

of the macrocosm—the universe. The constituents physical and super physical in both are the same; they emanate from one and the same source and after due stages of progress are re-absorbed into the same source. In Sanskrit terminology the *Pinda* and the *Brahmanda* are the same.

Now the *Brahmanda* has been determined by Hindu philosophers to be fourteen-fold and from a central plane are conceived *Sapta Swargas* and *Sapta Patalas** in opposite directions, the former being deemed as being above the plane, the latter below it. The human being has to bear all the responsibility, by the very fact of his evolution and satisfying his connection with these worlds. They are related to his being as helpful in view of his progress or harmful as leading him to fall.

It is in man's power to have direct knowledge of these worlds and having risen to the middle plane in Nature's own course of his evolution, he has to administer to his progress upward by subordinating his animal instincts and developing the spiritual ones. He succeeds in developing the inner sight and is able to enjoy a vision of all in proportion to his progress. The progress is a matter of man's achievement. Nature is indeed furthering his higher evolution, just as She has been doing through the earlier four stages of *Udvijja*, *Svedaja*, *Andaja* and *Jarayuja*. But Nature further blesses him with a power at the very stage of his human evolution. It is a power and as such it depends on its master and user to obtain good from its use or reap evil from its abuse. The free will that comes to Man, the Self Consciousness, the reflecting power is that power and as already said, it is on his willingness to use this power rightly that he will help on the course of evolution started by Nature. His connection with the other worlds is the vital point in the case.

Uncivilised man in evolution is subject to life and death and re-birth and re-death in his own sphere until his free will

* See section on occult world.



CL

improves his lot. In the previous four stages of evolution, the animal perfection came to man without any hindrance to his progress from an inferior to a higher type of life. Nature then was all powerful and her task was to lead the individual onward to the human stage until free will was developed. But at this stage the force of Nature although helpful to the full extent, gives up mastery and the reins of power into the hands of the properly developed individual soul. He understands what is right for him and what is wrong ; where the animal is predomenant in him and where he should rise superior as man. Until the judgment resulting from this knowledge bears on his conduct, he is subject to the cycle of birth and re-birth, death and re-death. Death takes the soul, to the land of the ghosts called the *Preta Loka* which he inhabits until another body for re-birth is developed, but there is no progress but only the alternate ingress and egress into *Pretatwa* and *Manushyatwa*. He is not sent back into the animal stages again unless his will corrupts him and retards his evolution. For it is equally possible in that case that he will fall into a backward stage of life and undergo all the evils of it.

In the earliest uncivilised condition the natural man as we may call him does not harm his own interest and remains passive. He experiences the *Preta* life after death. Then, if by positive effort of will, he improves his lot, his next higher experience is in connection with the *Pitriloka*, while persisting in a degrading use of his will he will go down to the *Naraka* world. In the *Pitriloka* the soul of man attains fitness to rise to the *Devaloka* (worlds of Devas) from which there is little danger of falling back to the *Bhuloka* (mortal world.) The first four *Bhuloka* *Pretaloka* *Pitriloka* and *Narakaloka* all are the lower set of worlds connected with the our *Bhuloka*, from the *Devaloka* the higher worlds are enjoyed by a safer progress, the Pitris help the soul to rise to the *Devaloka* and he goes on receiving help in the way from the Devas and Rishis until he reaches the *Satya-loka* the 7th highest one which is also called *Gñanaloka*.



To reach this final goal a three-fold purification is necessary—*Adhibhuta Shuddhi*, *Adhidaiva Shuddhi* and *Adhyatma Shuddhi*; the latter two proceed from *Karma*, *Upasana* and *Gnana* with the help of the Devas and of the Rishis; *Karma* and *Upasana* have been treated of in separate chapters* and *Gnana* is the gradually rising realisation of knowledge † as developed in the *Darshanas* which also are explained in due order in other chapters. The first—the *Adhibhuta Shuddhi* which depends by far on the disciplining of the body and control over external circumstances, is attained by means of the main factor of the special *Dharma* of Hindus—the *Varnashram Dharma*. ‡ The help of the *Pitris* plays an important part in the progress of the soul in the stage in which the larger part of life has to be passed by man.

From the beginning of the knotting up of *Chit* and *Jada* as described in the section on the Law of *Karma*, up to the evolution of man at this stage, the progress is almost automatic, being the result of Nature's own *Karma*, the *Sahaja Karma*. This progress needs not be understood as re-incarnation of the Soul, which will be pointed out as an essential fact in the progress under *Jaiva Karma* next treated of. In this progress there is no responsible Conscious *Karma* on the part of the Soul, but such *Karma* as is helped on by the *Devatās* for general advancement of the Soul to a stage of ability to perform responsible *Karma* which has called *Jaiva Karma* by *Karma Mimansa Darsana*. § The four stages of pre-human progress comprehend 84 lacs of *Yonis*, each stage being a Group-Soul under the care a particular *Devatā*. In the succession of births in each of the four kingdoms, there is no delay in passing from one *Yoni* to another. But when one whole kingdom is over, some time is taken by the *Devatas* before the progress in the next kingdom commences. When

* *Karma* in chapters 4 and 20. *Upasana* in chapters from 5 to 11.

† See chapters from 12 to 16.

‡ Dealt with in a separate chapter.

§ See *Karma Mimansa Philosophy* of *Bharadwaja*.



all the five Koshas are developed as in the earliest human stage the human Soul becomes fit for performing the Jaiva Karma, subjecting himself to responsibility for the results of his action, going under the name of *Pápa* (sin) and *Punya* (holy merit). Here is man conscious of himself as an individual being and this consciousness is so intense that in the beginning of his evolution in this primary human condition, he takes on the Preta (ghost) body corresponding to his human personality under-going a recurrence of Preta and Man, until his Jaiva Karma helps him to rise to higher stages of spirituality. This progress requires as many as two lacs of Yonis to pass through. After this he is able to evolve himself by the force of his own Karma into the *Pitri* and higher worlds, going higher and higher in proportion to his Karma.

So complete is the conception and conviction of the Indian mind regarding the existence of rising spiritual worlds already spoken of, that there is nothing like a question or doubt regarding re-incarnation of the human Soul in the Hindu mind. The philosophy of the Hindus starts with enunciating the futility of the doctrine of taking the body as the Soul,—the atheistic view.

In the natural course of evolution there is no fall backward except as a matter of punishment, as in the case of criminals, and the progress from the fallen condition will be to humanity and no intermediate lower stages, for example, Bharata * was re-born as an antelope, and was immediately restored to humanity after the death of that body.

Man is equally apt to rise or fall to anyone of the 14 worlds, the seven lower ones, or the seven higher ones. He may be undergoing the revolution of the cycle of birth and death, involving appearance in the worlds of Preta, *Pitri*, Narak etc. And he may as well become an Asura or Devatá through this same human stage according to the nature of his Karma.

* See Vishnu Bhagwata Purana.



VEDIC DARSHAN.

HINDU PHILOSOPHY.

XVI.

WE have already dealt with the seven upper Planes of Knowledge in another Section and we have also shown in it that each of the Seven Systems of Hindu Philosophy is connected with a plane of knowledge. As the Seven Planes of Knowledge are complete and comprehensive, so are the Seven Systems of Philosophy; and they include all schools of Hindu Philosophy. The Darshanas of the Shaiva sect such as Pāshupata Darshana, and Shaiva Darshana &c., and the Darshanas of the Shāktas, such as several Tantric Systems of Philosophy, and also the Systems of the Vaishnava sect, consisting of the doctrine of Dualism, and qualified Dualism and so on are all included in one or other of the aforesaid Seven Systems of Hindu Philosophy.

We can divide these Seven Systems into three Groups (Prasthānas). The first group is called *Padārtha-Vāda* group, the second is *Sāṅkhya-Pravachana* group, and the third is the *Mīmāṃsā* group.

The Seven Systems of Philosophy are:—

1. The Nyāya System.
2. The Vaisheshika System.
3. The Yoga System.
4. The Sāṅkhya System.
5. The Karma Mimāṃsā Systems.
 - (a) The first half by Bharadvāja; and
 - (b) The second half by Jaimini.
6. The Daivī Mimāṃsā System.
7. The Brahma Mimāṃsā or the Vedānta System.

Thus we find that the division of Philosophy into Seven Systems is a perfectly natural division. The first two are called *Padārtha-Vāda* group, the third and the fourth belong to the *Sāṅkhya* group; and the last three to the *Mīmāṃsā* group of Philosophy.



The term "Six Systems of Philosophy" which is met with in modern books has been borrowed from the Jains and the Buddhists; for their Philosophy was called the "Six Systems of Philosophy". In imitation of the atheistic philosophy of the Jains and the Buddhists, our Vedic philosophy has been named "Six Systems of Vedic Philosophy." The expression "Six Systems of Philosophy" does not occur in a single work of the Rishis.

The aim of the Seven Darshanas—All the Seven Systems lead to the one goal of Wisdom, viz., seeing the Self as Real, and everything else as unreal. All the Schools start with the enquiry: What is the way to attain perfect Beatitude, Moksha, or Salvation? They all assert that the deliverance from the bond of re-births and from pain, here and hereafter, is secured only by Knowledge. The aim of all these philosophies is to point out what this knowledge is.

There is as a fact no antagonism in the Seven Systems. They are best understood by being viewed in relation to each other. They form in their entirety one great scheme of Philosophic truth, leading to One Goal. All the Systems have but one object in view—to rescue men from miseries and sufferings and re-births. The way of rescue is one and the same, the removal of ignorance, or false knowledge, which takes the unreal to be real, such ignorance being the prime cause of bondage and misery. When such ignorance is removed by true knowledge, there is Moksha.

1. *Nyâya Philosophy*.—The founder of this System of Philosophy was Goutama. It aims to lead to the goal with the help of logical reasoning as the main thing. Goutam in his Nyâya system sets out, like the founders of other systems, with the enquiry: What is the way to obtain Nishreyasa (Perfect Beatitude)? And he then asserts that Perfect Knowledge or Knowledge of Truth is the only means.—This Knowledge embraces a variety of subjects but is chiefly directed to the true nature of the Soul as distinct from the body. He who obtains this knowledge is freed from all pains

and evils of life here and hereafter, and goes beyond all re-births. In fact he attains Nisreyasa,—Perfect Beatitude, and Moksha,—final Liberation.

The pains to which the human life is subject are due to the Soul's Connection and union with matter, *i. e.*, the material body, and its continued and frequent re-births. These births are the results of the human mind's constant *pravritti* (activity), which produces Karma. And Karma again produces results, requiring rewards for meritorious deeds and punishments for evil acts.

This *pravritti* of the mind has sprung from the fault of dislike, or desire, or stupidity. The origin of these defects is traced to *Mithyā jñāna* or wrong Knowledge, or ignorance. The Nyāya intends to remove this ignorance concerning the Soul and the Universe by the True Knowledge. This will destroy the faults of desire and dislike, with that will pass away *Pravritti*. Re-births will then cease, and pain and misery will be entirely removed. The removal of all pains and the restoration of the Soul to its original State of Rest is *Nisreyasa*, which is the *Summum bonum* at which the Nyāya aims.

The Nisreyasa is to be attained through Knowledge, which means the conviction of the Soul's eternal existence distinct from the body. Gotama enumerates sixteen topics to be studied which will help one to attain True Knowledge. They are as follows:—

1. *Pramāna*, means of right Knowledge.
2. *Prameya*, object of right Knowledge.
3. *Samshaya*, doubt.
4. *Prayojana*, motive, purpose.
5. *Drishtānta*, illustration.
6. *Siddhānta*, proved truth.
7. *Avayava*, members, or syllogistic premises.
8. *Tarka*, Confutation.
9. *Nirnaya*, Decision, ascertainment.



CSL

10. *Vada*, discussion for arriving at truth.
11. *Jalpa*, somehow to support one's own statement without regard to truth.
12. *Vitandā*, Cavil.
13. *Hetwābhas*, fallacy.
14. *Chhala*, perversion, quibble.
15. *Jāti*, futility.
16. *Nigraha-Sthān*, confutation, occasion for rebuke.

The aim of Nyāya is to prove that which is proved. What then is to be proved? The Nyāya answers: The Soul.

II. *Vaisheshick Philosophy*.—This system of Philosophy which has Kanād for its founder also starts with the enquiry: What is the way to attain Perfect Beatitude (Nisreyasa)? It asserts that Deliverance (Moksha) is only to be attained by the Knowledge of Truth. And the Knowledge of Truth comes by discussion of the agreement and disagreement of the *Six Padārthas* or Categories.

These Six Padārthas, the Objects of Knowledge, are the following:—

1. *Dravya*, Substance.
2. *Guna*, quality.
3. *Karma*, Action or motion.
4. *Samānya*, Genus.
5. *Vishesha*, Species.
6. *Samavāya*, Intimate relation or Combination.

To the above six categories, the Commentators add a seventh, called *abhāva*, non-existence, which has been included in the categories to bring out clearly the meaning of *bhāva*, or existence by showing the contrast between the two though Kanāda has not expressly enumerated *abhāva* as one of the categories, yet he deals with it. So the categories might be taken as seven.

Substance is the Sole Substratum. It is existent, non-eternal and possesses qualities and actions. It is the intimate cause of an aggregate effect or product.



Substance is divided into nine classes, *vis*:—

1. Earth.
2. Water.
3. Energy.
4. Air.
5. Ether (Akâsha).
6. Time.
7. Space.
8. Soul (Atmâ).
9. Mind.

Kanâda regards the Soul as ubiquitous and infinite,—it has the qualities of number and the like, which are possessed by space and time. Its existence is proved by the I-ness (self-identity) and also from the fact that there is an agent who controls the Senses, as a knife cuts. Without it, the Senses would be useless, for they are instruments of an unseen Ruler.

All material Substances, according to Kanâda, are primarily Atoms, and secondarily Aggregates of atoms. They are eternal in Atoms, and transient in aggregates. Kanâda thus explains the "existence", and "aggregation" of atoms.

Kanâda dwells on the categories to the minutest point,—so much so that perhaps it includes all that modern physical Science says. In fact his system is a diagnosis of Nature (Matter),—of what we perceive by the Senses. In Kanâda's opinion therefore the study of Nature to the minutest point, to understand Her thoroughly, thus being able to see the difference of the Soul with Nature, is the way to Final Beatitude.

III. *The Yoga Philosophy*.—Patanjali the founder of this system says that God, Iswara, the Supreme Ruler is a Soul or Spirit distinct from other Souls, unaffected by the ills with which they are beset, unconcerned with good or bad



deeds and their consequences, and with passing thoughts. In Him is the utmost Omniscience. He is infinite and unlimited by time.

The Yoga system further says : Objects capable of degrees reach their limit somewhere, as smallness in atoms, and magnitude in Ether ; so Knowledge, which more or less is in all beings, must reach its extreme limit somewhere, and that somewhere cannot be anywhere else but in Iswara.

Patanjali then points out the means by which pains can be avoided, re-births prevented, and Final Beatitude attained. According to him, Liberation means Union with God,—the complete merging into the Supreme One. This is Yoga.

The system of Philosophy under discussion is rather a Science than a Philosophy. It deals only with the practical means by which *complete union with Iswara* can be attained. It has left most part of its philosophical side of its system to be dealt with by the Sāṅkhya.

Patanjali has discussed his Philosophy in four chapters. The first deals with *Samadhi* or trance, the second, the means of its attainment, the third, the transcendent powers obtained by it, and the fourth, *Kaivalya* or Union with Iswara.

How is this Kaivalya to be attained by man ? The Yoga replies: By Samadhi. And what is this Samadhi and how is it to be gained ? This is the main question that Patanjali attempts to answer in his Yoga Sūtras.

The Yoga starts with the resolve that pain, here and hereafter, must be prevented. The evil with which man has to contend lies, according to Patanjali, in the various mental states. How is this to be done ? How is the thinking principle of the mind to be brought under complete control ? How is the mind to be made *perfectly calm*, as this is the only way to attain Samadhi or trance ? Patanjali says : "Yoga is the hindering of the modifications of the thinking principle of the mind". The Yoga is that state in which the mind is



perfectly stilled,—in which complete separation of the Soul has taken place with the body, and therefore mind's occupation is gone. Yet the Soul remains awhile invested with body and works, as the potter's wheel continues whirling for a time by the force of the impulse given to it previously. Therefore Yoga and its result,—*Samādhi* and *Kaivalya*, can be attained even in this life.

The Yoga then goes on to describe the different steps by which *Kaivalya* can be attained. They are eight in number, namely,—

1. *Yama*, control of the Senses.
2. *Niyama*, to acquire purification of the mental faculties.

These two prepare one for the practice of Yoga.

3. *Asana*, bodily postures that help —meditation.
4. *Prāṇāyām*, control of the *Prāṇa* through the control of the breaths.
5. *Pratyahāra*, gathering the Senses inwards.
6. *Dharaṇā*, holding the mind to a certain point in the supersensual world.
7. *Dhyāna*, mind's remaining fixed in an unbroken current in God.
8. *Samādhi*, trance, or super-consciousness.

This great *Samādhi* is the end of Yoga, this Union of the human Soul with the Supreme Soul. This is the state in which man does not exist, but only the Supreme One. This is *Kaivalya*.

IV. *The Sāṅkhya Philosophy*.—This system of Philosophy has the great Rishi Kapila for its founder. The *Sāṅkhya* system avoids the discussion of the existence of God. It does not say that there is no God. It simply says that the existence of God will not be attempted to be proved by the *Sāṅkhya*. The *Sāṅkhya* is not an atheistic philosophy, as it erroneously supposed by many. It holds that God can be perceived and seen, but only by super-consciousness.



The Sāṅkhya tries to find the way by which man can be made happy here and hereafter and to point out the way by which he can attain Moksha.

Complete and perpetual exemption from every sort of ill is the Moksha which the Sāṅkhya proposes to attain by the acquisition of True and Perfect Knowledge.

True and Perfect Knowledge by which deliverance from all evils is attainable consists in rightly understanding and discriminating the Twenty-five Principles (Tattwas).

The following are the Twenty-five Principles enumerated by the Sankhyas:—

1. *Prakriti*, (Mul-prakriti, or Pradhāna (Nature, primordial matter in a subtle state.)
2. *Buddhi*, or *Mahat*, (Consciousness, Intelligence).
3. *Ahaṁkāra*, (Egoism), Self-Consciousness.
- 4-8. *Five Tanmatras*, (Subtle particles).
- 9-19. Five *Gyan Indriya*, five *Karma Indriya* and *Manas* i. e. five organs of Sense,—five organs of action, and the mind.
- 20-24. The five *Bhootas* five elements, *vis.*, earth, water, fire, air and ether.
25. *Purusha*. (Atman, Soul or Self.)

