot be inserted between state and state, and only the Spirit remains to connect them. Thus the study of the states cannot be carried on solely through the intellect which is bound by time and space, but through the aid of intuition by which, as Bergson says, we place ourselves by

sympathetic insight in the middle of a state. We need not observe it merely from outside or translate the experience into the terms of an alien. Now no one can affirm that such a study has been hitherto attempted or accomplished, except by Vedānta.

We shall now deal with the analysis of the three states as effected by Vedānta. Saṅkara, its greatest exponent, has systematized the teachings of the Upanishads in his comments on the *Brahma-Sūtras* which have condensed them under various topical headings. In his comments on the *Sūtras*, the Upanishads and the *Bhagavad-Gītā*, we find a rational, consistent and exhaustive treatment of all the problems of Truth and Reality as they arise in the course of his exposition of Vedic Monism.

WAKING EXPERIENCE

In his introduction to the *Sūtras*, Saṅkara, imbued with a truly scientific spirit, discusses the foundation of empirical life. We can discover in him no traces of a theological or scholastic leaning. "Subject and object—the Self and the non-Self—are so radically opposed to each other in notion and in practical life that it is impossible to mistake the one for the other." After

this grand beginning he adds, "Yet we find that the mistake is universal and we can never trace it to its source, for our common life cannot do without this initial error." Without identifying the Self (subject) with the non-Self, viz. the body, the senses and the mind, we could not describe ourselves in terms strictly applicable to the latter. We could not say, 'I am lean or stout,' 'I am walking or sitting, I am blind or deaf,' 'I feel, I perceive or act. Hence we unconsciously confound the pure subject or the Witnessing Consciousness with its own objects, and conversely, we confound the ego with the Witness, whereby the real unattached character of the Pure Consciousness is lost sight of altogether. Admittedly this is due to a fundamental illusion on which all our waking activities are based; and to attain to Truth and Reality we must, realizing this illusion, rise above it by means of rational enquiry. Reason which points out the illusion must also be competent to release us from its hold. Saṅkara is not alone in drawing our attention to the illusory nature of empirical life. Plato, Kant and Hegel adopt the same strain, and in recent times, Bergson, equipped with all the knowledge of modern science, arrives at the same conclusion. The intellect, he says, disguises

Reality, misrepresents it and presents to us a static world, while the Reality is pure movement, change or the wider consciousness. According to both Sankara and Bergson the illusion is necessary to practical life, though none the less it is an illusion. S'aṅkara does not favour the reality of the idea as against that of the object. The testimony of consciousness itself establishes their distinctness. While the one, viz. the idea, is admitted to be real, this reality can be maintained only by contra-distinguishing it from that of the object. Still the reality of the idea and the object cannot be held to transcend the state in which both are experienced. In other words, their claim to reality is valid *within* the state, not beyond. This is a philosophical view that disposes of the dream-experience also. If we are true to consciousness, if consciousness is true to us, the objects and notions of dream are presented as indisputably real at the time, and are discovered to be illusions only after dream gives place to waking. We cannot suppose that waking experience can survive waking, any more than dream experience, dream. For that would be self-contradictory. Waking life may thus seem to be reduced to a long dream, but as Locke would say, "Even then the thinker and the critic being equally involved in the dream,

their mutual relations remain the same as if the condition was one of waking. ” Hence the external world with its multiplicity of other minds and objects, together with the internal world of judgments, feelings and volitions, like the ego cognizing them and engaged in action and enjoyment, is all on one level of reality which correlates them. It is wrong, therefore, to imagine that Vedanta is solipsistic, that while it concedes reality to the ego, it denies it to the non-ego.

Nevertheless, this does not conflict with the fundamental principle of Sankara that practical life is made possible only by the spontaneous ascription of the qualities of the subject to the object, and *vice versa*. For the reality of the experience of each state is ineluctably confined to the reality, is such only for the state, is only relative, not absolute. The waking life taken by itself is a mystery teeming with endless contradictions in whatever way we view it. and that the army of scientists and philosophers carrying on an incessant fight with nature to discover the matrix from which things originate and grow are faced with an ultimate *ne plus ultra* in all their investigations, are unquestionable facts to which all human researches testify. The very categories of thought are so many riddles ; substance,

quality, action, the universal, the particular, relation, space, time, causality, change—these are a phalanx of grenadiers whom every thinker has had to encounter in a close fight, of which the issue has remained doubtful to this day. Sir James Jeans in *'The Mysterious Universe'* concludes with these words: "Our main contention can hardly be that the science of to-day has a pronouncement to make. Perhaps it ought rather to be that science should leave off making pronouncements: the river of knowledge has too often turned back on itself." The view of modern science is given as follows: "To sum up, a soap-bubble with irregularities and corrugations on its surface is perhaps the best representation ... of the new universe revealed to us by the theory of relativity. The universe is not the interior of the soap-bubble but its surface... and the substance out of which this bubble is blown, the soap film, is empty space welded onto empty time."

This modest estimate of the power of science is but fitting, for Vedānta declares that the whole universe spread before us, as well as our achievements in it, is but a manifestation of Pure Consciousness. To find the ultimate Truth in the universe *itself* is a hopeless task, but to peer through it and detect the Reality that it

disguises is the first duty of every rational thinker. For, situated as we are, our view of the world can be only external, and we must proceed from knowledge to knowledge which can never be final, since it cannot be of an object as it is in itself, but as it is known. We shall now examine the dream-state with two or three preliminary remarks.

Waking or dream is not a state in the strict sense of the term. A state implies change occurring in the soul or its object. When we compare waking with dream, the soul assumes the position of a witness of the two, and no change can be allowed in the witness. The two states seem to offer themselves successively for trial, but as they are not events in one time-series, their sequence is an illusion. Neither can we suppose a change in the objective order, which would demand a continuity of the same time-series. Moreover, we labour under the disadvantage of having to judge from memory of dream which cannot be called up to confront us as a present experience, and this memory is itself of a strange character. Memory ordinarily refers to the past—a past time moving backwards infinitely from the present moment at which it terminates, that is to say, to a continuous time-flow related to

the present. Dream-experience, however, does not belong to this time-series, and cannot be included in its past. Again, just as we cannot know when waking begins, so we cannot know when dream begins, for both seem to be uncaused. A cause connects one event with another of the same time-order and the cause of a state would have to be inside the state, so that to transcend the state in order to discover its cause would be not merely illogical but impossible. Further, the soul as the witness of the two states intuits both, and that is how we know both. Hence the witnessing character of the soul claims special consideration. It behaves as an entity free from attachment to the bodies, the minds, the sense-groups and the percepts of the contrasted states, and becomes a metaphysical element which can be realized only as the 'I' but with the 'I' divested of the egoity of waking or dream. While it is difficult and impracticable for us to eliminate, in waking, this Witness from the ego-complex, and the Witness might seem to be a mere abstraction, our ability to remember dream and appropriate it to ourselves proves that nature does for us the analysis which we are unable to do for ourselves. She does this in virtue of the undeniable fact that the Witness is the Reality,

the essence of our being. In discussing sleep, we shall come upon another feature of the Witness which then passes off into Pure Consciousness.