Prakriti or Pradhan (Nature) is the plastic origin, or the universal material cause of all things. It is eternal matter, an extremely varified essence, out of which everything in the universe has been built up.

By the side of this Eternal and Infinite *Prakriti* stands *Purusha* or Atman (Soul). The Soul is neither produced nor productive. It is unchangeable and, immaterial.

The Purusha is innumerable in number. It exists in multitudes from eternity. It exists along with Prakriti. It is united to Prakriti in order to contemplate Her and be abstracted from Her. By the union of Purusha and Prakriti takes place Creation, consisting of the other principles.



All the changes, expansions, manifestations and developments of Prakriti in Creation are due to Her three inherent Gunas, or principles of Creation, namely, *Sattwa*, *Rajas* and *Tamas*.

The first and highest is *Sattwa*. It is alleviating, enlightening, attended with happiness, and virtue predominates in it. The second is *Rajas*. It is active, and attended with misery. The third and the lowest is *Tamas*. It is heavy and obstructive, attended with sorrow and dulness. These three Gunas are not mere accidents, or qualities of Prakriti, but are of Her essence and substance, and enter into Her composition.

Thus we find that Prakriti and Purusha exist from eternity in a mysterious union. Prakriti, on account of Her three *Gunas*, is productive and produces this universe. The result of this mysterious union is production of Mahat or Buddhi (Understanding, Intelligence, Super-Consciousness). It is the first Creation of Prakriti.

From Buddhi proceeds Ahamkâra (Egoism) which brings the perception of *I am*. From this Ahamkâra are produced the five Principles, called Tanmâtras, which are five subtle particles or atoms. The five grosser elements are earth, water, fire, air, and ether. From Ahamkâra are also produced eleven organs of Sense and action (Indriyas), five (eyes, ears, &c.,) being those of Knowledge, and five (hands, feet &c.) of action. The remaining eleventh sense is internal,—an organ both of Knowledge and action. This organ is termed *Manas* or Mind.

These eleven organs with Ahamkara and Buddhi are thirteen "Instruments of Knowledge". An external organ of Knowledge brings in the sensation, the internal organ (mind) then examines. Ahamkâra appropriates the perception as being the perceiver's own; Buddhi resolves, and an organ of action executes.



CSL

The desire of Purusha is fruition or Liberation. For this purpose He is in the first place invested with a subtle body, formed only of all the above-mentioned principles, except the five grosser elements. This person or subtle body is called *Linga Sarira* or *Sukshma Sarira*. It is affected by sentiments, but incapable of enjoyment until invested with the grosser body (*Sthula Sarira*).

For the purpose of fruition or enjoyment, Purusha clad in this subtle frame, is invested with a grosser body composed of all the five gross elements. This grosser body is perishable.

Corporeal creation, consisting of Souls invested with bodies, comprises many orders of beings.

In all this creation, Purusha experiences ills arising from decay and death, evils and miseries. Thus it passes through innumerable re-incarnations till it is finally liberated from its union with Prakriti. How is this Liberation to be attained, the Liberation which is the Salvation, the Perfect Beatitude by Perfect Knowledge of the five and twenty principles. But this Liberation naturally takes place at the end; for Purusha desists, because he has seen Prakriti in all Her phases. And She too desists, for She has nothing more to show.

V. (a) *Bharadvāja's Karma Mimamsā Philosophy*.— This system deals mainly with the mysteries of action and the Law of Karma. It is divided into four chapters. The first deals with the following topics:—

1. Dharma.
2. Divisions and Sub-divisions of Dharma.
3. The nature of God, His powers.
4. Dharma for men and for women.
5. Rules of good conduct.
6. Asram dharma and Caste dharma.
7. Chastity of women.
8. Karma as connected with *pāpa* and *punya*; and so on.



The second chapter deals with Seed of Karma, and discusses how Karma is the cause of in-born impulses and tendencies ; the relation of Karma to Creation, which is said to be dependent on Karma ; the scientific explanation of caste and Asram Systems ; re-incarnation of Souls, and the 16 Vaidic Sanskâras, their philosophy, and how the purification of Karma is attained by the purification of Sanskâra, and so on.

The third chapter deals mainly with Karma, its nature, its relation to in-born impulses and tendencies, and to Law of Karma in general, the philosophy of re-incarnation, the three kinds of principal Karma, *i. e.* (*Jaiva Karma*, *Aisha Karma* and *Sahaja Karma*) * and similar topics.

The fourth and the last chapter deals with:—

Moksha or liberation ; how it can be attained by good and virtuous acts ; what is renunciation ; how to control Nature ; special aspects of Karma, and other topics.

V. (*b*) *Jaimini's Karma Mimamsâ System*.—This is rather a defence of the Vedic rites and rituals than a philosophy. Its whole scope is the ascertainment of Dharma, Dharma here signifying Sacrifices, Rites, Rituals and other acts of religion ordained in the Vedas.

Both these two systems together, namely V (*a*) and V (*b*) form one system, called the Mimamsâ System, of which V (*a*) is the first part, and V (*b*) the second. The first part deals with the law of Karma in general, the second deals with the Vedic System of Karma, *i. e.* Vedic rites and ceremonies and sacrifices.

VI. *Daivi Mimamsa Philosophy*.—This System lays emphasis on the Blissful Character of the Supreme and holds that Brahman and its Shakti, like fire and its burning quality, are identical ; that creation proceeds from Shakti ; and

* These have been explained at length on the section on the Law of Karma.



urges its followers to see God in His three aspects of *Brahma*, *Ishwara* and *Virât*. It holds that the Supreme Lord is Love, and is of the nature of unutterable Bliss. (रसो वै सः आनन्दरूपं वरमं यद्विभाति) The aim of man ought to be to try to obtain that Holy Love and Bliss and be immersed in it.

A man's love for his brother, or his sister, or his son or wife, his reverence for his superiors ; all this is but the shadow of the Great Love which pervades every thing.*

How to acquire this holy Love for God? Various methods are prescribed for the Bhakta or the traveller on this path, some of which are: Hearing His name, uttering and singing His name, reciting hymns in praise of Him, worshipping Him, meditating on Him in solitude, serving the country and fellow-beings with the thought that he is serving Him he loves, &c.

This is the first stage (called *Vaidhi*) of devotion to God. This is acquired by practice.

The second stage (called *Râgâtmicâ Bhakti*, of the Bhakta arrives when he establishes one of the following relations with God, and loves Him as such.

A Bhakta may regard himself either as God's servant, or as His friend, or as His son, or as His lover.

When by continued practices, a Bhakta's feelings of devotion to God intensify, and rise to the highest pitch, he sees his Object of Love everywhere and in everything,—in which state he is one with the Supreme Being. This is the third and last stage of the Bhakta. This is called *Para Bhakti*.

The first chapter of this System of Philosophy deals with the above considerations. The remaining chapters deal with Devatâs, Rishis and Pitras ; the creation of the subtle worlds, and their influence on and relation to, this physical world ; and how liberation is possible through Bhakti.

* This subject has been dealt with in the section on Bhakti.



Some of the topics discussed in this system of Philosophy have been drawn upon to explain and illustrate the Sections on "The Occult world", and "Worship".

VII. The Vedanta Philosophy.—

This is the most important of all the Hindu Philosophies. In fact, it is *the last thing in all Philosophy*. The great structure of the Hindu religion stands on the strong foundation of the Vedanta Philosophy.

It is a development of the Philosophy of the Vedas,—especially, that of the Upanishads. The great Rishi, Veda-Vyâsa wrote his wonderful *Brahma-Sutras* based on the Philosophy of the Vedas and the Upanishads. Then many great and learned men wrote commentaries on them, and thus fully developed the Vedanta Philosophy.

The Vedanta Sutras begin: "Now, therefore, is the enquiry concerning Brahma, the Supreme One".

"He is that, whence are the creation, continuance, and dissolution."

"He is the Omnipotence Creator of the worlds, and Omniscient Author of revelation."

"This appears from the import and right understanding of the Vedas."

In the first chapter of the Sutras, the nature of the Supreme One has been discussed. Innumerable passages have been quoted from the various Upanishads. We shall quote a few.

The most important tenet of the Vedanta is that the Supreme One is the material as well as the efficient and instrumental cause of the universe.

Holding that there is absolutely *nothing else in the whole universe but That One*, the Vedanta goes on to describe the nature of That One.



"He wished to be many and prolific, and became manifold" (Chhandogya).

Therefore He is a Sentient Being, consequently rational and not insensible as the Prakriti of the Sāṅkhyas.

Then again—

"The Omnipotent, Omniscient, Sentient Cause of the Universe is essentially happy. He is the ethereal element from which all things proceed and to which all return. He is the breath in which all beings merge and into which all rise. He is the *light* which shines in heaven and in all places high and low,—everywhere throughout the world and within the human body. He is the life breath and intelligent self,—immortal, undying and ever blissful" (Chhandogya).

"Brahman is eternal, omniscient, pervader of all things, ever satisfied in Nature, ever pure, intelligent and free. He is Holy Knowledge and Pure Bliss and Joy".

"Brahman is Supreme,—Supreme and all-excellent, and pervading the body of each existent thing, He dwells deep in all existences. He encompasses and regulates the universe."

"The Brahman is the cause as well as the effect. Brahman is one without a second. He is not separate from the embodied Self. He is the Soul, and the Soul is He."

"The same earth exhibits diamonds, rocks, oysters, &c., the same soil produces a diversity of plants; the same food is converted into various excrescences,—hair, nails, &c. As milk changes to curd, and water to ice, so is Brahman variously transformed and diversified without any external aid. In like manner, the spider spins his web out of his own substances, spirits assume various shapes, crows propagate without males, the lotus proceeds from pond to pond without the power of motions. That Brahman is entire and has no parts is no objection. He is not wholly trans-



formed into worldly appearances. Various changes are presented to the same dreaming Soul. Divers illusory shapes and disguises are assumed by the same spirit."

"Unfairness and want of mercy are not to be imputed to Him, because some are happy, others are miserable and others again under both pleasure and pain. Everyone has his lot fixed according to his Karma and merits,—his previous virtues and vice in a former state of the universe, which has no beginning in time. The rain-cloud distributes rain freely and impartially, yet the sprout varies according to the seeds."

The Soul is immortal. Individual Souls are in the Vedas compared to sparks issuing from a blazing fire. The Soul is eternal and unborn. Its emanation is no birth and no original production. It is perpetually existent and conscious, not merely by association with the mind, as the Vaisheshiks hold.

The Soul is not of finite dimensions, nor minutely small, abiding within the heart and no bigger than the hundredth part of a hundredth of a hair's point (*i. e.* ethereal). On the contrary, being identical with the Supreme Brahman, it participates of its infinity.

The Soul is active, and not merely passive as the Sāṅkhyas maintain. Its activity, however, is not essential. As the carpenter, tools in hand, toils and suffers, so the Soul in conjunction with its instruments, *i. e.*, body, senses, organs,—is active, and quitting them, reposes.

Blind in the darkness of ignorance, the Soul is guided in its actions and fruition, in its attainment of Knowledge and consequent liberation and bliss, by the Supreme Ruler, who causes it to act conformably with its previous resolves.

The Soul is, as it were, a portion of the Supreme Ruler, as a spark of fire. The Supreme, however, does not partake of the pain and pleasure of which the human Soul is conscious.



As the Sun's image, reflected in water, is tremulous, quaking with the undulations of the pool, without however affecting other watery images and the solar orbit, so the sufferings of one individual affect not another, nor the Infinite One.

Such being the state of man,—how is it then that he feels that his existence is different from the Supreme One, and from the Universe? If there is nothing else in the universe but That One, if his Soul is one with the Supreme Soul,—how is it then that he feels the existence of Ego in him?

The Vedanta replies that this is due to his *Ignorance*. Whence does this ignorance come? When the Supreme One evolves from Himself the Universe, He places it under the influence of *Mâyâ*, which prevents one from knowing the real character of the Universe.

Mâyâ is some indescribable force or power of Brahman, which possesses everything in the universe. Influenced by Her, men forget their real nature, but consider that each has a separate and independent existence. In fact, this universe is the creation of *Mâyâ*, having absolutely no reality behind it. There is no *real existence* of anything in the universe, except that of Brahman. Everything else is the result of the mysterious *Mâyâ*. Like the Sâṅkhya, the Vedanta does not admit the separate existence of Purusha and Prakriti. It holds that Prakriti and Purusha are but two separate manifestations of One, the Supreme Soul, the Brahman. The cause of these manifestations is *Mâyâ*.

Not knowing his real nature through *Mâyâ* is man's *Ignorance*. So long as he will grovel in this ignorance, so long as he will identify himself with his body,—so long he will have to pass through many births and deaths, through pleasure and pain. When he will be able to get rid of this Ignorance,—his illusion will be destroyed, he will then *feel and realise* that there exists nothing else in the universe but the Supreme.



Everything in the universe is invested by the Supreme with three *gunas* or principles, namely, *Sattva*, *Rajas*, and *Tamas*, the nature of which has already been described.

These three principles affect men in everything according to their natural tendencies ; and according as they possess them in a higher or lower degree, will they contrive to rise, or to fall, to improve in virtue and goodness and approach towards Him, or cultivate vicious propensities, and wander away further and further from Brahman.

The Sutras say: "Just as a man, from darkness or distance, mistakes a piece of rope for a snake, so has he under the influence of ignorance, created for himself an outward world, which, like the imaginary snake, does not really exist. Thus he goes on performing various acts in this imaginary world: Man becomes the plaything of his own Karma. And his Karma brings him punishment for sinful acts, and happiness for good deeds. Thus he continues to suffer pain or enjoy happiness through many births, till, at the fulness of time, his Ignorance is destroyed, and then he finds himself united with the Supreme One, he finds that in reality he never had a separate existence from the Supreme Brahman.

The human Soul, thus created by the Lord's mysterious *Mâyâ*, is incased in a body, as in a sheath (*Kosha*), or rather in a succession of sheaths. The first or the innermost sheath is the *Anandamaya*. In this *Kosha* the Jiva feels the divine happiness indirectly, and his existence as separate from the Brahman owing to *Mâyâ*. This is the Jiva's *Kârana Sharira*.

Vijnân-mâyâ (Intellectual) is the second sheath. It is composed of the *Tanmatrâs* and *Buddhi* (Intellect) and the five Senses.

The next sheath is *Manomaya* (mental) in which the mind is joined with the above.

The fourth is the *Prân-maya* (vital) sheath. It comprises the organs of action and of *Prâna* or the Vital principles.



These four sheaths constitute man's *Sukshma Sarira* (subtle body). This body does not die, but attends the Soul in its various transmigrations.

Over this is the *Sthula Sarira* (gross body) of men. It is composed of the courses elements. This exterior case is called the *Annamaya Sheath*.

The Soul, thus covered with the three bodies *Sthula*, *Sukhma* and *Karana*, goes on doing Karma in this world. At death, the *Sthula Sarira* is destroyed and dissolves into the various elements of which it was composed. But the *Sukshma Sarira* is not destroyed at death. It is for this reason that death is nothing to the Hindu, and they do not regard it so seriously as do some people. They consider death as changing one worn out suit of clothes for a new one.

The Soul with the *Sukshma Sarira* is subject to re-incarnations and visits various other worlds to receive the rewards of good deeds, or suffer penalties for evil deeds.

The wise, liberated from worldly trammels, ascend to the abode of Brahman, and if their attainment of wisdom is complete, they pass into a Union with the Divine Essence.

This is *Moksha*. Three principal methods of realising Brahman are *Sravana Manana* and *Nididhvasana* which have been touched upon elsewhere in previous chapters.

He who has acquired Knowledge,—for him cease all births and re-births, all pain and pleasure: *He becomes all Bliss: He obtains Moksha: He finds that he is He.*

The quintessence of the Vedanta Philosophy has been formulated in a short line thus:

श्लोकाद्वयं प्रवक्ष्यामि यदुक्तं ग्रन्थकोटिभिः ।

ब्रह्म सत्यं जगन्मिथ्या जीवो ब्रह्मैव नापरः ॥

“In one half verse, I shall tell you what has been told in crores of volumes : Brahman is real, the world is unreal, and Jiva is Brahman Itself and nothing else.”



VARNASHRAM DHARMA.

(THE SYSTEM OF CASTES AND STAGES OF LIFE.)

THE SPECIAL DHARMA OF HINDUS.

XVII.

We have dealt with the growth of the human Soul from the automatic condition to the Self-Conscious responsible man, on whom his progress in future devolves as a responsible being. This progress is fully helped by the time-honoured religious system of India, well-known under the Indian name of *Varndshrama*.

We will first inquire into the question as to how the Varna or caste by birth is inevitable in evolution. The social and religious condition of every nation will show us with the slightest thought that castes and progressive stages of life from ignorance to wisdom, are common features among men prevailing silently in practice and not always clearly or emphatically defined by man. Nay, further, inter-marriage and inter-dining are equally exclusive in their character in such nations. This natural exclusiveness asserts itself when classes differ in status or power. In India this characteristic of Society was fully recognised and the principles of caste as an inevitable nature-made institution, were formulated depending solely on the individual's aptitude for the performance of certain duties, depending on the body, on the mind, on the intellect and on the spirit of the man. The tendency of the whole race being to fit the body for work and the mind for thought and the spirit with the intellect for a certain final goal of life, the stages of advance towards, and the realisation of, this goal were termed, in the same natural course of the needs of advancing life, the four ends of human life,—*Kāma* (satisfaction of worldly longings), *Artha* (gain), *Dharma* (righteousness) and *Moksha* (Liberation). The conduct of life was shaped accordingly by the masters of wisdom and power, and a thoroughly trustworthy code of laws assured the progress of the human soul towards the desired culmination.



With such a high ideal to be reached through human life, one can see how very vitally important the first appearance of man is in the course of evolution. Each human individual likewise comes into being fraught with all the encumbrances, ties and responsibilities from the humblest station in life to that of becoming the highest prophet and leader of mankind. The birth of man then in evolution is a most important fact that bears fully on the future of the individual, as also of his surroundings. And further, the birth of the civilised, self-controlled and spiritually-minded man is an event that puts the whole spiritual world astir. The perfection lies in the perfection of the *Sattwa* principle in man; all the *Sattwik* powers of the Universe, therefore, offer their help where it is needed to assure the safety, purity and growth to the desired perfection of such a human being.