DREAM STATE

From the waking point of view, dream is a case of typical illusion, or rather hallucination. Without admittedly an external ground a whole world rises into view, and no suspicion is aroused that we are bamboozled. Scene after scene follows originating feelings and acts with the stamp of genuineness. We are actors in the drama, playing fantastical parts, enjoying and suffering we know not how or why. There is no limit to the grotesqueness of the pagentry, overleaping the bounds of waking possibility. Yet at the time there is no surprise ; everything looks natural. We take things at their face-value. All the elements of waking are reproduced: time, space, change. In the very midst of the drama, we might jerk into waking, and, behold, it was all a dream ! The usual explanation offered is that the impressions formed on the waking mind remain latent in the background of the unconscious and suddenly gain scope for activity, manifesting themselves in the shape of dream-experience. Sleep is the region of the Unconscious and we are then

admitted behind the scenes to the sight of how the impressions, in their various degrees and strength, act and react upon one another in the deeps of our nature. No impression apparently ever dies, and, when it is denied adequate scope in waking, obtains it in dream, which is a realm of life for the latent impressions. The space and time are creations of the mind, and the relation of cause and effect is improvised. The intellect suspends its censorship and our critical faculties are laid to sleep. Such is the dictum of waking reason. But this theory of impressions loses sight of the fact that if the theory be right, an impression has to be endowed with the power to create a world of realities at a moment's notice, rather, without any notice at all. If the mind by a fiat can create actualities, where is the need or place for matter which is the object of absorbing study for a scientist? How can this indispensable factor of life be brushed aside so lightly? What is sauce for the goose must be sauce for the gander. If the reality of matter in waking life depends on our belief in our close observation and experimentation, how is our involuntary belief in the reality of our dream occurrences to be accounted for? How can we take two contradictory attitudes towards life, the one solipsistic and the

other realistic? This explanation is therefore suicidal and demolishes the very foundations of science. We can, besides, never notice the beginning or the origin of a dream. All our notions of propriety are outraged, without still engendering any surprise in us. Our consciousness which guides our judgment suddenly turns capricious, and one that lies down in Calcutta might find himself in a moment, as it were, in London. A single moment might expand into days and years. The dreamer might be transformed into a bull, a goat or an insect. And the learned explanation is belated. It comes after the illusion is over, for there are no certain marks or characteristics by which we can identify a dream as such at the time. In truth, dream cannot be defined, otherwise we could not fail to detect the trickery when it repeated itself a second time; but a man's, even a philosopher's life must include dreams to his dying day, and nature's power to delude is irresistible, supreme. A dream can indeed mimic all the features of waking, but one element remains triumphant and beyond its utmost power to mimic, and that is Consciousness. All the rest is plastic in the omnipotent hands of dream, and can be moulded into any shape it pleases. Time, space and causation

are its avowed slaves, and obey its autocratic bidding. Consciousness alone defies its tactics and remains an unruffled witness of its whims.

We have hitherto viewed dream as an object of the waking mind, as an external object. We shall now examine it from within, by placing ourselves sympathetically in its midst. This is properly to judge dream as dream, without the waking bias. Dream now appears to be a perfect replica of waking. A world is unrolled before us ; we never notice its suddenness or its incongruity with waking ; on the contrary it comes with all the impress of waking. Time, space and change are inevitably present. No element of life is missed – other minds, natural scenes, familiar faces and objects, the earth below and the star-studded sky above. We think, feel and act. We refer happenings to the past, and forecast them for the future. We remember dreams and relate them to friends, There is no suspicion of the state being a break, a discontinuity from waking: no fear that it may be sublated in the future. Miracles are common occurrences which do not strike us as anything extraordinary. We acquiesce in all, we appropriate all. Memories and emotions stream in, giving birth to strange conations. We converse with gods and ghosts. Sometimes

the future is foreshadowed. We acquire new powers, occupy new positions; nothing is impossible. We fly without wings and fall from hill-tops down, down through endless space. Nevertheless we believe that all is real and nothing shocks us. After waking we condemn dream as an irrational self-contradictory and unreal illusion, and resolve to be no more befooled. But in the next dream there is the same masque enacted and the same helplessness on our part to detect it, and this is repeated without end to our eternal chagrin through all our living days. It will not do to brush aside this aspect of life as a mere phantasy. "There are few subjects", writes Dr. F.C.S. Schiller "which philosophers have more persistently forborne to work out, not to say neglected, than the philosophic import of dreams." To regard that dream experience is unreal is to subordinate it to waking, and to accept the biassed decree of the latter against a sister-state. And on what is the claim of waking to reality based? Evidently on its own pronouncement. If so, is not dream entitled to equal reality according to its own pretensions? If it is objected that waking is never stultified whereas a dream is, the answer is, how can a state which is accompanied with a sense of waking stultify itself while it continues?

A state which is believed to be waking can never be conceived as liable to stultification while it lasts, and every *present* state claims to be waking flinging to its rear a stultified dream. Compare the instance of a dream within a dream. No state can be disloyal to itself. A dream proper is never known to be such at the time. A stultified state appears as a past dream and the present is *ever* waking. No state is self-identical. Thus a sympathetic examination of dream leads to the conclusion that it is a rival state as real as waking; and owing to the indeterminable discrepancy between the two in the time-flow, added to the unconscious and timeless interval between, they must be adjudged equal independence, as different realms of Reality of which they are expressions. The word 'interval' used above is, owing to defect of language, meant to denote what is timeless. For if a time-interval were imagined, it would connect waking and dream and make them a single continuous state, which would militate against all experience. Waking-time rules waking and stops with it, and dream-time is coeval with a dream. The interval is metaphysical. It is Pure Consciousness.

We are now free to consider the results obtained at this stage of our enquiry. The

examination of dream was made possible only by our individuality being laid aside. The mind and the body constitute our personality and our individual life depends on our connection with them. These two factors can hardly be supposed to be identical in both waking and dream, as our experience is to the contrary. So are the two worlds distinct. In setting the states side by side in our study, we have mentally disentangled ourselves from both and have attained to an attitude in which, free from the trammels of individuality we comprehend the two manifestations of Reality, as unstinted wholes - an attitude quite different from that in which we think of the waking world. In the latter case the world is not seized as a whole, since, as our object of attention, it is separated from ourselves and placed right against us in thought. We conduct our examination of dream, not as one ego contemplating the other, but as the soul divested of its egoity altogether. The simple experience denoted by the words, 'I dreamt,' raises us to the level of the witness and above that of the ego. The soul is thus proved to be an entity at the back of the mind, taking its stand as the metaphysical basis of life. The monobasic view, confined to waking, of theology throws it on the mercy of the scriptures or revelations to establish the soul or God. They are

matters of faith. But Vedantic analysis makes them indisputable elements of life and identifies them. The world is a correlate of the mind, concomitant with it. The question of other minds is limited to the fugitive states and is devoid of meaning with reference to the soul as their Witness. The soul thus sheds its individuality and becomes Universal Spirit, beyond the region of *meum* and *tuum*. The mind perceives the world, while the soul or spirit intuits both waking and dream, projects both, and absorbs both. The difficulty that perplexes the enquirer, viz. "When I am sleeping, is there not a world outside in which simultaneously there are other minds awake and active, whom I rejoin when I awake? How does my sleep affect the real affairs of the world which go on uninterrupted for all *my* changes of state? – this difficulty now vanishes. For the individuation implied in *my* sleep and the waking of *others* ceases when the comparative view of the states is taken. This is possible only with the individuality dropped. Moreover, the waking world composed of other minds and matter, with which waking connects me and from which sleep releases me, is strictly bound up with waking, and to aver that my waking or my waking world persists when I am sleeping is not only illogical

but inconceivable. The world has no status outside of my waking. The physical organism together with its brain, nerves and breath is limited to waking. To carry it over to another state, where another set obtains free play, is unwarranted. Similarly, birth and death, the evolution of the world, are integral parts of waking, and beyond it, meaningless. Solipsism or Subjectivism is easily transcended, for the Witness is no ego and Reality attaches to the former alone. Thus we have arrived at an entity which is the universal basis of life, which is All Life, beyond time, change and individuality. Why then should we examine sleep? For the simple reason that it is the primary state without which waking and dream would be impossible. We dream in sleep and wake from sleep.

Meanwhile we shall advert to some philosophical problems which receive their solution from our enquiry so far. The question of perception dissolves itself. The Spirit manifests itself as matter and mind, which appear as the correlated elements of experience in each state. Their metaphysical basis is one, and this affinity in their source accounts for their mutual adaptiveness. The Spirit as mind perceives Spirit as matter. The puzzles of Realism and Idealism evaporate.

For the principle on which we explain waking perception must apply equally to dream perception. If in the one case our knowledge is real, so must it be in the other. No purpose is served by affirming or denying the reality in either. Pragmatism is right in regarding judgements as only truth claims with a tentative value. Every manifestation of life or Spirit must necessarily promote life-purpose. For Life is supreme and its apparent frustration by death is but a delusion. Death itself is a manifestation of Life which transcending the states is immortal.

DREAMLESS SLEEP

We commonly believe that deep sleep is a state of absolute unconsciousness. What can we know of it? In answering this question, we must bear in mind that waking, dream and deep sleep are states that we intuit and that cannot create any conceivable break in life. They are known as immediacies and are not observed externally. Hence our knowledge of them is more intimate and perfect, less liable to error or misunderstanding, than that of objects. I see a chair, and my notion of it agrees with that of several other minds, and practical life is pivoted on such agreement. But as to what a chair is in itself apart

from my perception, generates a problem which has endlessly exercised the intellect of scientists and philosophers. Our knowledge of objects must be infinitely progressive, because of the disability with which we start, because we cannot know them as we know or realize our own feelings and sensations. The very structure of the intellect precludes the contrary. But this habit has so grown upon us that we forget the limitations of our power to know, and instinctively believe that that knowledge alone is true which we acquire by observation and experiment. We call it scientific. The states which cannot be so handled we are prone to ignore, as not allowing of the scientific method of approach. Now there must be something fundamentally wrong in this attitude, since the states are the *sine qua non* of life, the elements of which it is made up. The world which is the theatre of our activities, enjoyments and ambitions, with its comic and tragic sides, is unfolded to us in only one of them. In the other, there is a mimicry of it, and in the third it is conspicuous by its absence. Experimental Psychology, which presumes that the nature and the capacity of mind can be accurately known and measured by 'behaviour', cannot go to the root of the matter. It takes its stand on the outside and forms its

views from what it observes. This is opposed to the very nature of mind, viz. to conceive it as an object and study it as an alien, when all the while we have the privilege of knowing it immediately by reference to our own feelings and sensations. The scientific description of sleep from our observation of the condition of the sleeper's body is, in the words of the Upanishads (?), to beat the ant-hill and imagine the snake inside to be killed. With whatever care we pursue our method of external observation, we shall never realize the nature of sleep or dream. As to waking, we are still more helpless. We cannot observe before we wake ; and as all our acts are circumscribed by waking and involve it, we can never arrive at an objective notion of its nature. For it is as much an intuition as the other two. The only reliable source of knowledge about them is our intuition, and a study of the latter gives us a more, not less, scientific view of them than we have of external objects.

We have found that the entity that connects waking and dream is not the ego of either state, but the witness or the Spirit which is free from individuality. We have now to ascertain the principle which pieces together all the three. We have first to tackle deep sleep. This is

produced in three or four ways. First, in the natural manner; secondly, by means of drugs like chloroform; thirdly, by the practice of mental concentration known as *yoga*; or fourthly, through devout meditation. The nature of the experience, however, does not vary, for in each instance the mind that alone can detect difference ceases to operate. As the sleep which comes to us naturally every day is the only form familiar to us universally, and as even the *yogins* cannot help sleeping, a close study of sleep is rendered possible to all, and obviates the necessity of that of the other forms. Though fancied to be a mere blank, a state of unconsciousness, we shall presently realize that it is the home of Reality, the temple of God, and the true nebula giving birth to both mind and matter. It is the treasure-house of all truths; and in spite of our prepossessions we shall know it as the rock-basis of life.

To begin with, we have to dispose of the common notion that sleep is unconsciousness. This evidently is a serious mis-apprehension. For conscious beings as we are, though we may have a notion of unconsciousness, the notion when examined will be found to have no content. A notion is formed in consciousness and the latter cannot conceive its own absence, while it is there

to testify to itself. Unconsciousness cannot be a link in the chain of life ; and we could never speak of sleep if it did not constitute an integral element of conscious life. So it is not a mere idea. A person complaining of sleeplessness does not suffer from an inability to form the idea. As Wildon Carr observes "When we say that a man is unconscious in his sleep, we do not mean by unconsciousness a complete absence of consciousness, as when we say that a stone is unconscious. We mean that the consciousness which is present is blocked or hindered from being effective. Rouse a man from his sleep.....and consciousness returns." Besides, the statement, "I was unconscious during sleep," contradicts itself. For how can you say that you were unconscious unless you were *conscious* of your unconsciousness ? If one retorts, " I know now that I was unconscious," his position is not improved. How can you now refer to or describe a past occurrence unless it was part of your experience ? And an experience of a conscious being presupposes consciousness at the time of the experience as well as at the time of recollection. Further, the memory of sleep points to it as a period of felicity or bliss essential to life. It is thus futile to argue that sleep is a period of absolute unconsciousness. We can never be *aware* of such a state. We cannot own it or describe it as thus and thus.