The thinkers of old appreciating the value of man on this ground and knowing from the Vedic teachings the best chances that could be given to him for his most desirable development at this stage, prescribed rites to be observed for the most prosperous evolution of each coming human Soul. And how? From the very conception, indeed, the individual is counted as a member of the religious polity. This is, as a matter of fact, unintelligible to the non-Indian world, surpassing even their imagination as to what meaning it may have. A regular Sacrament, the first purificatory rite or still more strictly, the first spiritualising rite has to be performed by the future parents to ensure the safe, sound and proper conception in the mother's womb of the nation's expected new member—the male child. Even the sex is assured as will be seen later on.

At this juncture what happens in all the planes of life with which the human soul is connected is thus described in the Shastra :

It is a matter of common experience that powers other than human belonging to higher planes, such as the *Pitris*,



the *Devas* are attracted to certain select spots, or persons, or combination of certain mystic figures, or syllables, to which all is given the name of *Peetha*.* We may call it a mystical Shrine. A holy water place, an image representing some *Devas*, the sacrificial fire, man's own body can be used as such *Peethas*. With proper spiritual arrangements and mantras the *Devas* come to be present at the *Peethas*, and help human beings respecting their wants and wishes. Woman and man as wife and husband devoted to each other in perfect purity and chastity, uniting to procreate offspring, form in their union such a *peetha*, to which the *Pitris* and *Devas* are attracted with the benign desire to help the conception of a pure Soul in the expected offspring. This *Peetha* is formed in coition automatically for good or for evil, according to the condition mental and physical of the two. A general fact about the agency of the *Pitris* in governing the generation of beings may be noted here. The *Pitris* govern the changes of the seasons and their action in the case of human propagation is like a spontaneous act in the case even of wild, uncivilised tribes. This, so far as the gross body alone is concerned. But their agency is especially useful in the spiritual way only where the operation of *Varnásram dharma* is an established fact. This spontaneous formation of a *Peetha* is explained more fully elsewhere.† The soul (*Jiva*) is endowed with the gross body *Sthula Sharira* by the *Pitris*, and the *Devas* convey the *Jiva* in the *Sukshma Sharira* to the *Peetha* and help the *Jiva* to settle in the mother's womb when the moment of conception comes. ‡ This is a purification of the seed imparted by the rite called *Garbhádhan Samskar*.

It is in fact in proportion to the purity of the parents that a proper body with the high qualities will be developed with the help of the *Pitris* and *Devas*. In lesser purity the

* See the section on "The Mystic circle."

† See the Section on "The Mystic circle."

‡ See *Shamóhoo Gita*.



development from the original animal man is poor. Ugly, misshapen monstrosities, low characters with a fair exterior,—incongruities like these are due to heredity in this way. The character of the parents makes the *Peetha* of a holy nature or unholy and the offspring is in consequence godly or ungodly and so on. This purification or spiritualisation of the seed is a matter known and provided for only in India. Equalities in Society may be apparently secured by the impartation of external qualifications but genius, purity and spirituality come only by the operation of heredity. Long inner chastening is necessary to the growth of spirituality in the Soul and a series of births and deaths are gone through, before an individual Jiva develops the high spiritual character. But while this fact is deemed to be but accidental in other religions and philosophies, it has been determined and pre-arranged in the Indian religion as a scientific synthesis since ages past. The birth of the Jiva from the lower to a higher caste is a necessity according to that synthesis. The birth of the highest spiritual type is an event of world-wide importance and the whole *Pitri Loka* and *Deva Loka* are active in helping the appearance, into the world of a national spiritual hero or of the religious Teacher.

But growths are gradual as much in the spiritual sphere as in the material. From savage condition man has to grow into the most civilised spiritual man, one who, according to ancient Indian usages, is a god on this earth. Four usual grades are recognised in this growth. The lowest is the mechanical worker, labouring man, the man-machine, who must be absolutely under the power of a master to conduct his activities in useful channels,—a circumstance that helps both the Society and the individual himself. The spiritual colour of such a man is black characterised by the Principle of *Tamas*; the other colours opposed to this will be the white colour made of *Sattwa*. The brown and the red intervening, we get the four *Varnas*, the *Chaturvarnya*, the classes of serfs, traders, warriors and the spiritual guides.



As shown above, when parents strive to be pure the offspring rises in spirituality and must in the long run through repeated births and deaths reach the stage of the highest *Varna*. It is a spiritual function, not mechanical and worldly. You can not turn a butcher of to-day into a Brahman to-morrow, nor a Shepherd into a Mighty Ruler or Administrator in one birth. The Science of religion recognises no accidents. Every thing comes as regular cause and effect, and as effects follow causes duly, religious Science takes hold of the causes and commands the appearance of the results. All mankind is to be led finally to *Moksha*,—*Kama*, *Artha*, *Dharma* and *Moksha* being the stage-goals for the whole of mankind. This is a natural arrangement growing out of the existing state of things, just as life grows through the four stages of:—

1. *Udvijja*.
2. *Swedaja*.
3. *Andaja*.
4. *Jarāyuja*.

The perfected *Jarāyuja*, the human animal has correspondingly to pass through four stages, which can be determined by the function each aspires to serve:

1. *Kama*, a function of the animal instinct, marks the *Shudra* stage.
2. *Artha*, which contributes to the fulfilment of *Kāma*, at the same time governing it, is the characteristic of the *Vaishya* stage.
3. *Dharma*, which implies the government of the self over and above *Kāma* and *Artha* is the characteristic of the *Kshattriya* stage, where spirituality first manifests itself emphatically.
4. *Moksha*, which is the perfection of spirituality, inducing the individual to attain it for oneself as well as to guide other Souls towards it, characterises the *Brāhmana* stage. *

* See *Shambhoo Gita*.



Religion knows no partiality, no national distinction or racial predilection, neither sexual prejudice of which we shall speak later on. She is the mother of all creatures. In the life of man no mother could care more for her child, than religion does for every human being,--male or female, and in a manner far superior to the ordinary mortal mother. This mother in fact receives her guidance from Religion and is able to rear a powerful Soul in a fit body. Varna thus is as much an inevitable stage as any in the progress of evolution. They speak nonsense who condemn the Caste System as a man-made inconvenience. Outward cosmopolitanism, nay universal Brahmoism, is a misnomer and impossibility, as unthinkable as Sun-light without the Sun. The crux of the question of Varna is whether a Varna can be changed to a higher or lower and especially the higher Varna, by human agency without the intervention of birth and death, and some such occult agency. We offer an emphatic "No" in reply to the question and consider it a danger and draw-back to the progress of man as a Soul to amalgamate Castes. It is a matter of common experience that hybrids resulting from the union of different species become barren, as for example, the mule never propagates its own species. The principle equally applies to mankind in the case of very widely different species of the race. Any possible propagation must result in the ultimate extinction of the artificial species.†

Long heredity is a potent factor in the growth of the inner man and the outer colour ought to be the result of inner working of the Spirit and not a foreign painting on the skin; the pantomime is not the true individual behind it.

Varna therefore has been fixed by heredity and is a fact that comes into being by the help of higher agencies than man. Now to help the growth of each individual in each grade of Society, four stages are prescribed in the individual's single life; these apply to the three higher Varnas; the

†See Purana Samhita.



Shudra, the black or negative Varna, or the mechanical worker, has to serve all the other positive Varnas. For *Vaishya*, there are the 1st two *Ashramas* only, for *Kshatriya* the first three and for the *Brahman* all the four *Asramas*. * But then each has to pass through preparatory stages to be fit to realise the final goal of human existence. The first of these is the student stage, the second the married life, the third the recluse life, and the last the life of complete renunciation.

The universal first assumption in Indian Philosophy is that all objectivity apart from the pure absolute subject consists of three aspects, or principles, or *Gunas*,—*Sattwa*, *Rajas* and *Tamas*. These characterise not only the gross perceptible objects such as earth, water, air and fire, but the inner functions also, such as the mind, the feeling, the will. All these are *Sattwic*, *Rajasic* and *Tamasic*† combining the three *Gunas* in unequal proportions. The Superiority or predominance of *Sattwa* is a characteristic of the supremely spiritual *Jiva*. The predominance of *Tamas* is the characteristic of the earthly *Jiva*. Between these, stand two rising grades, the *Rajas*—*Sattwa* and *Rajas*—*Tamas*. These are the four classes of *Shudra*, *Vaisya*, *Kshatriya* and *Bráhmaṇa*. The actual life-work of these depends on their constitution.

Now it is true that in the respective classes there are exceptional people, very few, indeed, who rise superior to their fellows, or sink far below them. The spiritual growth that takes place under the direct help of the *Pitris* is necessarily gradual,—sudden leaps being almost impossible in nature, and even unthinkable as a bee transforming into a horse or an elephant in the very next birth. There are exceptions of course, but, as already pointed out, exceptions should be considered only as exceptions, and the general character of the class is not affected thereby.

* *Yagnavalkya Samhita*.

† See the section on the "Classification of *Dharma*".



Sattwa implies governance of the will by the individual Jiva, the killing out of all animal proclivities, attaining knowledge and inner light and independent absolute joy in self-realisation, the finality of which is Moksha. The Brahman's Soul is the ideal in the case, the perfected human Soul that has the vision of the final everlasting Bliss before him and out of sympathy with his fellows in bondage, that strives to show the path to them to attain freedom, before he himself finally merges into the universal self, the abode of that beatitude. He leads other Souls on from the lowest human type through rising grades until the Shudra blossoms out after a long series of births and deaths into the flower of the highest Caste, the Caste of the Guru of the rest †

The discipline of the body by subjecting it to hard work and spare diet, of the mind by entering into the field of learning and grasping the principles of life's comforts and of the Spirit by a preparedness to sacrifice life for the protection of the helpless and of the whole Soul by perfect renunciation so as to be fit for merging into the Divine. These are the clearly defined aims of the four Castes.

We have shown the synthetical process of nature's work in comprehending all progress of life ultimately in *Varnavyavastha*. The disposal of man, the last evolved physical

†cf "Thus we have four distinct stages of intellect all abundantly illustrated in the animal, all abundantly illustrated in the animal and human worlds about us—all equally illustrated in the individual growth of the Cosmic Conscious mind, and all four existing together in that mind as the first three exist together in the human mind,—the mind made up of *precepts* or sense-impressions; second, the mind made up of these and *recepts*—the so-called receptual mind, or in other words, the mind of simple consciousness; third, we have the mind made up of precepts, receipts and concepts, called sometimes the conceptional mind, or otherwise the self-conscious mind,—the mind of self-consciousness; and fourth and last, we have the intuitional mind—the mind whose highest element is not a receipt or a concept, but an intuition—This is the mind in which sensation, simple consciousness and self-consciousness are supplemented and crowned with Cosmic Consciousness".— Bucke's "Cosmic Consciousness," p. 13.



being in four orders. But there has been recorded an analytical process also in ancient Indian lore. As it will serve to answer one phase of criticism against India's classification of men, we give it here.

The question is why is there inequality at all? Why did nature or God create unequal beings with different stations and destinies and rear up animosities and discontent in nature's harmonious possibility?

The fact is, at the end of a previous universal deluge or destruction (Kalpanta)* all creatures were produced as in the past, but each in its own perfection. In the case of man the process of creation was this:— Brahmá was desirous of creating; the first human beings that appeared were the perfect men: Sanak, Sanandan, Sanátan and Sanat Kumara. (In their case there was not mind-creation too as in the second stage.) Being perfection themselves they were free from all desire and would not therefore exercise their will in any activity or direction.† But Brahma anxious to see progressive creation, was therefore obliged to create the ten *Prajapatis* to help himself in the work of creation. At the third stage general humanity came into existence. The difference between the *Prajapatis* and human beings was that the former were mind-born from Brahma and were themselves able to procreate mind-issue, while the latter came with divided sex, as two beings, males and females. The latter of these sexes represents *Prakriti*, the Primordial matter. The nature of *Prakriti* is to make the Purasa liable to fall. With such limitations involved in their condition what happened was this:—Every man coming into existence in the course of creation after the ten *Prajapatis* was a man of the highest spirituality and caste from the point of view of modern humanity. In fact there was perfection of humanity in every one and all were *Bipras* or perfectly refined *Brahmanas*. But

*See the Section on Time, Space and Creation.

† A fact described in many Puranas.

by their union with the other sex the work of procreation* began to fall. The mental creative power was no longer present because they gave all that power to *Prakriti* and depended on her for procreation. The nature of *Prakriti* is to cause degradation from perfection.† The *Baiji-Srishti*—the procreation by virtue of the combination of the blood of the sexes, leads to a descent from perfection in proportion to man's attachment to the other sex. The *Sthula Sharira* is the great factor in contributing to the attachment and the consequent degradation. The more one identifies oneself with the *Sthula Sharira*, the lower does one fall from the original *Bipratwa*, the perfect *Brahminhood*. By falling lower and lower through this sexual attachment, the four classes of men were ultimately formed, and at this stage comes the Divine help to regenerate the falling creatures. The means for effecting that regeneration is the institution of *Varnashram Dharma*. Much have been said in the Shastras about the usefulness of this Dharma of the Hindus.‡ The principal aim of *Varnashramdharma* is four-fold¶.

1. The preservation of spiritual man's race, by the help of the Pitris.
2. Help in critical times when man's spirituality is in danger by break of social order.

*See the Mahabharata.

†See illustration No. 5.

‡See Tantra Sanhita.

आर्यजातेर्बीजरक्षाऽऽध्यात्मिकी च क्रमोन्नतिः ।

पितृणां वर्द्धनाऽनल्पा तत्कृपाप्राप्तिरेव च ॥

सहायैर्देवलोकैश्च सम्बन्धस्थापनं भृशम् ।

विबुधानां प्रसादश्च विश्वमङ्गलसाधकः ॥

तथा स्वभावसंसिद्धसंस्कारोदयसाधनम् ।

बीजरक्षाऽऽत्मबोधस्य केवल्याभिगमोऽपि च ॥

वर्णाश्रमाणां धर्माणामष्टावेतानि मुख्यतः ।

प्रयोजनानि सप्त्राहुः कर्मतत्त्वान्विपारगाः ॥

Sambhoo Gita.

¶See Bharadwaja's Karma Mimamsa Philosophy.



3. Preservation of *Atmagnana* or self-knowledge.
4. The accomplishment of the Mukti of deserving souls.

Man's races at different ages have become entirely extinct, for example, the old Roman race is extinct, a race that seems from historical accounts to have been the ideal in the western world. The old Persian type has similarly disappeared. On the other hand, it is not a mere chance-case that the Indian race, the true Indian type of old, has not been lost after the lapse of thousands of ages and millions of vicissitudes. This fact is due to the institution of Varnashrama. An adverse view is taken of the institution of the four Varnas that sub-castes have been multiplying in scores, and the original four castes in their pure, ancient form cannot be said to exist in these days. This view is a mistaken one, because the preservation of the seed of the old spiritual race which has never been lost in India, still continues, and will continue safe and sound through all future on account of the system of Varna and Ashram order.

Having thus briefly indicated the natural formation of the Varnas, we proceed to describe the Ashramas and the Dharmas attaching to each of both the institutions. In a word, all such Dharmas can be expressed by *Achāra*: आचारः परमो धर्मः. The usual definition of *áchāra* is: धर्मादुक्तशरीरव्योपायः। or bodily activities agreeable to the advancement of Dharma. *Achāra* is the greatest factor in the Varna and Ashrama Dharmas. It is the root of habit in the ordinary tenor of life, and the background of fashion in fashionable society. It has the most beneficent or the most baneful effects on one's end and aim of existence. *Achāra* therefore ought to be properly guided, governed and carried out. One of our greatest works on Dharma Shashtra devotes one main part of its body to *áchāra*.* It includes the rules of life of all classes of men and in all stages of mortal life. Every

*See *Yajñavalkya Smṛiti* and *Manu*.



religious community has its own áchára in all countries and in all societies. The genius of the ancient Rishis found that the Vedas taught the general as well as particular ways of life to be followed by men so as to serve the fulfilment of the four-fold purpose of life,—the four *purusharthas*, in due course. The Indian religion, as already pointed out, neglects no human being and offers help to everyone towards the fulfilment of one's purpose, the highest spiritual purpose for which all life-activity in the universe is going on. Each individual then in proportion as he has risen from the early animal condition, coming to possess some mental refinement is taken to be fit for education as the first thing. Every young member of society of the world's religious polity must undergo proper training to be the future stay of his society, must be possessed of the necessary stock of worldly as well as spiritual knowledge by the time he reaches adult age, and care is taken that such training is available to the person as soon as he becomes fit for it in age, strength and intellect.

It will be remembered that heredity being an important factor in the capacity of the individual to receive suitable education, the classes or the Varnas are naturally taken into account in the very commencement of the work of education. The details of the training of the particular classes will be found in their own place in the special treatment of the subject in other works. It is sufficient to point out here how the first aim was to secure capacity in the young for áchára, the formation of right habits in the routine of life. As in military training all the physical faculties and activities are brought under entire control of discipline, so that under that exercise man becomes automatic like a machine, so in the earliest training the first aim is to develop an ability to exercise entire control over the body to inure it to hardships, privations and self-denial, and service in a perfect spirit of self-sacrifice.

It might be stated *en passant* that an inner principle of self-control, the control over the Pránas, or the vital princi-



ples, is taught in this early stage. A fuller treatment of it will be found in the Sections on Yogas in this work.

Not only personal control, but social etiquette and moral government go hand in hand with it. Respect to elders and to the learned and spiritual members of society, a universal sympathy, ready will for service and considerateness in conduct towards all and in all sorts of situations—these are made habitual as nature itself. The discipline of life as taught in the Shāstras would even appear to the modern mind as positively cruel if one could not think of the antidotes provided against mishaps in such training. Achār is intimately connected with the Dharma of all the Varnas and all the Ashramas. Further details will be given later on. Achār, as already said, is considered the supreme Dharma ; that is, in its practical aspect, Achār is itself Dharma.

And as in the case of the male sex, so in that of the other sex. Woman, who is imagined by western people to be a wholly neglected person in Indian society was far from being so in ancient India. The traditionary training of women in India where characters like Sitā, Damayanti, Sāvitrī and Tarāmati were developed, passes description. The holiest ideal of womanhood was illustrated by the actual life of Indian ladies and is so illustrated in hundreds of instances at this day, unnoticed for their very modesty, unboasted of for their very commonness in a society of spiritual ideals, as Indian society has always been and will even continue so to be. The vapours created by the inroads of western civilisation will vanish with all their vain pomp, and the serenity of perfect purity, holiness, chastity and devotion will again prevail in this land, curing the evils that have slyly crept in, with the selfish, animal instincts that yet largely characterise non-Indian nations and particularly those that do not believe in *Achār Dharma* and the special Dharma of womanhood.*

*Dealt with in separate Section.



Achár in the case of both sexes has been the first thing attended to in the government of the home and of society in the Bhârata Land.*

For the attainment of spirituality by the curbing of the animal instincts in the way above shown, a life-long discipline has thus been prescribed. Each stage of life is devoted to the achievement of a grand step in the march. The life of the celibate student in which all kind of rigour of bodily discipline is enforced is the first step towards the goal. Habits contracted during the early years of life become confirmed and the plastic flesh of youth can be very easily moulded to the life of dutifulness even under unfavourable physical conditions. The future man is supplied with all necessary knowledge† required by his future life in the world and prepared for strenuous work to advance the prosperity of society in his own field of work.

The next stage of life is the house-holder's—the citizen's, or the married man's;—a life of self-sacrifice based on self-government and a spirit of contributing to the welfare of every being in the world. The body is dedicated to actual service, one's very sustenance being subject to priority of the claims of the needy. The house-holder has to perform daily a five-fold sacrifice‡ contributing his quota to gratify the needs of all grades of life in the universe: the gross life of plants and lower stages, the life of animal beings from the meanest insect upwards to the highest sub-human animals, the life of man such as he himself, the life of the Pitris, the ancestors in the super-human spheres, the life of the Rishis the superior, long-lasting spiritual men, and the life of the Devas, the self-shining super-human class of powerful beings.

All classes in the range of creation are mutually helpful to one another's prosperity. As the Devatás are able to

*See Vishnu Gita.

†The Hindu system of education dealt with in a separate chapter.

‡See the Section on Mahayajna.



help mankind, so are men able to afford help to the Devas.*

The house-holder thus affords help to all and performs one other important function: that of propagation of his stock. His married life is dedicated to add to the strength of his class as marriage is emphatically pronounced in the marriage rite as intended to beget progeny. Very solemn are the conditions of contracting the marriage-bond, and solemn still is the actual duty of procreation, where every step in the act is a *religious duty*. It is a regular discharge of a spiritual responsibility, the aim of coition of the two sexes being the production of spiritual heroes—the longing of the parents is to get heroic progeny, not worthless vermin. The house-holder in asking a favour of the Pitris after performance of the *Shraddha* prays in these words: वीरं मे दत्तपितरः ।

"Let me, O Pitris, have a hero for a son", i. e., one that will heroically perform the duties of his class as prescribed in the *Shāstras*." The Vedic Rishis knew the value of the best class of human beings, and used to pray to the Devas saying: "May we have great heroes amongst us!"†

The life of a house-holder will thus be seen as the most important stage for the preservation, progress and prosperity of the world. But the spiritual aim is never to be lost sight of as contributing to the advancement in that direction of the individual as well as of the world at large.

The next stage comes when the house-holder begins to be too weak for the responsibilities of worldly life. Then comes the duty of practical renunciation. One stage of life

*We have in the *Bhagwad Gita*,

सहयज्ञाः प्रजाः सृष्ट्वा पुरोवाच प्रजापतिः ।
अनेन प्रसविष्यध्वमेव बीजस्त्विष्टकामधुक् ॥
देवान् भावयतानेन ते देवा भावयन्तु वः ।
परस्परं भावयन्तः श्रेयः परमवाप्स्यथ ॥

†सुवीरासो भवेम ।



is dedicated to this practice. The home is abandoned and the wife too is left to the care of the son, or taken along with oneself, if she too is prepared for the spiritual course along with her husband. The foot of the tree is then the home, and wild sustenance is resorted to, and a complete subordination of bodily comfort to the spiritual aim is practised, until finally all ties to the body and to the world become relaxed, all attachments are forgotten, and the individual can live only as a spiritual being in love of and dedication to, the final goal of emancipation. This is the last stage. The four-fold course of life for *Kama* or desire, *Artha* or gain, *Dharma*, and *Moksha* or freedom, leads to the destination, and the soul of the individual is united with the Universal Supreme Self, contributing at every step in his advance to the good of the universe and his own.

The fact may here be noted that nations among whom *Varnashramdharma* is not formulated and enforced will become extinct in course of time.* License of any kind is injurious to the existence of any society. *Varnashramdharma* is a preventive against license. Whole nations have become extinct and gone into oblivion in the last few thousand years, while the Indian nation persisting in its *Varnashramdharma* has lasted from time immemorial and will last through the future abiding by that *Dharma*.

In conclusion, we invite the attention of our readers to the philosophy pictured in illustration No. 5 according to the description in the *Shambho Gita*, where Lord Siva says:

“My *Prakriti* is divided into two, *viz.*, animate (*chetan*) and inanimate (*Jada*.) The stream of *Chetana-Prakriti* rises from the extreme *Jada* form in the shape of a mountain. The stream flows smoothly down through four gulfs in its course, representing the *Udvijja*, *Swedaja*, *Andaja* and *Jarayuja* stages. The stream strictly keeps to its channel while flowing through these gulfs straight on, and there is

*See *Shambhoo Gita*



THE WORLD'S ETERNAL RELIGION

CSL

176-8



Illustration
No 5.

THE VARNASRAMA EMBANKMENT



not the least danger of its swerving from its course. On coming down to the flat tableland representing the human stage of life from the slopes of the mountain, the stream widens, but is exposed to the danger of flowing astray into pits and abysses, &c.; and of being swallowed up there instead of passing right onward in its course to meet the ocean representing the Brahman and Mukti. The pits and abysses, &c., represent the loss of spirituality, and consequent barbarity and extinction. The embankment of the river on the tableland represents Varnashramdharma, which, on the one hand keeps the Chetan-stream (Jiva) from going astray into the pits, &c., and on the other hand, it facilitates its onward course to meet and merge into the ocean of Mukti. In this peacefully flowing stream, the Devatas bathe in delight and the Rishis are engaged in prayers on the both the banks of the river and enjoy its holy surroundings. The idea being that if humanity is spiritual, the Devatas and Rishis feel gratified. On the other hand the Pitris help in the preservation and repairs of the embankment representing the Varnashrama Dharma. The Pitris are in their turn helped in their work by *Saty* women and *Sadāchāri* Brāhmans. That is, chastity of women and the pious life (Achār) of men help the Pitris in the performance of their duty. The aim of the Pitris is to preserve and maintain the spiritual race of man, the most important race in all the 14 Lokas.

NARI DHARMA.

WOMEN'S DHARMA.

XVIII.

In the law of Karma the position of men and women are like the seed and the soil. The Karma-Mimamsa philosophy* and the Smriti Shastrat recognise the *Yajna Dharma* and *Tapa Dharma*† as basis of the special Dharmas of

* See chapter on Vedic Darsan.

† See chapter on Veda and Shashtra.

‡ See chapter III.



men and women, respectively. Hence the fundamental principles of the women's Dharma are *viz.*—

1. Three-fold Tāpa,
2. Chastity (Satitwa), and
3. Obedience (Aswātantra).

This brings us to the consideration of the position and promise of woman's life and her functions in view of the three-fold aim,—quite distinct from man.

In the earliest course of creation, Shastras give proof that procreation was purely a work of the will or mind,—*mānasi-srishti*. Then came the bodily procreation, but without the condition of sex,—comparable to the multiplication of an amœba, and to the parts of the bodies of spiders, grasshoppers, crabs, &c., that are restored by Nature, if the original ones happen to be lost. Sex was developed later on as a pre-condition of procreation, but sexes were undivided. Science also recognises androgynous and hermaphroditical species. The ideal of this is emblemized in the half Dāvi (female) form of Shiva. The left half is there the female. Lastly, from the flesh and bones of man, the female was created as a separate being. Woman as fitted to contain in her the seed deposited for the propagation of the race is like the soil and is in consequence characterised by the conditions necessary for the conception, nourishment and growth of the child first in the womb and next on her own person, until the child is able to sustain itself on *outside* food. The history of the sex in this way is long, woman like man being the last of the sac-born females or in other word, side by side with male evolution, female evolution goes on from the earliest animal stage to womanhood in the human stage.*

As the male soul evolves out of previous male births, so the female soul also evolves out of previous female births.

*See Bharadwaja's Karma-Mimansa and Shakti Gītā.



In the latter case, weakness, softness, blankness of exterior are the usual conditions. The last fact of the absence in the female of special features of an impressive appearance, of strength, vigour, heroism, independence, is markedly illustrated in many of the higher animals, birds, quadrupeds, and finally in man. The female is absolutely void of natural adornments or the emphatic emblems of the male sex. The mane of the lion, the plumage of the peacock, the enormous tusks of the elephant, the rainbow colours round the parrot's neck, the moustache and beard of man are positive emblems of strength, heroism and self-dependence in the male.

The female in consequence has to depend entirely on the male and is unfit for independence,—as a matter of fact, independence is ruin to her. Instinctively then the woman who yields to the work of *Sahaja-Karma* and dedicates herself entirely to the male and by preference to one male, is helped on by that Karma to the goal of life.* The theory is simple. The Yoga-Shāstra has enunciated the effectiveness of the persistence of the inclinations of will in man. What one intently devotes oneself to is realised by the one in its entirety: निविष्ट्याज्ञात् साक्षात्कारः। Woman dedicating herself entirely to the love of man succeeds in the course of her evolution in being born as man. Until she becomes man, she has no Liberation,† which goal is attainable only by the male.‡ For thousands of births in the progress of evolution the female will be born as female and if and when she becomes attached firmly to one male, the two will continue being repeatedly born as man and wife. By perfect self-dedication in love and self-sacrifice to the husband, the ideal of her heart, she will be raised by nature to the male form, and then will she be able to realise the final goal of crea-

* See Shakti Gith.

† "Cosmic Consciousness then appears in individuals mostly of the male sex."—Bucke's "Cosmic Consciousness".

‡ Karma-Mimansa Philosophy of Bharadwaja.



tion. Till malehood is obtained, the female in her repeated birth will obtain *abhyudaya* or temporal welfare, but not *Nisreyasa* or Absolute Freedom.*

Hence is the greatest stress laid in the Shástra on the virtue of chastity of woman. Chastity is actual Yoga for her. What man is to attain by active *Ashram-dharma* woman attains by active chastity,† while in her passive co-partnership in the *ashram-dharma* she gets the full half of the fruit of the husband's performances. The *Patni* or wife is पतिकर्तृक यज्ञस्य फलभोजी, i. e., enjoyer of the fruit of the sacrifice which the husband performs.‡ But woman's active virtue is chastity; without which she is not entitled to have above-mentioned fruit of the law of Karma. Man has to perform Yajna and woman to practise chastity. *Tapa-pradhanya*, or the predominance of the spirit of an austere life characterises *nari-dharma*, while *Yajna-pradhanya* and the predominance of the spirit of formal sacrifice is the characteristic of *purusha-dharma*.

Woman's chastity involves the question of the marriage of widows, and marriage in the same *gotra* or in near kinship, the proportionate age between the husband and wife, polyandry and allied problems. Before treating of these, let us examine the nature of chastity. The chaste woman can be considered from several points of view in accordance with her moral make apart from bodily action.

The woman who deems her husband to be the only man and all other men as women,—such a one is the highest type. Her passions are wholly dedicated to the husband and subservient to his need and will. She exercises no independent will, respecting even the instinctive needs; they have in fact no personal existence in her, apart from their dedication by her to the husband.

*See Bharadwaja's Karma-Mimansa Philosophy.

†See Shakti Gita.

‡All Vedas and all Shastras are unanimous in this respect.



The second order of chastity is that in which the woman looks upon elder men as fathers, equals as brothers, and youngers as sons. The husband alone is a husband to her.

In the third grade although instinct may be disturbed by passion for other men than the husband, she possesses a stronger will effectively governing the instinct and thus saving her chastity by moral force.

A fourth order will be one where bodily action alone is controlled while the mind is loose.*

The highest *Sati* forgets herself in her love of, and dedication to, the husband and will be free from femalehood after death, and will be born as a highly advanced spiritual man going virtually to Mukti.†

The woman who from extreme attachment and self-dedication burns herself with the dead husband's corpse, reaches the heavenly world‡ of chaste women, enjoys the husband's company to the full and is then born as man. Other women will advance gradually, rising to higher *stritwa*, getting *Swarga-bhoga* after each birth.

Self-dedication of an extreme nature is a possibility though cases of this nature are but too rare, and man is right in preventing by law a suicidal practice, like *sati*'s self-immolation, where conditions are evidently more often doubtful than not. But instances of a genuine feeling of self-sacrifice in self-immolation were and are possible. A case came to be well-known just on the eve of the enforcement of the *Sati* Act, which case appeared in detailed description in the *Bengal Gazetteer*. While some sympathetic Christian missionaries tried to persuade a young *Sati*, from burning herself with her dead husband, she actually discussed the reason why they thought of dissuading her, the argu-

* See *Puran Samhita*.

† *Bharadwaja Karma-Mimansa Philosophy*.

‡ Described as the fifth upper *Loka* in *Paranas*.


 CS
L

ment turning on the agony of a living death in fire. The woman convinced the preachers and others that were present there that what they considered bodily pain was nothing to her, that she had got better of the consciousness of such pain, and to prove it, she actually held her fingers in a flame of fire, and while the fingers burnt almost to the bones, she kept a cheerful countenance and laughingly asked the astonished spectators whether they had still any doubt about her firmness of will in the sacrifice.

Man is a mere depositor of the seed. The largest part in propagation is played by woman as mother. The mother's flesh supplies the body, her milk nourishes the child when it is born. Her instincts will be inherited in bodily conditions and morals* by the progeny and great importance has therefore to be attached to the purity of woman with whose inner and outer being the child is bound up from conception to its self-dependence after birth. If her purity be contaminated it is destined to ruin the spiritual prospects of the child to be born. India is very strong on the point of maintaining woman's purity and guarding her from evil circumstances. Western nations will follow India in this matter as they become wiser by appreciating India's spirituality.

These great principles are at the bottom of prohibiting widow re-marriage among high class Hindus. Ascetic chastity being the condition of true spirituality in woman, widow re-marriage is prohibited by the Shashtra in the case of the highest, *i. e.*, the most spiritually advanced classes and these classes only. Where evil practices and sins grow rampant exceptional remedies like widow re-marriage and orphanages and the like will be eligible institutions. But when spirituality is a national fact and national aim, enforced asceticism will not but be productive of good; at the same time a preventive of evil to a great extent. If the principles of chastity

* Bucke's "Cosmic Consciousness," p. 313; "The man (to be born should have a great mother—a woman).



detailed above are strong in women, the question of re-marriage of the widowed woman can never rise at all.

Marriages in near kinship may be compared to nourishing oneself with one's own blood, the result of which will be early extinction.* Union of different stocks brings fresh life-energy into the progeny and experience has rightly guided men to bar certain relationships from sexual use for propagation.

The next idea in the Hindu Shastras, in the matter of procreation of sound progeny is that the male must be older in age than the female.† It has been noted by observers of the subject that male progeny is often the natural result of the union of the more grown-up man and the woman of much younger age. Apart from that, the main point would be that it is like the relation between the seed and the soil. The soil should be fresh, while the seed must be perfectly mature and sound.‡ Sane, self-governed progeny of staid mind and habits is naturally to be expected as the fruit of a true morally elevated mind-seed, as in the mature, fresh, energetic, self-balanced man,—such a one as the *brahmacharya* life develops when followed to perfection.

This consideration leads to that of the equality of the sexes. In India woman is emphatically pronounced as unfit for independence: न स्त्री स्वातन्त्र्यमर्हति ।

The Shashtra never considers the sexes as equal. It is against Nature that the weaker sex should be believed to be stronger than, or equal to, man. The attempt to raise woman to equality with man will lead to unnatural consequences. Men's kingdoms are well-known and have lasted for centuries, but women's kingdoms are myths, and if they occur, they will be ephemeral by their very nature.

* See Karma-Mimansa Philosophy of Bharadwaja.

† "That the father should be a superior man physically and spiritually."
P. 313, Bucke's Cosmic Consciousness.

‡ Bharadwaja's Karma-Mimansa Philosophy.



A nation giving such predominance to women is exposed to two dangers. The will of women growing predominant, the progeny will mostly be females and deaths of infants will be more frequent. The ultimate result will be the extinction of the race and of the nation.

It may be remarked by the way, that man, when too much given to woman is destined to be born as woman by way of punishment,* the redeeming feature in such a case will be that this woman will be a *Brahmvidini*, provided that the man had been perfectly virtuous like a woman of perfect chastity. The main principle is that the advancement of dharma is a matter involving the advancement of the Sattwa Guna. Man and woman are both moulded into the Sattwa Guna by virtue of the right *Acharya*. A three-fold purity is needed for the preservation in the advancement of the Sattwa Guna—Adhibhoota Shuddhi, Adhidaiva Shuddhi, and the Adhyatma Shuddhi. This purity rests respectively on the Pitris, the Devas and the Rishis. While the preservation of the race is entirely a matter in the hands of the Pitris,† *Satitwa* or chastity is the best source of the fulfilment of the law of the Pitris in propagating the race. Woman's unchastity contaminates the male seed and the Pitris are prevented from affording help. The result is a corrupt progeny, virtually ending in the total extinction of the pure type. The Pitris help only if there is purity of the seed and blood of man and woman, as an effect of the virtue of each.

To summarise: The Hindu ideal of a wife is that "a wife is the half of man; she is a true companion of her husband in this and other world; she is for him a source of Dharma prosperity, pleasure and salvation."‡ The *nari-dharma* is essential support of Varnashramdharma.§ Varnashram Dharma again is the promoter of a truly spiritual human race and prevents such a race from extinction.

* Purana Samhita.

† See the illustration No. 5 of Shambho Gita.

‡ See Mahavarata.

§ See illustration No. 5.