“I was aware of nothing, neither of myself nor of the world.” This is how a man roused from deep sleep describes it, and thereon hangs the whole possibility of metaphysics as a positive science. If a man says he was aware of nothing, he must have been *aware* of this unawareness. Do what we may, we cannot rid ourselves of awareness in some form or other. “I was not aware of myself or of the world.” This disposes of the ego and non-ego in sleep, and discloses their eternal concomitance. I was not aware of the non-ego, because I was not aware of the ego. Just as the presence of the one necessarily demands and depends on the presence of the other, the absence of the one must spell the absence of the other. In waking we perceive the world, because there is the ego to perceive it. In sleep we are aware of neither, because neither is present. To suppose an outside world flourishing all the same by the side of the sleeper is not to the point. It is illogical. The world persisting is obviously the waking world connected with the individual sleeper, which is cognized by the waking critic, but the sleeper has shed his individuality when he has passed into sleep, into Pure Spirit, and no world can attach itself to Spirit. For the world is seen to be concomitant with the individual ego, and it is the mind, the senses and the body that individuate

Spirit. When, however, these shackles of determination are flung off as in sleep, still to hold that the world exists in relation to Spirit, is neither rational nor consonant to experience. The world comes and goes with the waking state ; and as I can change my states, so I can, when I move into the next state, switch off the world, which is my cumber in waking, along with the ego, its counterpart. The recognition of this truth requires some clear thinking, as the mind and the present ego act as clogs impeding the higher view revealed by intuition.

What then is the awareness characterizing deep sleep ? It is not one craving an object and an ego. It is not of the subject-object variety that we are familiar with in waking and dream. It is what Vedanta calls the Transcendental or Pure Consciousness. We shall call the other the empirical consciousness, and the life predominated by it the empirical life. We shall now more closely examine sleep as Pure Consciousness. In the first place, it is a state of absolute unity. In the absence of time and space there is no room for change or plurality. Rāmānuja indeed believes in the persistence of the ego, and some other thinkers in that of the non-ego also, then in a latent condition. But evidently they are wrong. For we have seen how the entity which alone

links up waking and dream as the Witness, is already divested of egoity, and our present examination of sleep is rendered possible only by the persistence of the same Witness in sleep also, that is to say, of the Witness divested of the psychic set (mind and senses) and the physical body, which are the individualizing elements. Time ceases to operate outside of the states and is absent from sleep. Hence the ideas of latency or patency which are confined to the sphere of a time-order are inapplicable to the contents of sleep. We carry over to sleep our waking bias when we conceive multiplicity in a potential condition in it: and we forget that it is an independent state to be judged and understood by itself and not to be translated into the terms of the others whereby we should forfeit the advantage of a new experience. There is neither a potential world in sleep nor an actual world beside the sleeper, the Scylla and Charybdis to be avoided in Vedantic sailing.

In the next place, it is not a state* *in* which Pure Consciousness abides, but is itself Pure Con-

* *The Editor of 'The Cultural Heritage of India', with whose permission I have reprinted this article has added a foot-note here :—*

“ This is only the view of a group of modern thinkers. The orthodox school of thought represented

consciousness. The popular view that it is a state is due to a mis-apprehension of its true nature which a careful analysis can alone reveal. For it is timeless and changeless and to call it a state under the circumstances is a misnomer. The Witness has transformed itself into Pure Consciousness, for without it we could have no knowledge of sleep. But its report of the non-existence then of the ego and the non-ego shows that it has

by S'ankara, Sāyanāchārya and others considers 'dreamless sleep' (*Sushupti*) as a *state* in which *avidya* inheres in its causal form. The assumption of the state of *sushupti* as Pure Consciousness, i. e. a state of absolute unity' without the least vestige of *avidya* being latent in it, results in the consequent negation of the indispensableness of any spiritual discipline so strongly enjoined in the Sruti and by the *achāryas*. In fact, it is only in the state of *samadhi* attained through a rigorous course of spiritual discipline that this veil of nescience which persists in a latent form even in dreamless sleep is torn off; and as a result the Supreme Reality, the abiding Witness in all the three states of waking, dream and sleep is realized as the *Turiya* (transcendent) divested of all the tentacles of *māya*. *Vide* S'ankara's commentary on *Mandukya Upa.* 5-7, on *Mand. Karika* 13-14, on *Chhand. Up.* 8.3-1-3 and on *Vedānta Sūtras* 3-2-9; *Panchadas'i* 1-39, 41; *Vedānta Paribhāṣā*, Ch. 7. —Ed."

I happen to belong to 'The group of modern thinkers' referred to in this footnote, and therefore feel called upon to

assumed the role of Pure Consciousness. It is hence clear that the Witness of the ego and the non-ego in the other states is also the Witness of their absence, and that the Witness and Pure Consciousness are identical. A mirror reflects objects presented to it, but in the absence of objects it ceases to be a reflector though the power to reflect is ever inherent in it.

In the third place, the states are independent expressions of Reality, so many wholes in which Reality manifests itself: for, being free from time and space, it is indivisible. For the same

state the reasons which compel us to arrive at this conclusion. In the first place S'āṅkara is perfectly innocent of the opinion herein ascribed to the so-called 'Orthodox School'. For he emphatically declares in his *Sūtra-Bhāṣya* (3-2-7) in so many words that Brahman or Atman alone is the state of Sleep. (ब्रह्म तु अनपायिसुप्तिस्थानम् । ... तस्मादात्मैव सुप्तिस्थानम्) In the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-Bhāṣya* (4-3-22), it has been stated in the clearest terms 'अविद्याकामकर्मनिर्मुक्तमेव तद्रूपं यत्सुषुप्ते आत्मनो गृह्यते प्रत्यक्षतः' (The nature of Atman which is directly inherited in sleep, is absolutely free from ignorance, desire and action.) It is of course quite true that the Post-S'āṅkaras are of the opinion that ignorance is latent in sleep. Their idea of ignorance and its removal, however, is quite different from that of S'āṅkara, as I have shown in my '*Vedānta-Prakriyā-Pratyabhijñā*' and the '*Panchapādika-Prasthānam*'. According to S'āṅkara, ignorance is only the mental super-imposition of the world and the Self, and therefore it can never obtain in states like sleep and *śamādhi*. — Editor.

reason, not only waking and dream are each a whole but every one of their constituents is such. The plurality perceived within a state stands as an obstacle to our recognition of the indivisibility of Reality. "Standing undivided amidst beings, yet appearing as divided" (*Gita* XIII, 17). But in sleep we have Pure Consciousness, presented as the whole which is the master-key with which we have to unlock the doors of the other states. The metaphysical nature of the latter is thus revealed as Pure Consciousness which determines the value and the nature of the rest. We thus arrive at the equation :

Waking = Dream = Pure Consciousness.