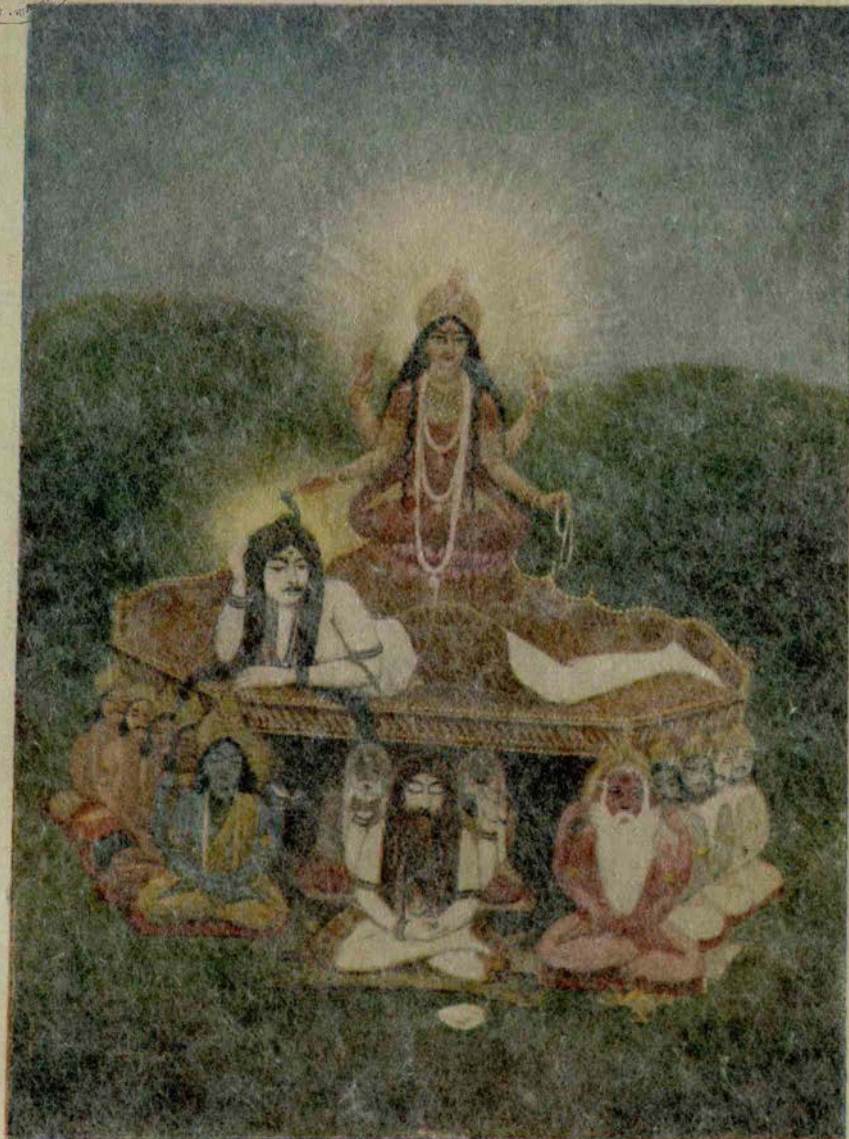


Illustration
 No. 6.

THE BRAHMAMAYEE DEVI



MURTI PUJA.
IMAGE WORSHIP.
XIX.

We now discuss another special Dharma of Hindus—*Murti-Puja* Image-Worship, – which has an intimate connection with Karma, Upasana, Gnana as well as with Mukti. The main point in the Yagnick practice of the so-called Image-Worship is *Bháva*. The idea of Bhava ought to be properly understood, before the subject is dealt with on the philosophical standpoint. Bhava, as its etymology shows, means 'becoming' and also 'being.' We can understand a sequence between first becoming and then being. This is the secret of *Bhava** explained by Hindu Philosophy.

Bhavana is another term giving the same meaning in a more explicit way. The word has the causal sense of 'causing to be.' There is a very deep meaning having almost the force of creation in this causal root. In the Purva and the Madhya Mimánsa Darshanas, it is used in the sense of 'creating' or 'causing to be.' Even the Sat, Chit and Ananda experience of Brahman is nothing but Bháva.

Creation, preservation and destruction are due to the three *gunas*, Rajas, Sattwa and Tamas, and the objectivity of these is due to the subject Bháva with reference to each. They belong to the original elements in the conceptions of the *Atma*—*Sat*, *Chit* and *Ananda*. In the condition of Mukti, the three *gunas* of Prakriti become absorbed into the Mulaprakriti, or the primordial matter. The Mulaprakriti disappears into that same balanced conditions of the three bhavas of the subject. Bháva, therefore, will be understood as the essential principle in connection with Mukti.†

What the Hindu does in the worship of images is that he makes use of his Bháva, and to help this, he uses the

* *Daivi*—Mimansa Philosophy of Angira.

† See *Vishnu Gita*. Bháva has been very well explained in the *Daivi Mimansa*, and the *Karma – Mimansa Philosophies*.

material image. He may begin with the mere worship of the image, but as soon as he learns the principle of Bháva underlying the worship, he conceives his beloved ideal in the image, and with the reciprocal action of the Bháva on the image, and the image on the Bháva, his ideal of love, gets strength and form. This is what has been described as the *Vaidhi Bhakti*.* This is the lowest sort of love or Bhakti to be enjoined on the novitiate. When his love becomes firm on the ideal by this process, he rises to the second* stage of Bhakti, called *Ragatmica Bhakti*. The Hindus will continue their worship of images, which appears to others as mere material statues and objects. But as the stages rise, the mental ideal will grow strong, and the external object will only be an occasional help. The image is a mystical shrine like various other objects explained in detail as 16 in number.† Just as cow's milk that pervades the cow's whole body is obtainable only through the teats so the omnipresent Brahman can be realised with the help of 16 mystical shrines, ‡ treated of in the section on worship and section on Pitha, such as fire, water, a painting, some diagrams &c.—the image is a Pitha or mystic shrine, whence spiritual powers can rise to help seekers.

Fuller treatment of the subject is possible. But it is unnecessary if the few facts, particularly those about Bháva and Bhávana, are properly understood and borne in mind.

*See Section on Bhakti.

†See Sections No. V, VI and X.

‡ यथा गवां सर्वशरीरं पयः पयोधराभिःसरतीह केवलम् ।
तथा परात्माऽखिलगोऽपि शाश्वतो विकाशमाप्नोति स दिव्यदेशकैः ॥
तन्त्रेषु दिव्यदेशाः षोडश प्रोक्ता यथात्र कथ्यन्ते ।
अग्न्यम्बुलिङ्गवेद्यो भित्तिरेखा तथा च चित्रश्च ॥
मण्डलविशिखौ नित्यं यन्त्रं पीठञ्च भावयन्त्रञ्च ।
मूर्तिर्विभूतिनाभी हृदयं मूर्द्धा च षोडशैते स्युः ॥

See Sections No. VI and X.



Image-worship usually termed idolatry by adverse critics is unintelligible to them, until they could look into the psychological and philosophical aspects of it. As a matter of fact, it is not the gross, material objects that are worshipped, but these objects merely help the creation of the mystic shrine (*Pitha*), and images are only one kind out of 16 such already alluded-to objects mentioned in the *Shástrás* or *Mantra Yoga*. Critics of idolatry believe fetishes and images to be the same thing. They ignore the spiritual side of the whole subject, and pose as critics by merely looking at the superficialities.

Image-worship has three principal practical processes: *Dhyána* or meditation, *Stuti* or singing praises, and *Japa* or constant thinking. *Dhyána* has, of course, a *Rupa* or form, as its basis. *Stuti* refers to the attributes, and *Japa* refers to the name of God, which in the Guru's examination of the mental condition of the disciple is given to him by the former. *Japa*, *Dhyána* and *Stuti*, the three aspects of image-worship, are able finally to merge into one, when *Samádhi* or trance results, which in its finality is *Mukti*. The philosophy of *Japa* has been explained in full detail in the *Tantras*, and there is a special chapter on it in the *Shakti Gítá*. To help the reader we subjoin here a translation of a few verses from the *Shakti Gítá*, bearing on *Dhyána* and *Stuti* of God-hood imaged as Almighty Mother. A perusal of it will enlighten the reader on the true essential character of image worship *

*The thinking mind will with the exercise of a little thought perceive the subtle feeling that underlies image-worship, remembering how statues, and emblems and portraits, &c., of worthy personages are held in reverence and adorned with wreaths of flowers and such other things, and looked at with reverence to such an extent that any abuse in respect of these is considered as little less than sacrilege. The Indian religious thinker has taken note of the subtle action of external objects in the psychical and spiritual line and turned it to the advantage of the aspirant. The worship of Mother Maria among Christians is in no way foreign to the Hindu belief, and so among the Jains and the Buddhists image-worship is what the Hindu mind can fully appreciate. Among the Muhammadans, particular spots, *e.g.*, *mukbaras*, are actual places of worship.



दिवौकसोऽखिल अमी पुरस्तदा व्यलोक्य-
 नखण्डमण्डलाकृतिं विभिद्य वै तमस्ततिम् ।
 अखण्डमण्डलात्मकं सुदिव्यमेकमद्भुतं
 महः किमप्यहो परं प्रकाशते स्म दुःसहम् ॥
 अनन्तकोटिमूर्यतेज-ओधमोषताकरं
 विभासते स्म तन्महः समुज्ज्वलं मनोहरम् ।
 महस्ततोऽन्तरा गलद्धिरण्यपुञ्जसन्निभा
 समाविरास्त बोडशी समस्तविश्वमोहिनी ॥
 अपूर्वमूर्तिरम्बिकाऽवलास्वरूपधारिणी
 बभौ समस्तविश्वव्यभास्वरप्रभाकरा । *
 सुदिव्यवल्लभूषणैर्विभूषता चतुर्भुजैः
 सुपाशमंकुशं तथाऽभयं वरध्व विभ्रती ॥
 असीं जगद्भवतिप्रणाराकारिणांश्वरी
 शिवात्मनः परात्परय नाभिपद्ममास्थिता ।
 शिवोऽपि दिव्यमन्त्रमस्त्यधिस्वपंस्त्रिदेवयुक्-
 पितृव्रजविनिर्ज्जरा यदीयतादरूपिणः ॥
 गभीरमप्यहोऽम्बिहामुखं सुचारुदर्शनं
 जगद्धिमोहकारकस्वमन्दहास्यशोभितम् ।
 अवाचि सत्यपि स्वतस्तदाननादुदेति च
 जगद्धिमोहसाधकः स श्रौध्वनिर्निरन्तरम् ॥

Then all those Gods (Devas) beheld before themselves: how, having burst through the mass of darkness shaped as a dense sphere, a wonderful, indescribable, excessively brilliant, and sublime lustre shone dazzling forth in the form of a compact sphere.

That light charming and blazing poured out reducing to worthlessness the flood of the splendour of numberless crores of suns. Then in the midst of that light, there became visible a sixteen-year old Goddess, fascinating to the whole universe appearing like a mass of molten gold.

* See illustration No. 6, which represents this Dhyana.



समस्ततत्त्वतो ध्रुवं बहिर्गताऽन्यसौ शिवा
जगत्स्वदिव्यशक्तिभिश्च वेविषत्यथाऽसिलम् ।
ददाति विश्वशङ्करं परं निरन्तरं सुदुः
प्रसादमात्मनो जगज्जिवांसिजीवजातये ॥
सदात्मिका चिदात्मिका रसात्मिकाऽद्रयाप्यसौ
प्रपद्य सच्चिदात्मकं हि भावमात्मनैव तु ।
प्रपञ्चरूपधारिणी महेश्वरी द्रयात्मिका
रसात्मकस्वभक्त्या समस्तविश्वमाश्नुत ॥
देवीं ब्रह्मरयीं समीक्ष्य पुरतस्त्वेवंविधां निर्जरा
निष्पन्दा अगिरोऽभवन्निव कियन्मूढाः क्षणं संस्थिताः ।

Possessing a woman's form of a beauty of which there was no like before, Ambikā, in whom fresh and glorious stores of lustre were all combined, shone forth adorned with four arms with high heavenly jewels on them, carrying in the four hands a noose, a goad, the promise of freedom from fear, and a boon for the devotee.

That Goddess, who effects the creation, continuance and destruction of the worlds, sat on a lotus growing out of the navel of the God, the Highest of the High, the form of whose self is Shiva, the Nirguna Brahman.

Shiva too was there, lying on a heavenly sofa which had for its legs three classes of Devatas in three separate groups, the Rishis, the Devatas, the Pitris, headed by Rudra, Vishnu and Brahmā, respectively.

Ambicā's face, though grave, possessed a beautiful look graced with its beaming smile that spread a fascination over the world; and though she did not utter anything, yet there rose incessantly from her mouth that utterance of Om, which succeeds in spreading a charm over the world.

And further, that Divine Mother, though standing beyond all principles of creation, pervading the whole world by means of her divine powers, repeatedly grants her favour, giving happiness to the universe, to the whole class of living beings that inhabit the world.

पश्चान्मोहतमोविपुक्तमतयश्चैतन्यपूर्णाशयाः
 शान्ता देवगणाः कृताञ्जलिपुटा देवीं परां तुष्टुवुः ॥
 देवि ! प्रपन्नार्त्तिहरे ! शिवे ! त्वं
 वाष्णीमनोबुद्धिभिरप्रमेया ।
 यतोऽस्त्यतो नैव हि कश्चिदीशः
 स्तोतुं स्वशब्दैर्भवतीं कदाचित् ॥
 परं मनोवेगविमोहिता वयं
 भावं भवत्या अपि बाह्मनोधियाम् ।
 अगोचरं द्योतयितुं सप्रयत्नाः
 क्षमस्व नो दोषमष्टं दयानिधे ! ॥
 अत्र क्षमाप्तावपि कारणं ते
 महत्यपराऽस्ति कृपैव मातः ! ।
 ब्रह्मस्वरूपे ! जगदम्बिकेऽलं
 दयामयीं त्वां सततं नमामः ॥
 परात्परा त्वं परतत्त्वरूपिणी
 स्वतीत्य तत्त्वान्यलिलानि राजसे ।
 सार्धैस्त्वसाहाय्यत आत्मना पुन-
 र्दाम्पत्यरूपं युगलञ्च दिश्रती ॥

Although Herself consisting of *Sat* or pure existence, *Chit* or pure consciousness, and of *Rasa* or joy; though without duality, She—as the great Goddess in Her own person using Her nature in the form of existence and consciousness, taking the form of duality, pervaded the whole universe by means of Her power, consisting of the joy—*Rasa*.

Beholding the great Goddess full in the Brahman power, in this sort of appearance before them, the Devatas became motionless and speechless, as it were, for a time, remaining wholly entranced. Then having the minds freed from the darkness of ignorance, with hearts full of consciousness, the assemblages of the Devatas holding forward their folded hands in peace, praised the Great Goddess: Said the Devatas:—



तनोषि शृङ्गारमयीं समन्ता-
लीलाललामान्वितसुष्ठुमेताम् ।
स्वानन्दसन्दोहभरप्रकाशा-
मनाद्यनन्तां जगदम्बिकेऽलम् ॥
लीलोदयास्ते भवतो भवत्या-
श्रीक्षितिः केवलमेव पातः ! ।
नानाविधस्यामितसंख्यकस्य
ब्रह्माण्डसत्त्वस्य च देवि ! मन्ये ॥
सर्गस्थितिप्रत्यवहारकार्यं
भवद्विलासस्य तरङ्गमात्रम् ।
कर्तुं क्षणेनाऽखिलमस्यत्वं त्वं
नमोऽस्त्वतस्तेऽखिलशक्तिरूपे ! ॥
त्वं निर्युगाकारविवर्जिताऽपि

As Thou, O Goddess, O Shiva, removing the distress of those coming to Thee for relief, are not to be definitely known by the speech, the mind and the intellect; none indeed is therefore able to praise Thee by words.

But over powered by the violent impulse of the mind, we try to manifest in words Thine essential being though incomprehensible to the speech, mind and intellect,—O Goddess, the Ocean of Compassion, pardon this fault of ours.

And in the securing of pardon in this maker, Thine infinite graciousness alone, O Mother, is the ground, O Goddess having the Brahman as Thy personal form, O Mother of the Universe, we repeatedly salute Thee, who are full of grace and compassion.

Higher than the High, possessing a form by the highest principle, Thou appearest glorious for excelling all the principles of creation; and again, through the united work of Thine existence and consciousness Thou personally manifestest a dual form in the relation of the husband and the wife.

त्वं भावराज्याच्च बहिर्गताऽपि ।
 सर्वेन्द्रियाऽगोचरतां गताऽपि
 त्वेका ह्यखण्डा विभुरद्वयाऽपि ॥
 स्वयक्तकल्याणविवर्द्धनाय
 धृत्वा स्वरूपं सगुणं हि तेभ्यः ।
 निःश्रेयसं यच्छसि भावगम्या
 त्रिभावरूपे ! भवतीं नमामः ॥
 नास्त्यम्ब ! सीमा तव सत्कृपायाः
 शक्ता न ये भक्तगणास्वदीयाः ।
 तत्त्वप्रबोधस्य प्रपूर्यभावाद्—
 द्रष्टुं हि ते भावमयस्वरूपम् ॥
 स्वाभाविकैरेव कृपाकटाक्षैः
 समीहमाना ह्यनुकम्पितुं तान् ।
 गुणाश्रयाद्यच्छसि दर्शनं स्वं
 मुक्तिञ्च तेभ्योऽभ्युदयं ददासि ॥
 ज्ञातुं न शक्तास्तव देवि ! तत्त्वं
 वयं न दैत्या अपि मानवाः के ।
 परात्परे ! त्वाञ्च दयान्वुराशे !
 वयं नमामस्त्रिगुणस्वरूपे ! ॥

O Mother of the worlds, Thou spreadest out in perfection this beginningless and endless creation, together with the sportive beauty and adornment, characterised by the sentiment of Love, whose manifestation contains the flowing tide of the ebullitions of joy.

By a mere glance of Thine eye, O Mother, rise sportive appearances, through the Lord, and so do, O Goddess, there arise, I think, the sportive appearances of the multitudes of *Brahmāndas* of various sorts and in infinite numbers.

The work of Creation, its continuance and its re-absorption, is a mere wave of Thy sportive pleasure. Thou art able to create the whole in a moment. A salutation to Thee, therefore, All-powerful O Goddess.