Having analyzed the states we are in a position to discuss those philosophical questions which obtain a final solution in the light of Vedanta. First, what is Reality? Since the three states exhaust all life and experience, Reality is that which invariably accompanies the states and persists in the midst of and in spite of the varying contexts. It is thus seen to be Pure Consciousness which pervades all life, whose nature is such as to make even an idea of its non-existence unthinkable. In defining Reality as that whose non-existence cannot be conceived or imagined, both S'ankara and Bergson agree. But whereas

Bergson, whose observation is limited to the waking state, identifies Reality with unceasing change, S'ankara identifies it with Pure Consciousness or the Witness, not subject to change. For the Witness of change cannot change. Pure Consciousness is not merely the Reality but the All. Its remaining single and secondless in sleep, its indivisibility and its ubiquity through life shows that it is the radical principle on which hang the wholes, waking and dream. It includes its manifestations, it is all-inclusive, This knowledge is the truest, the highest that we can or need possess. It is the Absolute Truth, relating as it does to the all-inclusive Reality ; and from this standpoint it is clear that Bradley was right in declaring that truth and knowledge merge in Reality and are one with it. The authority of the Vedas which unfold this Truth becomes unquestionable. Their testimony is the voice of life and experience. To deny it is to strangle that voice. On the contrary, if the Vedas be interpreted to support Dualism, they must forfeit their claim to reveal the Oneness reached by a rational analysis of life, and their authoritative-ness will pass into an arbitrary assumption.

One may imagine that the methodology of Vedānta, which eschews external observation

and experiment, is defective inasmuch as it fails to throw light on the nature of the world. This is a grave mistake. In studying the inner life, we rise above its manifestations, and get at the very root from which the ego and the non-ego of the states branch out. Yet the relation is not organic, but metaphysical. Reality does not develop, by a process in time, into waking and dream, but seems directly to manifest itself as the latter. There are no intermediate stages. Reality does not bring into being what was *non est*, but apparently becomes its own 'other', for even while appearing as the objective world, it remains an undiminished Whole. And the advantage of the inner analysis lies in this that it discloses Reality no less than our identity with it. It is we before whom the states are furled and unfurled, it is we who are resolved in sleep into Pure Consciousness which like a canopy covers the whole of life and that is life. It is our Self that co-ordinates the states. Placed beyond time and generating the time-flow of each state, it is immortal and by immediate experience we know it to be Perfect Bliss. This is the Highest Being which the Upanishads call 'Brahman'. It gives being to the objects and occurrences of the states as well as to the states

themselves, and this imparted being is real within each state. A state and its contents mutually determine their own reality, but as a manifestation this reality is not ultimate. Since we are real and the objective world is Reality, we can never know unreality. The contents of the state as much as the states themselves, however, when viewed as separate from Pure Consciousness, fade into nothing. They are mere abstractions, void of reality. Again, Reality as the Eternal Witness cannot rightly be treated as an object, and number and quality which apply to objects cannot be predicated of it. Being an immediacy, it allows of no doubt, hypothesis or predication concerning its nature. It is not transcendent, but transcendental. It is the Absolute, bearing no relation to any other. For in the absence of time and space no relation can exist between Reality and its manifestations, since the terms of the relation cannot meet on the same level of reality.

The question how the world arose is altogether impermissible. Causality works only in time, and the waking world must find its cause in waking which circumscribes the sphere of causation. Neither can we ask why we wake and dream—for we intuit the states, and those

intuitions being the prius of our mental and bodily activities are primary and so beyond the pale of time and causation. We can now indeed turn our minds forwards and backwards, but when we approach the question of the origin of the state that brings forth the mind, we realize our limitation and are struck dumb. Waking limits the sphere of causation. This, however, does not affect our conclusions. Pure Consciousness being the All, waking and dream can only be its expressions, no less than the worlds which they bring into view. Their fugitiveness and contingency mark them as realities of the second or subordinate degree.

We shall now advert to another interesting point of enquiry. What is the nature of Pure Consciousness or the Witness? Is it, as Pure Being, a concrete or an abstract idea? If it is abstract or empty of all contents, it cannot give rise to the states or to their worlds, for nothing can come out of nothing. If on the contrary it is concrete, it already contains in solution all the elements that afterwards crystalize into creation. In this case the Unity is not an undiluted Absolute, but a real complexity in a subtle condition. Non-dualism would be a mere web of fancy and so also the various degrees of Reality. This objec-

tion has been raised by Hegel against Vedanta, from a total misconception of its position. The Pure Consciousness of Vedanta is neither an idea nor an object. It is the Witness which converts everything else into an object, and is known to us more intimately as our Self than any object can possibly be. It cannot be classed in any of the categories of thought as these are products of thought, and no category can precede consciousness which it presupposes. Thus the dilemma whether Pure Consciousness is an abstract or a concrete idea is meaningless. To treat Pure Consciousness as an object would be to do injustice to its nature. But not to be an object is not to be nothing. It is more real than any other, because it is our own Self, whose reality is a primary assumption with us, is a truth we start from, before we ascertain the reality of other things. To question its reality is to question whether we live. Hegel started with the error that the world of perception and all life must be derived from an original principle by a gradual dialectic process which assumes everything going before as implicit in a present idea which is its explication, so that the movement of ideas being circular, every idea is a microcosm, differing from others only in the proportion in it of implicit and

explicit elements. This self-movement without a goal or an aim is an unintelligible mystery. Vedānta does not trace the world to the Absolute either directly or indirectly. Its truth is based on facts of experience. In sleep we find Pure Consciousness without a second and in waking and dream the worlds unroll themselves before us, in addition to Pure Consciousness. Since this view exhausts all reality, we can legitimately suppose only that the second element in the states, viz. the world, is but the original Pure Consciousness without loss of integrity, appearing as the object to itself. As there is no change in Pure Consciousness, this second element appearing as an alien must be a delusion. It is not alien. Thus to resolve all into Pure Consciousness is the highest function of reason. It is wrong to derive waking or dream from sleep. All three are independent of one another, and the temporal relation of posterior or anterior is the creation of our own time-ridden mind. There is no time to connect them. Only a comparative survey of the states enables us to assess their metaphysical value.

Two important considerations force us to recognize this truth. First, the notions of 'I', the subject or consciousness, are peculiar in their

nature and inhibit plurality in strict thinking. We cannot conceive two 'I's, two subjects, or two consciousnesses, unless these are turned into objects. This radical fact no pluralism can explain. Secondly, why we believe even illusions to be real at the time, baffles all psychology, and is rendered intelligible only in the light of the truth that as we are real we can never experience unreality, neither perceive or conceive it. That it was an illusion is an after-thought, which then deals with the reality of *that* discovery. In this manner, we transfer in every instance *our* reality to the object of knowledge. Both the 'I' and the world bear on them the sure proofs of their origin in Pure Consciousness. Like Pure Consciousness, the 'I' cannot be pluralized and the world is out there only for a cognizing consciousness. This concomitance of the world with consciousness must point to a common source of both in which they have their kinship.

As children fear darkness, says Schopenhauer, so do people fear annihilation. Exactly similar is the fear of Brahmanhood, devoid of qualities and individuality. But the fear must be overcome, if we are to face facts and not indulge in comforting fancies. Is there, however, room for fear? *Gauḍapāda* remarks : " They conceive fear in

what is free from all fear " (*Māṇḍūkya* III. 39). How then is this repugnance to Brahman to be accounted for? In the first place, when we try to comprehend it, we require it to be described in terms of what we know in waking life, that is to say, in empirical terms. It must be presented as an individual person with power, wisdom and mercy, in short, as the God of Theology, who alone can hear our prayers, hasten to our help, absolve us from our sins, and be our Saviour. But our experience of sleep is a precise negation of these features. Who can be satisfied with Pure Consciousness? This feeling evidently proceeds from the waking bias that ever predominates over our judgement. If in its true nature Brahman cannot be described in familiar terms, we ought not to conclude that it is nothing. Our whole nature revolts against such a view and we cannot conceive nothing. Our self surely is not nothing. On the contrary, the aim and object of manifestation would seem to be the objective realization of the greatness of Brahman as expressible in names and forms. The ideas of power etc. displayed in life must be traced to Brahman and we cannot define or describe it in other terms. To make it acceptable to our empirical conception, even personality must be imposed on it.

Thus the interpretation of sleep as a negation of all that we know is but a natural criticism from the view-point of waking. It is an external view. In itself, it is a Unity consisting of Consciousness and Bliss and divested of all alien elements. Since such is our essence, our opposition to it is futile.

Those that cannot make up their minds to accept the unadulterated truth, are free to regard Brahman as clothed with attributes which the manifestations suggest and justify. In fact, dream and waking are nature's comments on sleep. All the power, mental, physical and moral, that they display, all the goodness, mercy and wonder that we discern in them, must be ultimately traced to Pure Consciousness, though these manifestations do not affect it in the least. Says the *Bhagavadgītā* (X. 41): "Whatever is glorious, good, beautiful and mighty, understand thou that to go forth from a fragment of My splendour." Metaphysically there is no evil as there is no alien, although from the empirical view both are real and give rise to Ethics. Theology contemplates Reality clothed with attributes, though it does not realize the true basis on which its faith, must eternally stand. Vedanta supplies that basis. God then is not fictitious, but is the

Real of reals. Our faith in Him is not without its fruit, for life is Brahman, and no unreality can be smuggled into it. Still the path of Reason is distinct from that of Faith. While knowledge removes the fetters of ignorance *immediately*, faith steeps us endlessly in dualistic life in which perfect peace cannot reign, from which contradictions cannot be banished. The dualities of common life are appearances whose essence is the One.

Ethics is the eldest-born of Vedanta. As the interests of the individual are secured by the relation of the soul to God as one of Self to Self, so the ends of morality are ensured by the recognition of the same Self in others. The *Gita* declares (XIII. 28): "He that sees the One Ruler existing everywhere cannot injure another who is his own Self, and so attains the Highest Goal." And the goal is harmony and peace. The sense of individuality and the seeking of individual interests are wrecked on the rock of Universal Identity, the refusal to perceive any other entity than Self, or Brahman, which is the All and includes *all*. Theology which emphasizes distinctions can neither enjoin aimless self-denial nor ensure God's sympathy. For, if God and the souls are essentially distinct, their interests may

collide and never be identical. On the contrary, he who realizes his oneness with God, the all-inclusive Being, triumphs over his narrow views induced by a sense of individuality, and can find no evil in life that does not ultimately tend to confirm his conviction. To set the seal on it, he becomes pure in thought, word and deed, which are its inevitable forms of expression. "Vedanta" says Paul Deussen, "is the greatest support to morality." It fixes the standard of right and wrong and explains the instinct imbedded in us in the form of the categorical imperative or the preference of the good over the bad.

The aesthetic feeling or the sense of the beautiful is due to a temporary suppression of individuality and objectivity, to an unconscious realization of Oneness. This can never be explained by Pluralism. Culture, training, and personal predilections are contributory factors. But the effect, viz. annihilation of 'otherness' would be impossible if the 'other' were absolutely real. The aesthetic delight is a metaphysical experience, bringing to light the essentially blissful nature of Spirit. For beauty is externalized bliss.

In accounting for the second element in life, Vedanta propounds a theory. Brahman mani-

festis itself as the world in order to obtain an objective view of itself. It suffers separation into the subject and the object, and through eternal change it contemplates its own inexhaustible nature. Self-expression is for self-realization. Brahman works assiduously in the person of the scientist to ransack all corners of nature to make them intelligible. Hence the progress of science is bound to be unlimited. The Vedantic spirit supplies the most powerful stimulus to the cultivation of science in all departments of life. While the truths so discovered cannot be final, owing to the ceaseless change that rules the universe, they can never affect the Vedāntic truths which envisage all the three states and relate to a sphere transcending time. The reader will carefully remember that Vedānta has fulfilled its function when it has established the One Reality which is all-inclusive and which resolves every thing into itself leaving no remainder. The doctrines of *māyā* and *avidyā* are offered only to help the aspirant to rise to the plane of the Absolute Oneness, for the appearance of an outstanding second element might operate on him as a hold-back. When the Oneness is reached, however, there is no worry with a second.

The eschatology of Vedanta is among its dogmatics. It concerns the fate of unenlightened souls, and as its pronouncements are neither verifiable nor refutable, they must be tested only by the moral principles they involve. On the one hand the soul is eternal, and on the other, its embodiment must continue while it remains ignorant of its true nature. Hence the doctrines of *karma* and rebirth are formulated to determine its course through its spiritual evolution. Heaven and hell are described as places in which the souls of the dead experience joys and sufferings respectively as the strict consequence of their deeds in life—“according to acts and culture”—and not as reward or punishment (*Katha. V. 7*). When the period is over, they take new births, the nature of which is determined by the moral sum of deeds in the previous life. Their migration from body to body continues until enlightenment occurs, which puts an end to further migrations and brings on release. God as our truest friend guards and guides the soul through all its wanderings and can never desert it, for He is its very Self. His solicitude for its well-being never ceases till it is safely landed on the shore of deliverance. No soul is left to perish in the waters

of *samsāra* (transmigration). Sin which arises from attachment to non-Self creates a distance between us and our very Self, God. Prayer, meditation and worship bring about communion, and facilitate approach. Those that lean on faith must pass through a very strict discipline in life, practising self-control, celibacy and renunciation, devotion and service, worship and meditation. Through the grace of God so obtained and through special experiences they receive enlightenment leading to release. A Vedantin cannot decry these means warranting a pure and disinterested life, for he alone can truly appreciate the adamant basis on which they rest.

We shall now briefly consider the doctrines of *māyā* and *avidyā* which as we have seen have no place in the strict system of Truth.* *Māyā* is the power with which Brahman is regarded as invested, in order to account for the phenomenal life. The term is also used to indicate the phenomena. The contradictions which run through all empirical life point to its unreality by itself and demand a basic Reality to make it effective. The belief in objects taken by themselves comes to us

* For a fuller idea see the writer's "*Vedānta or the Science of Reality*".

naturally and is due to *avidyā* or ignorance of the Truth. Empirical life endowed with an existence independent of God is common delusion, the source of all evil. In truth, Brahman neither creates nor destroys. It is above change and time and is beatitude itself. In the strictest sense we are Brahman. Much of the unpopularity of Vedanta is due to the reckless manner in which the Truth is expounded. The idea that all is Brahman is inspiring, while the notion that all is *māyā* or illusion is to most people disconcerting, paralysing. The *Bhagavad-Gītā* in its own gripping style refers to the Absolute and the relative phase of the same Reality : “ Shining with all sense-faculties, without any senses; unattached, supporting everything ; and free from qualities, enjoying them ” (XIII. 14). The one is the transcendental and the other the empirical view.