किं वर्णन तेऽस्ति कृपाम्बुराशे-
र्येऽज्ञानपारैर्जडिता विप्रगुहाः ।
मातर्महत्त्वं परमाद्भुतं ते
किमप्यहो नैव विदन्ति भक्ताः ॥
अनन्यभक्त्यैव तु केवलं हि
भक्त्यायमाणास्तव पादपद्मे ।
विच्योतयस्यम्भ ! न तानपि त्वं
स्वदर्शनान्मोक्षस्वनेः कदापि ॥
श्रीविष्णुगौरीशिवधीशसूर्य-
रूपास्तु पञ्चात्मकदेवतास्तु ।
यथारुचि त्वं प्रकटत्वमेत्य
स्थूलास्तु तान्वै कुरुषे कृतार्थान् ॥
दैवेषु राज्येषु यदा कदाचिद-
घोरेण देवास्तुसङ्गरेण ।

Although void of attributes Thou art, and void of form ;
although standing outside the province of objective existence ;
although beyond the range of the senses ; although only one
and whole, and without a second, and all-pervading :

Because assuming a form possessed of attributes for the
well-being of Thy devotees, Thou givest them the highest
good. We salute Thee, O Goddess, in whom all the three
conditions of existence become manifest.

There is no limit, O Mother, to Thy kindly grace—in
the case of Thy devotees, who are not able to realise Thy
form, consisting of the ideal forms, through their imperfec-
tions in the knowledge of the principles.

Showing them mercy, Thou grantest them, with Thy
natural glances of grace, the sight of Thine own self by Thy-
self assuming attributes ; and Thou grantest them temporal
prosperity as also Liberation.

Neither are we, the Gods, O Goddess, nor again the
Daityas, able to know Thy true essence,—what to speak of
man ? And, O Highest beyond the High, O Ocean of grace, O
Thou who hast the three *gunas* as Thy form we salute Thee.

उत्तिष्ठते धार्मिकविलंबौघो
 दयामयि ! त्वञ्च तदैव नूनम् ॥
 मातर्नगन्मङ्गलमाशु कर्तु-
 माकृष्य तेजांस्यमलानि नोऽलम् ।
 तैरेव सन्दीपितदिकृतमूहैः
 स्थूलं स्वरूपं विमलं दधाना ॥
 इत्वाऽसुरांस्तान् कुरुषे व्यवस्थां
 दैवाधिराज्यस्य विशालसीम्नः ।
 एवं कदाचित् किल मर्त्यलोके
 धर्मस्य जाते बहु विप्लवे हि ॥
 विभिन्नजीवेश्ववतीर्थ्य मातः !
 इठादसाधून्त्रिलिलाभिहत्य ।
 साधून्वन्ती पुनरेव धर्म-
 राज्यं सुसंस्थापयते तदा त्वम् ॥
 देशो यदा ह्यसम्प्रेति तं त्वं
 नेतृस्वरूपे ह्यवतीर्थ्य पासि ।

O Ocean of compassion, what description of Thine is possible? How wonderful Thy devotees, made dull by the meshes of ignorance and thus losing sense, do not at all know Thy greatness.

Only with one-pointed devotion to Thee, if they cling like bees at Thy lotus-like feet, Thou, O Mother, dost not deny them the realisation of Thy presence, which is the source of Freedom.

Thou makest them happy by becoming manifest according to their taste in the gross five-fold Godheads,—Vishnu, Gouri, Shiva, Dheesh and Surya.

And when sometime in the God's Kingdoms, there rises a havoc among the righteous, owing to the fearful war between the Gods and the Demons, then, O Merciful One, Thou.

Taking from us our bright powers to sufficiently effect a blessed amelioration of the world, O Mother, and assuming



विष्णुवादिपश्चात्कदेवरूपे !
वयं नमामो रणचण्डिके ! त्वाम् ॥
त्वं सच्चिदानन्दमये स्वर्काये
ब्रह्मस्वरूपे निजविज्ञभक्तान् ।
तयेशरूपे च विधाप्य मात-
रूपासकान् दर्शनमात्मभक्तान् ॥
निष्कामयज्ञावलिनिष्ठसाधकान्
विराट्स्वरूपे च विधाप्य दर्शनम् ।
श्रुतेर्महावाक्यमिदं मनोहरं
करोष्यहो “ तत्त्वमसीति ” सार्थकम् ॥

a bright, gross form by means of those powers, that spread illumination all round: Thou killest those Demon” and establishest order in the God’s vast Kingdoms:

So sometimes when there occurs, as is occasionally the case, a great overthrow of *Dharma*, Thou, O Mother, incarnating in various beings, destroy the unrighteous by Thy power, and protect the righteous, and thus establishest the Kingdom of righteousness.

When a nation is on the brink of ruin, Thou incarnatest Thyself in the form of Leaders and protectest it. O Wrathful One in the battle-field, O Goddess of the forms of the five-fold Gods, Vishnu and others, we bow to Thee!

How wonderful! Thou utterest the great utterance of the Vedas: ‘Thou art that,’ true in its sense, by helping Thy devotees possessing knowledge to realise Thy presence in Thy *Brahma*-form; by helping Thy worshipping devotees to realise the same in Thy *Iswara* form; by helping the aspirants who place their faith in the continued performance of the sacrifice in a desireless spirit to realise the same in Thy *Virāt* form.

मन्त्रावलीनां दृढसेतुभूते !
 सृष्ट्यादिजाते ! प्रभवे ! श्रुतीनाम् ।
 अनाद्यनन्तेऽखिलगे ! प्रणम्ये !
 नमो भवत्यै प्रणवस्वरूपे ! ॥
 ज्ञानस्य साम्राज्यमृषिप्रकाण्डै-
 रस्माभिरम्नाऽखिलकर्मराज्यम् ।
 स्थूलं स्वराज्यं पितृभिश्च नूनं
 दत्त्वाऽथ संरक्षयसे स्वशक्तिम् ॥
 अव्यक्तरूपेऽखिलशक्तिशोभे !
 व्यक्तेऽगुणे ! त्वं सगुणेऽसि मातः ! ।
 विमोहिनी जीवततेरविद्या
 विद्याऽपि कैवल्यप्रदा त्वमेव ॥
 नित्यं तुरीयास्पदसम्प्रतिष्ठा-
 विधायिनी ब्रह्मययी त्वमेव ।
 स्वाहास्वधाकारवषट्स्वरूपे !
 हे देवमातर्भवतीं नमामः ॥
 त्वमेव मातः ! प्रतिकल्पमेव
 सरस्वतीरूपमहो दधाना ।
 स्वाध्यात्मशक्त्यर्षिप्रशान्तचित्त-

O Mother, possessed of all power and grace ! O Unmanifested, and O Manifested One ! O attributeless One ! O Goddess with attributes ! Thou art nescience, deluding all the individual souls. Thou art thyself science conferring absolute freedom.

O Goddess, who art the bridge along the numbers of mystic verses ! O Goddess, who appearest before creation ! O source of the Vedas ! O beginningless and endless ! O Thou, who has the *Om* as Thy form, O pervader of everything, O worthy of salutation, we bow to Thee !

O Mother, Thou by conferring Thy powers, protectest the Sovereignty of Knowledge through the distinguished Rishis : the whole Sovereignty of Karma through us : and the Sovereignty of the gross, mortal world through the Pitris.



माविर्विधस्ते च प्रणोद्य वेदान् ॥
वेदेषु संस्थापयसेऽथ मन्त्र-
शक्तिं हि गायत्र्यधिरूपतस्त्वम् ।
त्वमेव सावित्र्यधिरूपतश्च
यज्ञक्रियाशक्तिमथो वितन्य ॥
तत्साधकेभ्यो मनुजेभ्य आशु
निःश्रेयसञ्चाभ्युदयं ददासि ।
अतो वयं ज्ञानप्रदेशतिनम्ना
हे वेदमातर्भवती नमामः ॥

Thyself Thou art the dispenser of the status in the position of the fourth condition. Thyself Thou existest as Brahman. O Mother of the Gods, having the form of *Swaha*, *Swadha* and *Vashat*, we salute Thee.

In every period of creation, Thou Thyself, O Divine Mother, assumest the forms of *Saraswati*, the Goddess of Learning, inspirest with Thy spiritual power the calm minds of the Rishis, and revealest the Vedas to them.

From Thy presiding power over *Gayatri*, Thou conveyest and instillest the power of mystic utterances into the Vedas, and from Thy presiding power over *Savitri*, Thou conveyest and instillest power into the sacrificial observances.

And Thou givest prosperity and the final Bliss to those that aspire to win them by those performances. Hence, O Giver of Knowledge, do we in great humility salute Thee, O Mother of the Vedas.

MAHAYAJNA.

THE GREAT SACRIFICES.

XX.

Yajna is a great idea in Hinduism. It is in fact almost a synonym for Dharma. But in usage, Yajna is ritualistic action and especially action based on, and characterised by,



the three-fold purification, *viz.*, the purification of *Adhibhoota*, *Adhidaiva* and *Adhyatma*, all taking place simultaneously. In the Vaidic Yajna, purification of *dravya*, of *kriya* and of *mantra* is effected as a means of right procedure. The purification of *dravya i. e.* articles leads to the purification of *adhibhoota*. The right procedure according to sacred injunctions, which occasions the purification of *kriya*, gives the purification of the *adhidaiva*. The mantras help to give the purification of *adhyatma*. The *dravyas* include the articles, the material means, such as cow's milk or *ghee*, the construction or arrangement of the sacred spot or shrine, the erection of the *Mandapa* or sanctum, the fire to be produced for the ceremony and other things required according to the nature and form of the sacrifice. When these are in the proper order the *adhibhoota* purification is secured.

Adhidaiva purification occurs when the *Prana* comes into the place, and thus a *Pitha* (of which we have spoken elsewhere)* is created by right procedure according to the *Karma Kanda* of *Vedas* or *Tantras*. Consecration by means of the recitation of the prescribed *Mantras* establishes a connection with the *Devas* or occult world, thus giving the *Adhyatma* purification.

In all action that which gives spiritual elevation to the Soul is Yajna.†

The difference between a Yajna in general and a *Maha-Yajna* is this: *Karma* for the individual is Yajna. The fruit of it is intended to contribute to the well-being or prosperity of the individual, the advancement of the performer's personal interests. The *Maha-Yajna* serves a universal function: in fact it is a sacrifice of his own interests to be undergone by the individual for not only his own class of beings, but for every being of every sort in the whole universe, from the

*See Section on *Pithas*.

†See *Bhagwad Gita*, Chapter IV.



minutest vermin to the highest developments of life where the very perfection of spirituality* is reached.

Five grades of this are recognised in the Shastras : they are known as the five Mahayajna, the five great sacrifices, that are compulsory on every house-holder. He has to contribute by all means in his power to the sustenance of all those grades of beings and to take for his use only the leavings according to the nature of the article dedicated to those beings. The five grades are :

1. Brahma-Yajná,
2. Deva-Yajna,
3. Pitri-Yajná,
4. Bhoota-Yajná, and
5. Nri-Yajná.

These five Mahayajnas are special Dharmas of Hindus, and are peculiarly connected with the functions of *Grihasthas*.†

We now explain the nature of these to show how essential they are to the well-being of the Sacrificer and of all those grades of life. Nothing could be more generous, more comprehensive, more holy, spiritual and bliss-giving : the very essence of the beauty of religion is presented herein, that will not fail to induce the right-minded thinker to assimilate these ideas and these forms in his daily life.

The Brahma-Yajna.—Knowledge is the chief thing on which the existence of the universe and Mukti of the Jiva depends; the safety, continuity and prosperity of the universe rest on knowledge. Every human being as the enjoyer of the advantages accruing to him from the world, owes a debt to it. Knowledge is the first thing we owe to all beings and the sacrifice in the form of knowledge for them in whatever form they exist must receive our due contribution. Knowledge is contained in the Vedas, Shástras, the sphere of knowledge is in the hands of the holy, immor-

*See *Karma-Mimansa* of Bharadwaj.

†See Section on Varnashrama Dharma.

tal, *Rishis*. They subsist on knowledge, that is their actual food* which we can serve out to them from our position as house-holders. When with a view to the satisfaction of the *Rishis* one pursues knowledge, with no other object but the acquisition and advancement of knowledge,—knowledge for its own sake—one is able to perform the *Brahma-Yajna*. By the performance of this great sacrifice, the *Rishis* are gratified and they help the acquisition and diffusion of knowledge on the part of mankind.† The Maharshi Patanjali says: ब्राह्मणेन निष्कारणो वेदोऽध्येतव्यः ।

Nish-kām or desireless performance of sacred action is the holiest and the worthiest. The house-holder's performance of the *Brahma-Yajna* in a desireless spirit is the first and the highest duty enjoined on him. The *Brahma-Yajna* is the revision and acquisition of all sorts of knowledge of Brahman, of the *Vedas* and the *Shāstras*—holy knowledge which is the source of all power—all bliss, all safety and immortality.—*Mukti* in the long run.†

The Deva-Yajna.—The verses in the *Sri Bhagwad Gītā* about the creation of *Yajnas* together with that of the creatures is well-known.‡

All dualistic relations are conditional. "Give and take" is a law of duality. Dependence on material offerings reigns supreme in the spiritual as well as in the physical universe. The *Devas* exist and thrive not by their own *Karma*, own power and

* See *Daici-Mimansa Philosophy*.

† We have touched upon this subject in the Section on *Veda and Shāstra*.

‡ सहयज्ञाः प्रजाः सृष्ट्वा पुरोवाच प्रजापतिः ।

अनेन प्रतविष्यध्वं, एष वोऽस्त्विष्टकामधुक् ॥

देवान् भावयन्तनि ते देवा भावयन्तु वः ।

परस्परं भावयन्तः श्रेयः परमवाप्स्यथ ॥



sustenance, but by what is contributed by conscious man towards their well-being from the central organisation—the *Mrityu Loka*.* The directions of natural utility are, however, different. As in the case of plant life and human life, these are mutually contributory to the prosperity of both, so in the case of *Devas* and men both can contribute to each other's strength and happiness. Through fire, offerings are sent up from *Mrityu Loka* to the *Devas* in their *Daiva Loka*. Fire is the great physico-spiritual medium for conveying sacrificial offering to the *Devas* one fact about which is often quoted.

अग्नौ प्रास्ताहुतिः सम्यगादित्यमुपतिष्ठते ।

आदित्याब्जायते वृष्टिर्वृष्टेरक्षं ततः प्रजाः ॥

To feed the *Devas* and to keep them pleased without selfish desire is the duty in the performance of the *Deva Yajna*. And this sacrifice is to be offered into the fire. To please the *Devas* by special ceremonial for the welfare of the whole humanity is a *Mahayagna* no doubt. The *Devas* as described elsewhere, are the agencies† in the proper disposal of *Karma* in the nature of evolution and re-birth and re-incarnation and the giving of *Bhoga* (the realisation of the result) corresponding to the *Karma* of the individual.

The Pitri Yajna.—We have also explained how in the administration of the *Brahmānda*, there are separate departments in charge of the *Rishis*, the *Devas* and the *Pitris* as in the human Kingdoms.‡ The *Pitris* form and keep the *Sthula Sharira* or the gross body in right condition and contribute to the fitness of the same for higher advancement in the case of humanity.

Our debt to the *Pitris* is correspondingly great. It is necessary therefore to keep these *Pitris* well-pleased towards us. The *Pitri-Loka* is the link between humanity and spiri-

*See chapter on Occult World.

†See Section on Occult World.

‡See Section on Occult World.



tuality. If the Pitris are kept pleased by the house-holders as a daily duty, their good pleasure contributes to the well-being of the whole humanity, and prevents a race over which they preside, from becoming extinct.* The formal performance of the ceremonial to please the Pitris is the Pitri-Yajna, which as referring to the well-fare of the whole of humanity is one of the Mahá-Yajnas.

Bhoota-Yajna.—A far nearer mutual helpfulness is to be noted with reference to the Bhoota-Yajna. Our bodies† and their sustenance, and our comforts and conveniences are due to the use we are required to make of all beings from the least to the highest. Matter and life in almost all shapes and grades contribute to our well-beings—in drinking, in eating and similar bodily comforts and entertainments. The living beings contribute every thing undergoing total sacrifice for us. A return for this sacrifice is necessary. We could not of course bless all the beings by our actions, we therefore dedicate our actions to the Devatás that are the guides of the group souls‡ of the Bhootas. This is the Bhoota-Yajna, and it is a Mahá-Yajna inasmuch as it is intended to be a universal contribution through the Devatás referred to.

Nri-Yajna.—Lastly, we come to the Nri-Yajna. Every human being is under obligations to his human friends. The parents and kinsfolk, neighbours and towns-people, and countrymen and religious brethren and benevolent humanity all over the world have been instrumental in bringing about the vast amount of happiness, comforts, pleasure, and reliefs that we enjoy in this world. Our devotion in every day depends far more on our human association than on others. A daily and regular contribution towards the well-being of that humanity is a duty devolving on us. It is evidently impossible to gratify the human race,

*See the section on Varnasram Dharma.

†See the section on Evolution and Re-Incarnation.

‡See section on Occult World.



to make a return of the obligations. The solution under the difficulty of contributing to this end lies in the due worship of the guest. The *Atithi** or guest with the house-holder is a god, even if the guest happens to be of the lowest caste, or an out-caste altogether. When we possess the spirit of self-sacrifice which contributes its quota first to the need of the guest, and when we are content to feed ourselves with what is left after satisfying the *Atithi*, it is a true sacrifice and the food we thus eat is sacrificial food. It is a sacred portion enjoyed by us out of the performance of that holy sacrifice.

The uppermost explanation usually given of the necessity of these five Mahayagnas—great sacrifices, is the atonement for the five destructive processes in our life that must be sustained only at the cost of other life. जीवो जीवस्य जीवनम् The usual processes of destruction of life for our well-being are five.