The reader who has so far followed the Vedantic reasoning will readily perceive that the question of a cause never arises with regard to *māyā* or *avidyā*. *Māyā* is a theoretical concession to the *avidyā*-ridden soul to satisfy its craving for an explanation of the world, and *avidyā* or ignorance must in all cases be traced to the absence of enquiry. The order of evolution is fixed and immutable : First *avidyā* or ignorance, and then

intellection. Causation cannot precede ignorance, for it presupposes intellection. Knowledge is the implacable foe of ignorance which it completely destroys, Causation is defunct in the plane on which *māyā* and *avidyā* work.

There is an impression that Vedānta is mysticism and that the latter is the culmination of its teaching. The two, however, are wide and distinctly apart. The Upanishads no doubt deal largely with *upāsana*s or meditations which aim at the experience of mystic Oneness and the ecstasy resulting from it. This is evidently meant for these who avoid discussion and reasoning. The rational portion stands out more prominently and the methodology is based on it. The distinction between the two is radical and far-reaching. Mysticism seeks private experience by conscious effort, while Vedāntic reason builds on universal experience. Although philosophy must throw light on all kinds of human experience, its Truth cannot be drawn from special experiences, however rare ; for the latter are not within the lives of all. Vedānta aims at knowledge of Truth ; mysticism ecstasy.

In contemplating life we seem to be spectators of a strange drama; a play of shadows in the shape of the states enacted before us. The

actors and the scenes are ourselves transmuted, without the least loss of our integrity. So long as we take the shadow for substance, we are merged in joys and sorrows, in birth and death. When we remember that it is but a shadow and that Reality can cast no shadow, the play now known to be an illusion deceives us no more, and the states rolling and unrolling themselves before us fool us no more. We are left to admire the greatness of Brahman which can project such scenes and withdraw them into itself, leaving no trace behind. To dispel the fear of illusion *Santayana* suggests a way. It is "to entertain the illusion without succumbing to it, accepting it openly as an illusion and forbidding it to claim any sort of being but that which it obviously has ; and then, whether it profits me or not, it will not deceive me."

'TIGER' VARADACHAR*

(A STUDY)

Mr. 'Tiger' Varadachar is among the master-singers of our time. "If you are something in music," writes Mr. E. Krishna Aiyar towards the close of a critical appreciation, "and know which is which in the art, you will find in him gems of rare brilliance, not always easy to choose and grasp." This is due to the originality of his genius. In his *kirtana*, *swaram*, *pallavi*, *padam*, *jāvali*, and *folk-song*, he displays an inimitable method of his own.

Mr. Varadachar builds his *alapana* on a creative plan, evolving unexpected combinations by an artistic alteration of phraseology, of the long and the short. His *bhirkas* are like no other's. Continual new orders of notes flash and vanish, leaving you stunned by their charm. A new series starts from a remote note, yet with a natural link between the end of the last and the beginning of the next. His way is not to evolve gradually from a single note, or to conclude in the same. Mechanical parallelism is his aversion. He fills his *bhirkas* with consecutive

* From the 'Triveni', Madras, March, 1937.

notes as well as by sudden jumps. His slides over a whole gamut are exquisite. Commonplace combinations are, by an artistic vision, clothed in fresh beauty and novelty. The charm of the start and the finish are altogether his own. Theories affect him not, but his style generates new theories. His notes are fine crystals; and his *gamakas*, live sparks. No *rāga* can resist his blandishments but submits to his manner, ever new and ever elusive.

The structure of an adept's song is variegated by blends— compounds of two, or more, near or distant notes. Mr. Varadachar brims over with them. Their identity is unsuspected by the unanalytical ear. They look so innocently simple. But when you try to reproduce them on the *vinā* or the violin, their synthetic make-up is disclosed. You then discover that the weird yet dignified effects are due to the lurking presence of a large number of these blends, which are his current coin.

His *pallavi* is marked by clearness and precision. To follow his time is, even for experts, a hard though a zestful task. In the slowest, as in the quickest pace, he is equally at home. His accuracy is unfailing. *Muktāyams* and *makutas*

are definite and forewarning ; subtle variations accompany the commencement, the middle, and the end of each *avartana*. Lovely *swaras* appear in sparkling groups, and the resonant individuality of the *raga* is never missed. His *laya* is a continual feast, and a problem raised by the varying orders of the notes which intersperse the duration. *Jātis* are under his thumb. When he gives himself the go, he never tarries or hesitates, nor is he perplexed by any situation. The *laya* and the *tāla* would seem to wait on him, instead of his waiting on them by artifices known as the 'filling up of the gap.' His *pallavi* is thus a concentration of his intellectual skill no less than his artistic taste.

Mr. Varadachar is one of those responsible for the closer assimilation of the instrumental music with the living voice. He fires the instrumentalists with the same ardour with which he glows. The late Viṇā Seshanna of honoured memory is said to have observed, on a public occasion, that he was not a *tiger*, but a *lion* among musicians. Even professional jealousies give way before the force of genius.

In handling the commonest *rāgas*, or the most familiar folk-songs, he creates a new earth,

a new heaven, dipped in all the colours of the rainbow. "Whatever he touches he adorns." The trite and the commonplace becomes, in his hands, classical, The dull and the hackneyed he enlivens and enriches. At every step he creates, and he creates every step. His ideas flow, and each is a new birth, endowed with life, sweetness, and strength. For repetition, look not, for he lacks not in inspiration or invention. His voice is sometimes refractory, but when he has curbed its whims, no slave is more obedient to his lightest bidding. It then, like Ariel, cheerfully performs the tasks imposed by the Master.

He is deeply versed in the art *abhinaya* which is at present in imminent danger of dying out. Even in *devaranāma* his power of *expression* bathes the spectator's mind in the pure light of heaven. His snatches are a treat. His Hindustani is in the strict manner of *Gavāyis*, and one can hardly discover the imitation when it so faithfully recalls the original.

Life at best is a fight, often a bitter fight. Mr. Varadachar takes it with a fund of humour which triumphs over the ills by insistent defiance. This innate sense of humour illumines and adorns his style, eked out by characteristic

motions of the head and the body, to the irrepressible delight of young and old. Only the 'Talkies' can preserve this aspect.

Mr. Varadachar is perhaps the only representative now living of the old masters of musical tradition, of the schools of Coimbatore Raghava Aiyar, Pallavi Sesha Aiyar, and Patnam Subrahmanya Aiyar. If we are to make any progress in the development of our national music, the unique styles of the great masters should be religiously preserved, for, they combine the intellectual and the emotional elements in the highest measure. Artistes of established fame like Mr. Varadachar are, however, found to be unwilling to feed the gramophone plates with their specimens, for fear that their worth may be cheapened or their manner vulgarized through undeft imitation. Such reluctance has to be overcome in the interests of the science, and for the spread of healthy concepts which must outlive the fashion and the caprice of the hour.