पञ्चगूना गृहस्थस्य चतुर्लौषण्युपस्कारः ।&†

This is a true purpose, but not the whole purpose. The whole purpose is far larger in fact, universal as just shown.† The Hindu Dharma understands the self, or *Atmā*, as pervading all beings. Every one else, man and animal, plant and insects nay, even material substances, as well as occult powers, all these are phases of our own self, and whatever we, as simple beings do, is to be done for the sake of the whole; to teach this great ideal in life the Mahayagnas are compulsory on every Hindu house-holder. Much less would there be with the Hindus anything like hatred for the votaries of other religions or races or castes. Hatred of this sort is condemned by the Hindu Shāstras. A liberal, generous, grateful heart is developed by the guidance and practice enjoined in the Shāstras

*A man of any nationality, of any caste, and of any religion who chances to come accidentally to the house of a house-holder before his mealtime is an *atithi*.

†See Manu Smṛiti.

‡See Tantrā Sanhita.

and the five great sacrifices are one of the best illustrations of the universally sympathetic nature of the Hindu religion.

धर्मं यो बाधते धर्मो, न स धर्मः कुधर्मं तत् ।

अविरोधी तु यो धर्मः स धर्म इति निश्चितम् ॥

The great Rishi Yajnavalkya says: "The Dharma, which stands in the way of other Dharmas, is not Dharma at all, but is a wrong Dharma. That which is not contradictory to the Dharmas of other sects, etc., is real Dharma,—this is the truth."

MUKTI

LIBERATION.

XXI.

The final goal of religion is liberation as determined by the Hindu teachers. The literature on the subject of liberation is very vast in India. There are the 1180 Upanishads, the seven Darshanas, and many Shāstras conforming to the teaching of the Vedas, all intended to help the aspirant to gain liberation. A brief description of its nature is given here. It is the ultimate truth of the law of Karma,* it is the ultimate aim of Unasana, Yoga and Bhakti,† and it is the ultimate object of the Gnana-Kanda of Vedas,‡ as explained in separate sections, and its outline will make the path easy for the disciple.

The being of the individual soul is explained elsewhere§ as the knotting up of the conscious with the unconscious (विज्ञाद्वयं) which has been shown as the result of *Avidyā* or nescience. With the help of *Vidyā* or true knowledge, the individual Jiva is able to attain Mukti by virtue of his own power, as also has already been shown. Karma being of three sorts,—the *Sahaja*, the *Aisha* and the *Jaiva*,—Mukti also as referring to each sort of Karma, takes a three-fold

*See chapter IV.

†See chapters from V to XI.

‡See chapters XII and XVI.

§See chapters IV and XIII.



shape.* This has partly been explained in the section on 'The Occult World.' A fuller explanation is given here:—

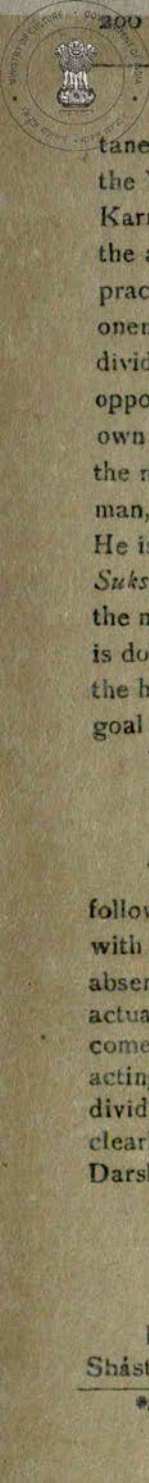
Man as a being endowed with free will can do or counteract good or evil at pleasure. The conquest of sin (*Papa*) and the acquisition of holy merit (*Punya*) are in his power, and if he achieves both these ends, he gradually enlarges his sphere of growth into spirituality, and, rising from world to world in the upper series of the seven worlds, reaches the topmost world and stands installed there as one of the highest Maharshis and Māhatmas, and at his will can gain liberation by penetrating through the सूर्य मण्डल, the solar light, as has been stated in the description of the *Shukla Gati* in the *Bhagwad Gita*.

In the attainment of this Mukti, strenuous Jaiva Karma† and self-knowledge (*Atma-Jnana*) obtained by rising to the seventh spiritual world are the main causes, the former the prior cause, the latter the ulterior one.

The next kind of Mukti is connected with the Aisha Karma. A man making himself holy and desirous of gaining power, advances to Devatā-hood by virtue of the help of the Aisha Karma, which helps the Jiva by the willing co-operation of the powerful Gods. The Jiva thus ascending from power to power, ultimately holds the position of Indra; there, performing his duties without failure, he keeps up that position, and does not fall back or lower. Rising higher still by this perfect dutifulness, the Jiva rises to the very highest Godhood,—Brahmā, Vishnu or Mahesh, according to the preponderance in his nature of the principles of Rajas, the Sattwa, or the Tamas. He becomes one with either of these. From this position, a return to the cycle of up and down never takes place; and this is as good as Mukti, which in its actuality is with these gods a mere matter of the will. They are themselves Mukta as Saguna Brahman.

*See Shambhoo Gītā.

†See *Bharadwaja's Karma—Mimansa Philosophy*.



The third sort of Mukti belongs to the Sahaja or spontaneous Karma. This has been very largely treated of in the Vedas and the Shāstras.* The two Yoga practices, the Karma Yoga and the Jñāna Yoga, are both positive helps to the aspirant in this direction. The main principle in the practice of this Yoga is freedom from desire. One realises oneness with the universe under such a practice,—one's individuality is taken off, and there is no delusion of self as opposed to non-self. The whole world is realised as one's own self. This naturally results in the condition of the Jñāni, the man of perfect knowledge. He becomes one with Brahman, seeing no difference between Brahman and himself. He is rid of the three bodies,—the *Sthula* or the Gross, the *Sukshma* or the Subtle, and the *Karana* or the Causal; and the natural result is a liberated condition even while the body is doing its own work. This is the *Jivan-Mukta* condition, the highest and the best, to attain which is aimed at as the goal by all the Darshanas.

The Upanishad says:

मिद्यते हृदयग्रंथिश्छिद्यन्ते सर्वसंशयाः ।

श्चयिन्ते चास्य कर्माणि तस्मिन् दृष्टे परावरे ॥

The destruction of Karma meant here takes place as follows: the Karma of the long past series of births disappears with the acquisition of self-knowledge. On account of the absence of desire, no new Karma is contracted; and the actually operating Karma under which the body is at work comes to an end with the end of the body that continues acting like the potter's wheel. This last condition of the individual is *Jivan-Mukti*, its practice and theory have been clearly dealt with in sections on Raja Yoga and Vedic Darshana, respectively.

VEDA AND SHASTRA.

THE HINDU SCRIPTURES.

XXII.

Before we proceed to deal with the Vedas and the Shāstras as basis of the Hindu religion, we will consider

*See section on Vedic Darshan.



the spiritual sources through which the Vedas and the Shastras become revealed to the world. It must be admitted that like this phenomenal creation, all knowledge must proceed from a Highest Divine Source. The three Highest Divine manifestations are Brahmá, Vishnu and Mahesh. All universal stock of knowledge is contained in them. Next to these, range the great sages,—the Rishis, who are also divine in their nature and who exist in numerous grades and classes. They inhabit all the fourteen worlds that make up each Brahmánda. From the lowest to the highest plane and world, they are the representatives of the spiritual side of the universe.* In the lower worlds their material power is great. But from the Pitri-world upwards the grades of spirituality rise superior and continuously increasing over the lower worlds, so that from the second upper world to the fifth, the power of spirituality of the Rishis becomes more and more divine in character, until in the sixth and the seventh, the spirituality becomes almost perfect. Between these last, there is a small difference. The perfect Jnanis live in the seventh world, while those near to perfection live in the sixth world.

As divine beings, these Rishis are able to incarnate themselves especially in the human world.† These incarnations are of three grades according to the nature of the function to be performed. Some appear as perfect incarnations (Purnávatáras), others as partial incarnations (Kalavatáras or Amshávatáras); others as incarnations by possession for temporary purposes, called Aveshávatáras. Maharsi Vasishtha, for example, is a Purnávatára. Rishis to whom some portions of the Vedas manifest themselves are Amshávatáras, while those that manifest power only temporarily are Aveshávatáras.

It will be seen from this that knowledge being the product of the spiritual power of the Rishis, all kind of

*See the section on *Occult World*.

†See *Daivi—Mimánsá Philosophy*.



208-
CSL

THE WORLD'S ETERNAL RELIGION

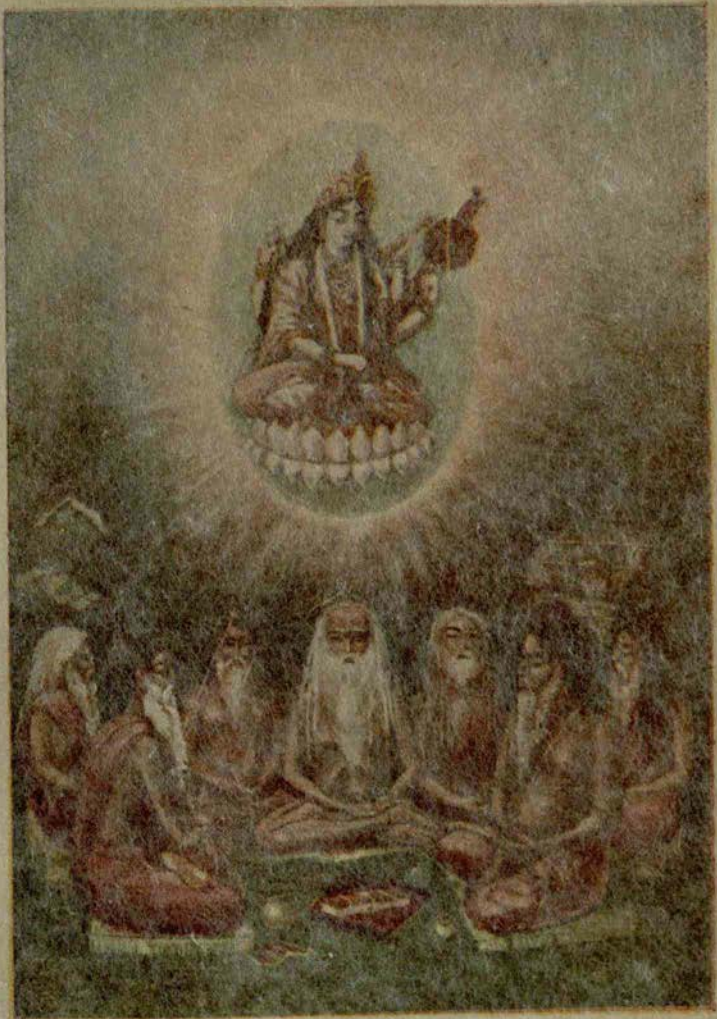


Illustration
No. 7

THE REVELATION OF THE VEDAS

from the different occult worlds into ours all at one and the same time.

We next consider the nature of the utilities of the knowledge revealed. These are termed *Yatharthá*, or exact, pure, true, *Rochacká* or the charming, coaxing, sweet and *Bhayánaka** or the threatening, fearful, over-bearing. The utilities correspond to the mental constitution of the recipients of the knowledge. Men are usually to be classified as Sáttwic, Rájásic and Támasic, and the impartation and character of the knowledge given must suit the condition of each, remembering that the whole of humanity is virtually to be raised from the lowest to the highest grade of spirituality. The three-fold utility will be illustrated by the three-fold character of the Vedas, as explained further on,—the *Adhyátma*, the *Adhidaiva*, the *Adhibhúta*,† which are the bases of Jnána, Upásaná and Karma.

Lastly, comes the question of the medium of conveying Knowledge. The medium as usually named is *Bhášhá* or language. It is not easy to define this "Bhášhá." Even in ordinary experience, we have to classify Bhášhá according to the signs used: There is the plain ordinary language; the hyroglyphic language of secret communications may appear in any number of varieties; symbolic language for purposes of special trades is very common; the deaf and dumb man's language is another; the child's language, the animal's, the bird's, the insects, even that of plants and of the heavenly spheres and the Stars,—to what sublime grade goes the meaning of Bhášhá! The language of the spirit and the mind common in psychical experiments—what an awful phase will Bhášhá appear in, and what definition of it is possible considering the nature of the communication!

With such back-ground we are to consider the nature and variety of the Veda-Shástras which are the everlasting bases

*See *Vishnu Gita*.

†See *Vishnu Gita*.



of our ever-lasting Religion. And the first Lords and Inspirers of the knowledge that is to manifest itself in varied forms in the world are the first Lords of this creation,—Brahmá, Vishnu and Mahesh. It is difficult to find names for Bháshá until we come to what alone is familiar to us in connection with it. The books in which this Bháshá appears, materialised so to say, are first of all to be definitely understood.

The arrangement of books, or works is recognised as—

- (1) Brahmánda ;
- (2) Pinda ;
- (3) Náda ;
- (4) Bindu ; and
- (5) Akshara.*

The lastic Akshara (printed books or Mss) common to all, is the class most popularly known, though it is but one-fifth part. The others rise in their abstract and spiritual character as follows:

Brahmánda with which can be very distinctly compared the expression "the Book of Nature," is the stock of knowledge as contained in the heart of Brahmá, Vishnu and Mahesh as belonging to each Brahmánda.

That stock of knowledge is inaccessible without their personal favour or grace.

Pinda is the stock of knowledge given by the Rishis from any of the 14 Lokas into the heart of the men of letters,

*As in the Vedas.

पंचनद्यः सरस्वतीमपि यन्तिस स्रोतसः ।

सरस्वती तु पंचधा सो देशेऽभवत्सरित् ॥

—शुक्ल यजुर्वेद संहिता ।

ब्रह्माण्डपिण्डनादाश्च विदुरक्षरमेव च ।

पंचैव पुस्तकान्यादुर्योगशास्त्रविशारदाः ॥

And details will be found in the *Dheesh Gita*.



savants, scientists, etc., of all countries, for the welfare of the world. Such stock of knowledge will be found in the original works of all countries in which any great and original truth is revealed. *Bhava*, or the abstract idea, preponderates in this.

Nada.—The form of this lies in the *Pranava** or *Om*. The *Vedas* or *Shrutis* grow out of this, and are obtained in the form of words by the Vedic Rishis who, when absorbed in *Yoga*, hear the *Richas* of the *Vedas*, as the direct words of God. It is for this reason that the *Vedas* are held so sacred. This fact is illustrated in illustration No. 7.

Bindu.—The book in the form of *Bindu* is revealed into the heart of the *Upāsaka-Yogis* or worshippers in an abstract form. There is no direct connection with *Shabda* or sound in this, the idea alone being manifest according to the Vedic truth. As *Richas* or Vedic hymns are an illustration of the *Nāda* form of books, so the *Smritis* and the *Purānas* are illustrations of this class. *Shabda* does not preponderate here, but Vedic *Bhāva* does.

The last and the most popular form of written books of the Hindu religion is arranged in seven classes:—

- (1) The *Vedas*,
- (2) The *Vedāngas*,
- (3) The *Darshanas*,
- (4) The *Smritis*,
- (5) The *Purānas*,
- (6) The *Tantras*,
- (7) The *Upa-Vedas*.

The *Vedas* are known in three forms, *vis.*,—

- (a) The *Sambhitās*.
- (b) The *Brāhmanas*.
- (c) The *Upanishads*.

In this *Kalpa* or cycle of creation† in this the twenty-eighth *Kaliyuga* that is going on, the numerical quantity

*See section on *Mantra Yoga*.

†See the section on *Time, Space and Creation*.



of the three each forms of the Vedas (*i. e.*, Samhitas, Brahmanas and Upanishads) is 1180.* Out of these, seven or eight Samhitas are extant at this time. Similarly, about 20 or 22 Brahmanas and a hundred Upanishads. All the rest are lost in their Akshara form.

The *Vedāngas* are well-known as six :—

- (1) Shikshá,
- (2) Nirukta,
- (3) Vyakarana,
- (4) Chhandas,
- (5) Jyotisha,
- (6) Kalpa.

Shikshá,—the work on Vedic accent and recitation. The correct pronunciation of Vedic words is one phase of it, and Vedic music is the other. In ordinary recitation, we find *Shikshá* to be duly in vogue. But the musical recitation is lost; the *Sam-gána* is not now available. The intonation of Vedic recitation in the form described in the *Shikshá* is capable of producing corresponding vibrations in the whole of the Brahmanda. As an ordinary example of the production of corresponding Sonance, we have most musical instruments that sound usually by striking. If a number of such instruments, tuned to one pitch, be lying about, and one happens to be sounded, its vibrations will produce corresponding vibrations in all the rest. The intonation of Vedic words similarly will produce corresponding sound in all other parts of the Brahmanda wherever its vibrations correspond, especially in the *Dāivi-Loka*, the world of the Devatás. As the *Shiksha* is a means of the correct intonation of the *Mantras*, it is rightly placed at the top of the list.

Nirukta is the science of understanding the meaning of Vedic words. As there are three departments in the universe, so are there three meanings, *i. e.*, Adhyatma, Adhidaiva and

*See *Muktikopanishad*.



Adhibhoota conveyed by the Vedas recited by the Rishis.*
Nirukta helps the construction of Vedic utterances in the three ways. A large quantity of Nirukta is lost.

Vyākaraṇa, the Grammar of the Vedas, exists at present only in Pāṇini's work. Very many grammatical works preceded Pāṇini's, all of which are not now available.

Chhandas, the Vedic prosody, gives the *Yatī*, the Cæsura. By the Yati, we are able to understand the action that is meant in the recitation and the accentuation of the verse. Niruktā and Vyākaraṇa serve to give Gnana and are helpful for the knowledge of the Gnana Kanda; just as the Chhandas and Shiksha are helpful for the knowledge of the Upasana Kanda, so the remaining two—*Jyotisha* and *Kalpa* are helpful in understanding the Karma Kanda or the performance of the Vedic injunction.

Jyotish is Vedic Astronomy. A knowledge of it helps the adjustment of time and the performance of the enjoined ritualistic or sacrificial observances. This helps the attainment of the complete fruit of the performance.

Kalpa is the science of the actual application of the recitation of the Vedic Mantras to particular observance. Without Kalpa no one could know the practical value of the Karma Kanda. Only a few works on Kalpa are now left to us, out of a total of 1,180, like the number of the Samhita, the Brahmanas and the Upanishads.