Books You Ought to Read

Books authored by

Sri Sri Satchidanāndendra Saraswati Swamiji

Published through A.P. Karyalaya, Holenarasipura.

Note :

- (i) *The figure in the bracket near the Sl.No. indicates the title number (Krāmanka) of the book published by Karyalaya.*
- (ii) *The figure in the bracket after the name of the book indicates the year of publication, Edition.*

Sl.No.	Name of the Book	Pages
1.	(58) Avāsthathraya or The Unique Method of Vedanta(1982, II edition) The first publication on the method of the three states of Consciousness, to wit, waking, dream, deep sleep which our Real self transcends. A valuable introduction to the study of Vedanta as the Science of Reality.	20
2.	(63) Narada's Aphorisms on Bhakti <i>(With text, translation and notes. (1997, II edition)</i> The book will serve as a valuable guide to those who wish to tread the path of Bhakti or God-Love. The book is traditionally ascribed to the Sage Narada. The book is written in a lucid style & expounds the birth, growth, development, unfoldment & expression of Bhakthi, within a short compass. The treatment is quite non - sectarian & followers of other religions also are likely to find much food for reflection.	
3.	(75) Minor works of S'aṅkara (1999, II edition) Here are Sixteen of the most popular minor works ascribed to S'aṅkara, with English translation and short notes elucidating all different points.	68

4. **(124) How to Recognize the Method of Vedanta**
(1995, II edition) 128

The first sustained attempt to reduce all the seemingly various Methods of the Upanishads to the only comprehensive Method of **Adhyārōpa-apavāda** (*superimposition & Rescission*). This treatise contains a brief account of the History of Vedantic thought up to the time of Sarvajnatma Muni.

This is an independent edition of the Sanskrit book *Introduction to the Vedanta Prakriyā Pratyabhijñā*.

5. **(129) Vedanta or the Science of Reality**
by K.A. Krishna Swamy Iyer (1991, III edition) 551

With a Foreword by Dr. S. Radhakrishnan. This is a work dealing with the immediate Realization of Brahman by pure reflection on the witness of three states. It sets out the basis of all religions & the meaning of all experience. Faith justified by Reason and Ethics is placed on firm ground. All systems of thought, Eastern & Western, are examined to prove the truths of Vedanta. Second Revised edition was printed in 1965 & third edition in 1991.

6. **(132, 137, 140) S'uddha S'aṅkara-Prakriyā-Bhāskara. (1965, 1967 & 1968, I edition) ; (2001, Comprehensive I edition) 186**

Sheds Light on the Vedantic Method according to S'aṅkara.

Three booklets in Part I, Part II and Part III printed during 1965, 1967 and 1968 are now printed as a comprehensive edition.

Part I (1, 2) (1965) - p. 48 determining the genuine doctrine of the Upanishads & the hoary tradition of S'āṅkara's school as distinguished from other ancient Advaitic Schools.

Part II (3,4,5) (1967) - p. 98 Treating of the distinctive features and tenets of S'āṅkara Vedanta and the unique comprehensive Method of the system, and the Varieties of that Method.

Part III (6 & 7) (1968) - p. 98 Compares & contrasts S'āṅkara's tradition of Vedanta with the other Ancient Schools of Advaita that flourished side by side with it, but have been now supplanted by S'āṅkara's system. The distinctive Vedantic doctrine of Ajāti or non- origination has been clearly set forth at some length.

Also repudiates the charge usually levelled at S'āṅkara's System Viz, that Gaudapada & S'āṅkara have themselves borrowed their vital doctrines from S'ūnyāvadins (Nihilists) and the Vijñānavādins (Buddhistic Idealists)

7. (135) Salient Features of S'āṅkara Vedanta
(1990, II edition) 136

Presents Matter & Method of genuine S'āṅkara Vedanta in a small compass. The reference to original texts & classification & consolidation of the most important upanishadic teachings would make this little book a useful Companion to the "S'uddha - S'āṅkara-Prakriyā-Bhāskara" of the same author.

- 8. (146) S'aṅkara's clarifications of certain Vedantic concepts. (1996, II edition) 96**
- This book contains a systematic account of the clarification of certain Vedantic Concepts as presented in S'aṅkara's classical writings, especially in his Sutra Bhashya
- 9. (183) The Vision of Ātman (1995, II edition) 130**
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 (5) Nididhyasana, Upasana and Yoga. (6) Are Sravana & other means enjoined (7) Relative importance of the three means.
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- 11. (158) Is'āvasyōpanishad (1972, I edition) 70**
 (with translation.)
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not mere subtle intellectualism but is an Intuition of the Reality, arising through Divine Grace. The writer has incidentally refuted the oft-repeated assertion that S'ankara's philosophy is an out-and-out Rationalistic system and that he has provided no place for Iswara in his Advaita-Philosophy.

- 13. (162) Misconceptions about S'ankara** (1998, II edn) **126**
 All criticisms on Vedanta are convincingly solved using the genuine traditional methodology of S'ankara Vedanta.
- 14. (163) The Upanishadic approach to Reality** (1997, II edition) **80**
 The Unique Method of Teaching Vedanta adopted by Sri Gaudapada, S'ankara & Sureswara.
- 15. (176) The Science of Being** (1978, I edition) **128**
 Deals with chapter VI of Chandogya Upanishad; -presents in a nut-shell the true nature of the Science of Being.
- 16. (202) Introductions to Vedanta text books** (1996, I edition) **226**
(Compilation of Introductions of English & Sanskrit books of S.S. Swamiji)
 Sri S.S. Swamiji did yeomen service to students & seekers of Vedantic philosophy by writing highly enlightening Introductions in English, to several books of Sanskrit (17 Nos) and English (8 Nos). All such important introductions are compiled here, keeping in mind those readers who cannot read the original Sanskrit works but still eager to know the unique Teachings in them.

Books (Authored / Translated)

by Sri D.B. Gangolli

- 17. (186) The unique teachings of S'ankara** (1983, I edn) **66**

It is a very Valuable booklet in which Adhyasa (Misconception born out of Avidya or ignorance) is dealt with clearly. Without a thorough understanding of this fundamental teaching of Adi S'ankara, a true seeker cannot acquire the necessary qualification to enter through the portals to the august Sanctum of the Spiritual Science of Vedanta

- 18 (201) The pristine pure Advaita Philosophy of**
Adi S'ankara (1996, I edition) **138**
 (Translation of *S'ankara Siddhanta* in kannada by S.S. Swamiji)

This book - though small in size has profound, lofty, unalloyed teachings of Adi S'ankara. This was the product of relentless & long drawn research carried out over a period of 65 years by Sri Swamiji. As a result of process of decadence & degeneration in the calibre of the preceptors & their teachings in the post S'ankara - era, many an alien & doctrine tenet, totally opposed to the traditional methodology propounded by the most ancient line of teachers like Vedavyasa, Gaudapada, S'ankara & Sureswara, have come into vogue even in the highest Vedantic circles.

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