* गुणभावमयत्वादभगवद्वाक्यं वेदः ।

त्रयोर्धाः सर्ववेदेषु ।

यथा दुग्धञ्च भक्तञ्च शर्कराभिः सुमिश्रितम् ।

कल्पितं देवभोगाय परमाब्जं सुधोषमम् ॥

तथा त्रैविध्यमापन्नः श्रुतिभेदः सुखात्मकः ।

नयते ब्राह्मणं नित्यं ब्रह्मानन्दं परात्परम् ॥

पुराणं संहिता ।



The *Upangas* of the Vedas, the seven Darshanas, are treated in a separate section.* The name, as its etymology will show, means that these works are the "eyesight of the Vedas." Without a knowledge of the Darshanas, one will be blind in the field of knowledge, just as a man that has no sight is unable to do anything independently in the world owing to his blindness.

The *Smṛiti* works which include the laws of every department of Hindu life are many. The principal are Manu and Yajñavalkya. There are 18 more, and there is an equal number of *Upasṁritis*, the total thus being 38 *Smṛiti* works.

The next Shāstric works are the *Puranas*. They are rightly commentaries on special portions of the Vedas. They are not histories, though they contain various narrations. The meaning of the Vedas which is not explicit is made explicit by the *Puranas*. Some do mistake the *Purānas* for history, and are then faced with contradictory and inconsistent narrations, and are nonplussed as to the true import of these works. The stories of Prahlāda described as a Jñāni in the "Yoga-Vasistha" and as a Bhakta in the *Vishnu Bhagwata*, are to be reconciled from the point of view of history. Shuka is described as a Bāla-Brahmachāri, a celibate from childhood in the *Vishnu-Bhagwata*, while as a house-holder in the *Devi-Bhagwata*. The aim of all *Purānas* is to illustrate and explain the meaning of certain matters in the Vedas. Mutually contradictory narrations like these will show that the *Purānas* are not intended to be history. The value of history is already examined in the Preface, and history of the mere date-and-name-cataloguing sort is a vain effort at exactness in a record where infinite knowledge and infinite facts are to be explained to mankind for their guidance to the goal of life.

The *Purānas* are 18 in number, and there are 18 *Upa-Purānas*, and 18 *Maha-Puranas* together with the *Itihāsas*

*See section on Vedic Darshanas



(a kind of Purana), the Mahabharata with its supplement, the Hari-Vansha, and the Rámáyana with its accompaniment, the Yoga-Vásistha. There are a few Purana-Samhitás in addition to these, falling under the same heading.

The Tantras.—The number of Tantra works mentioned is very vast as many as सप्त सप्त सहस्राणि, or 49 thousand, all of which are, of course, not available, though a good number may yet be found.

The last set of literature is the Upa-Vedas—works on Science and Art based on Religion. There were vast works on these, while only a few are now extant. Works on music, medicine, including particular branches as of veterinary, such as of horses, of elephants; agriculture, engineering, astronomy, astrology, physiognomy, physiology, and numerous arts and sciences, also fine arts, for which India has been famed from the oldest times. These are the Upa-Vedas.

These all *Akshara* works preserved in the form of writings and now in printed books are nevertheless liable to be destroyed. Enemies of a nation go to the extreme of burning books and destroying whole libraries. They are after all perishable things, exposed to the destructive work of the elements and of time. The rest four classes of books, *i. e.*, Nada, Brahmanda, Pinda and Bindu, are indestructible.

One must know the three-fold utility, the three-fold meaning, and three-fold language to be able to grasp the meaning of all works, whether preserved in the form of records or in any other form of a more durable character,—the *Adhyatma* or the spiritual, the *Adhidaiva* or super-physical and the *Adhibhúta* or physical aspects. And all knowledge will then be reliable and valuable for the attainment of the goal.

One more fact of the three-fold form of language must not be lost sight of,—the *Samadhi Bháshá*, the *Laukika Bháshá* and the *Parakiya Bháshá*. The *Parakiya Bháshá* is

often mistaken as a genuine source of history by the so-called research students of the present day.*

The three utilities and the three meanings have been already explained. We will add some remarks regarding the three-fold Bhāshā to help the readers of the Veda-Shāstras to a proper understanding of the same.

(1) The *Samādhi Bhāshā* is the medium by which one's experience during the Samādhi state is understood by another who also must lapse into the Samādhi state to be able to take cognizance of it. The Samādhi-Bhāshā of the Vedas and Shāstras is the same for all. There is no difference of opinion in understanding each other in this language, *e. g.*, the definitions of Atmā, Prakriti, Karma, Daivi world, the four-fold creation, etc., will be understood as the same in all our Shāstras.

(2) The *Laukika-Bhāshā* is the medium by which we allegorize, or figuratively or poetically describe the experiences in the Samadhi for a plainer expression and sound impression of the subjects in communicating them to the inquirers, *e. g.*, the description of the Shiva-Linga,† of the consummation of the marriage of Shiva and Pārvati, and similar other topics are figurative expressions for high spiritual matters. The comparative study of the *Rāsa-Līlā* of the Vishnu Bhagwata and the Devi Bhagwata will show what philosophy is conveyed in objective representations of a fascinating character. This Laukika-Bhāshā is deemed the most important of the three.

(3) The *Parakiya-Bhāshā* is the medium that conveys illustrations in the form of Gāthā or stories, of the above topics in order to support and more deeply impress the descriptions of the other two Bhashas, *e. g.*, for the dharma of truthfulness, the Gāthā of Harish Chandra; for a woman's dharma of chastity the Gāthā of Savitri and Satyavana, etc. This Bhāshā is more frequent in the Puranās, though partially occurring in the Vedas too.

*See *Vishnu Gīta* and also *Purana Samhita*.

†See *Linga Purana* and also *Shambhoo Gīta*.



Before putting an interpretation on the Hindu scriptures, all these works and aspects must be well studied. It will be found that the beauty and utility of the religious life of humanity are best seen in India even of to-day and students of religion will get a correct knowledge of the philosophy and practice of religion by a study of the scriptures and the routine of the daily life of the Hindus. It will dispossess them of numerous self-imposed dogmas, it will help their understanding, and it may be even induce them to practise it in their own life, though we would still say (Lord Krishna says:) "स्वधर्मो निधनं श्रेयः परधर्मो भयावहः।"

"Better death in performing one's own Dharma. The Dharma of others is fraught with dangers."

SHIKSHA.

EDUCATION.

XXIII.

The aim of education according to the Hindu ideal is the development of humanity in man, and the acquisition of progress in Dharma with final Liberation of the Soul as the Goal.*

We point out the main differences between the ideas of education in ancient India, and the modern world, chiefly represented by the West.

(1) The Hindus of old did not think it right to impart the same education to every individual. The fitness of the candidate was always the condition in the choice of the line of education, the Varna, Ashrama, sex capacities and powers were always considered before settling the nature of education to be imparted to the candidate from the very beginning. The secret of this mode of imparting education was the consideration of the stage of evolution reached by each. The

*See Tantra Sanhita.

West, on the other hand, tries to bring all sorts of intellect to a common level in the very beginning with no attention whatever to the stage of evolution. This evidently is a cause of confusion often ending in misguidance and failure in various ways.

(2) Old Hindu education had separate lines of training for the candidates in view of Kāma (desire), Artha (gain), Dharma and Moksha (final Liberation of the Soul). Each candidate underwent separate training for the Purushartha (life's object) for which he had become fit.* The West, on the other hand, is not conscious of these separate four aims.

(3) The Hindus of ancient times recognized the importance of arts and sciences only for Kāma and Artha, both being material ends. Yet these two were never considered ends in themselves. They recognized the importance of Philosophy for Dharma and Moksha, these last being spiritual ends. While the West does not yet recognize the use and importance of philosophy as contributing to Dharma and Moksha, and, therefore, relegates that study to a subordinate place.

(4) According to the ancient Hindu aim, man and woman were considered as distinct individualities to be trained up for quite distinct purposes. For Nature fits each sex for distinctly separate duties. The relation between the two would be like that between the Seed and the Soil. The West holding both sexes as equal, confounds the ways and aims of education in their case, giving much more of the education fit for males to females, than is fit or necessary for them. Very feeble attempts are made in the West towards a separation of ways and means in this direction. We begin with women-bachelors of arts, and women-barristers, and end with suffragettes, promising future leaders in politics, and in war for the matter of that, future republican presidents and future wielders of empires, to say nothing of reverend women-fathers, and women-boxers, and what not.

* See Purana Sanhita.



(5) Hindus of old began the education of the child* generally at the age of eight in *Tapabana* though educational work as referring to the soul of the individual continued to the very last, the fourth stage of Sannyāsa itself,—the stage of the Paramahansa,† where education reached its finality. The West, on the other hand, requires Palatial buildings for giving education and has not been able to give thought to this whole side of the subject.

(6) Education in old Hindu practices was a part of religious life like every other function; and *Vedarambha* or the commencement of the study of the Vedas, which is the eighth in order out of the sixteen Sanskāras, or purificatory rites, was a regular sacrament and important religious ceremony. And throughout life, Sanskāras had to be observed imparting higher and higher training, all as a performance of religious duty. In the modern world, religion is totally separated from education, the scope of which is limited, ignoring the true aim of human life, and therefore leading to unfortunate confusion of duties and ideals, thus giving rise to such horrors as Bolshevic and Nihilistic, and similar anarchical and other crimes.

(7) In ancient India *Achāra* was the first step kept in view in imparting education. The preservation of Varna-Dharma and Ashrama-Dharma was the next aim. The necessity of this fact is unknown in the Western world. It is governed by fashion instead; and, in place of Varnashram-dharma, a promiscuous mixture of functions, and the so-called equality of all are held as the ideals.

(8) In the old Hindu system, the basis of education being Dharma and *Adhyatma-Lakshya* (or attention to the self in everything), the aims of *Para-Loka* (or the life here-

*See section on Varnasrama Dharma.

†The fourth Ashrama (the Sannyasa) has its own four stages, viz.,—(1) Kutichaka, (2) Bahulaka, (3) Hansa, and (4) Paramahansa (see Sannyas Gita).



after and the occult world) and Mukti (or final freedom) were perpetually kept in view. In contrast with this, we see that the modern world aims at nothing more than Kāma (or desire) and Artha (or gain), as already pointed out. Exceptions to this are few and far between.

The present troubles and the universal disturbance of peace in the modern world is entirely due to wrong education. The revolution of the relations between king and subjects, between man and woman, between grades of men in society, between Artha-Kāma on the one hand, and Dharma-Moksha on the other,—all is due to wrong education. The system of Education in India was originally very vast and comprehensive. It proceeds on the basis of Nature, so that the comprehensiveness of it is like that of Nature's Law in every department of creation. Nature supplies an exposition of God's will in its orderly course. It obeys that will so that whatever suggestion would come to us from Nature will be God's own order. The ancient Rishis studied Nature thoroughly and framed rules for human guidance, which can be followed safely and with perfect confidence and success.

We will try to illustrate Nature's Law regarding the relation between the sexes. Man and woman, being specifically distinct from each other, though mutually helpful, are like the seed and the soil. The responsibility of each is accordingly different, while in the case of woman, it is ever far greater in respect of propagation of progeny than it is on men. It is not possible for a woman to receive the seed from even two men in the course of a year, while a man can plant his seed in hundreds of soils during the same time. Again, if a man dies immediately after planting the seed, Nature herself helps the growth of the child in the womb. While man in this way leads but a momentary responsibility, a woman has to bear the seed for some ten months. This will show how much greater woman's responsibility is than man's.



We will give another illustration intended to show man's and woman's responsibility in maintaining the purity of the family, society, and race; and by preserving spirituality in obtaining the help of the* Pitris: The man committing adultery, spoils his own body and morality, while woman, going the same immoral way, will not only spoil her soil and her morality, but will spoil her family, society and spiritual race, and she and her descendants will lose the help of the *Pitris*. It is for these reasons that the holy Sages have assigned different duties to each sex, and so the education of each is also different. From these considerations it follows that the fitness, capacity and duty of each sex being different the same sort of education would be inappropriate for both.

On the whole, the aim of education will be seen to be to lead the soul from its birth to final Emancipation. The schooling therefore runs not only through the younger years but it is to be life-long, until the *Parmahansa* condition is reached. And as in the case of man, so in the case of woman. Her education too beginning with girlhood must end in the perfection of chastity. The aims and principles Varnashrama Dharma properly followed will make the schooling perfectly effective in the case of both.

In the modern system of education, the religious side not being properly understood, the spiritual goal has been wholly ignored. But no education would be true and worth anything, where the whole four-fold aim of life has not been assigned its proper place and preparation. Let us hope that educational systems will before long assimilate this ideal, and lead to the Emancipation of Mankind from the present gross materialism,—the inevitable result of (literally) positivist thought.

DHARMA-SAMANWAYA.

RECONCILIATION OF ALL RELIGIONS.

XXIV.

The aim of all the Religions of the world is the Realisation of the Divine. This realisation assures freedom from

* See Chapters on Varnashrama and Nari-dharma.



pain so common to mortal life. By the power of intuition man becomes conscious of his Divine nature, and every religion instituted by man has the one goal of reaching the Most High in Spirit, which results in the natural emancipation from bondage. The yearning for this emancipation begins in a feeble way in the semi-civilized heart, but as civilization and refinement grow more effective, more and more definite forms come to be prescribed for the purpose of the emancipation. The forms do vary, but the goal is the same.

From the materialistic yearnings, a new road comes to be opened to the Soul in a higher psychology (Yoga) by which an opening is made unto the road to the Divine. The gross body is found to be as but the husk round the grain of the spirit, and the realisation of the power and permanence of the latter urges thought and action towards making it one's own.

The Indian mind intuitively perceiving this possibility determined a regular course of life to be followed for the realisation of that goal. The outer form of the course will be found to depend on the surroundings in which each section or individual of humanity stands situated. Forms, even mutually antagonistic will be found prescribed in the Scripture for the advancement of particular cases.

But the goal is one, the realisation of the Divine. Religious systems belonging to the present, past or the future, and any part of the world will find themselves duly formulated and supported in the all-embracing Indian Religion. Many religions there are, whose votaries have a spirit of discord against other creeds than their own. Sanatan Dharma of India does not disown any creed whatever, and finds no cause for difference and discord. There is a place for every grade in the scale.

All prophets, all revelations, all liturgies, have their due places assigned to them, in the Indian Continent of Religions.



Names differ, but that matters little, the goal being one and the same. The idea of God as a personal being is represented in the various Godhoods in the Indian Religion. God, the Judge, is represented by Yama; God, the Creator is represented by Brahma; God, the Preserver, is represented by Vishnu; God, the Destroyer, is represented by Siva. In this way* Iswara and Virat and Brahman are definite representations of different conceptions of Godhood in various religions.

The five-fold Saguna forms unknown in other religions involve a masterly philosophy leading to realisation of Godhood by the path of Worship.

In Christianity, Judaism and Muhammadanism, the personal formless God will find corresponding representation in Trimurti alluded to in previous chapters. There could be no variance between the beliefs of our non-Hindu brothers and our own if we properly understand each other.

Buddha-Deva of Buddhism and Rishava-Deva of Jainism are admitted as divine incarnations amongst the Hindus. The theory of Avatara† is almost identical. The Buddhists and Jains consider Avatara to be perfected men, while the Hindus accept a long gradation of Avatara assumed by Vishnu or Shiva out of the Great Triad.

The Law of Karma as propounded in the philosophy of Hinduism is admitted in the same strain by these two ancient creeds. The details of the Law have only been worked out in the former. They have similar Faith in the Occult world (Daivi Jagat) also.

The practical principles of the four systems of Yoga are equally recognized by the Savants of both these creeds in some form or other.

*See section on Occult World.

†See section on Worship.



The Gnan-Kanda of Buddhism has also followed to some extent the same principle as obtains in our seven planes of knowledge. The fundamental differences between Hinduism and these two creeds lie only in the adoption of Varnasram Dharma by the former as its special Dharma.

The Section 'on Worship in all its phases' includes all gradations from fetish worship and the worship of the dead and demon-worship of uncivilized communities to the highest abstraction of the worship of Brahman, the one without a second. The ideal of any religion under this head will find its proper place in this system.

The Section on Love will be duly appreciated by our Christian and Muhammadan brethern in the aspect of Love of God peculiar to their own religions.

Our doctrine of re-incarnation as treated of in the Section on 'Evolution and Re-incarnation' and 'the Law of Karma' treated of on the Section under the same heading both find a place in the philosophical systems of our Buddhist, Jain and Zoroastrian brethern.

The antagonism of the Evil Spirit to the Holy Spirit common to Zoroastrianism, Christianity, Judaism, Muhammadanism, etc., is explained in a rational and intelligible way in the descriptions of the war between the Devas and Asuras, and their seven Upper Lokas and seven Lower Lokas, respectively, in the Section on 'Occult World.'

Heaven and Hell mentioned in other religions are explained in full detail in the various grades in the Section on "the Occult World," as Pitri-Loka and other Swarga Lokas on one side and Preta-Loka and Naraka-Loka on the other.

The reward and punishment for the good and evil deeds of this life after Divine Judgment, recognized in other religions, are also explained in clear detail in the same section.



Some religions which do not recognize rebirth recognize one universal day of judgment for all Souls. This very limited view is enlarged upon in detail in the description of the conditions of the Soul after death, as realized in the Preta-Loka, Pitri-Loka, Narak-Loka, etc., in the same section.

The fundamental likeness of all religions in respect of the Goal to be reached has been made clear in the foregoing part. The fundamental difference will be found to subsist in the matter of Achāra and Varnashramadharma. It has been already pointed out that the external situation of individuals as also their mental constitution is the basis of the practical side of each religion. In the Indian religion this principle has been considered from its crudest shape to its extreme perfection, and it has been adopted to whole classes and grades of humanity falling within the pale of Hindu influence. The circumstances of other lands have led to modified forms in this direction and owing to their very imperfection no formal regulations, nor definite ideals, have been prescribed in their practices. This difference, however, does not imply any sort of antagonism. It is a question of priority or posteriority in one and the same line of progress, the progress of the Soul from matter to spirit. And it has been many times shown before that the Indian religion—Sanatan Dharma is the storehouse of well-arranged spiritual principles with corresponding practical regulations. If these are imperfectly concerned and vaguely formulated and only suggestive in their character in other religions, that is a matter of mere accident; it means no real difference between them. The fact is *Achāra* is a matter intimately connected with the gross body, and *Varnāshramadharma*s are connected with the Occult side of the world. Although we find signs of the functions of these special Dharmas in all other advanced societies of the world, but no doubt those are the special Dharmas of India. The Indians believe that the organization of *Varnāshramadharma* ever gets help from the Occult world. In the case of other religions the functions of these Dharmas are not wholly lost