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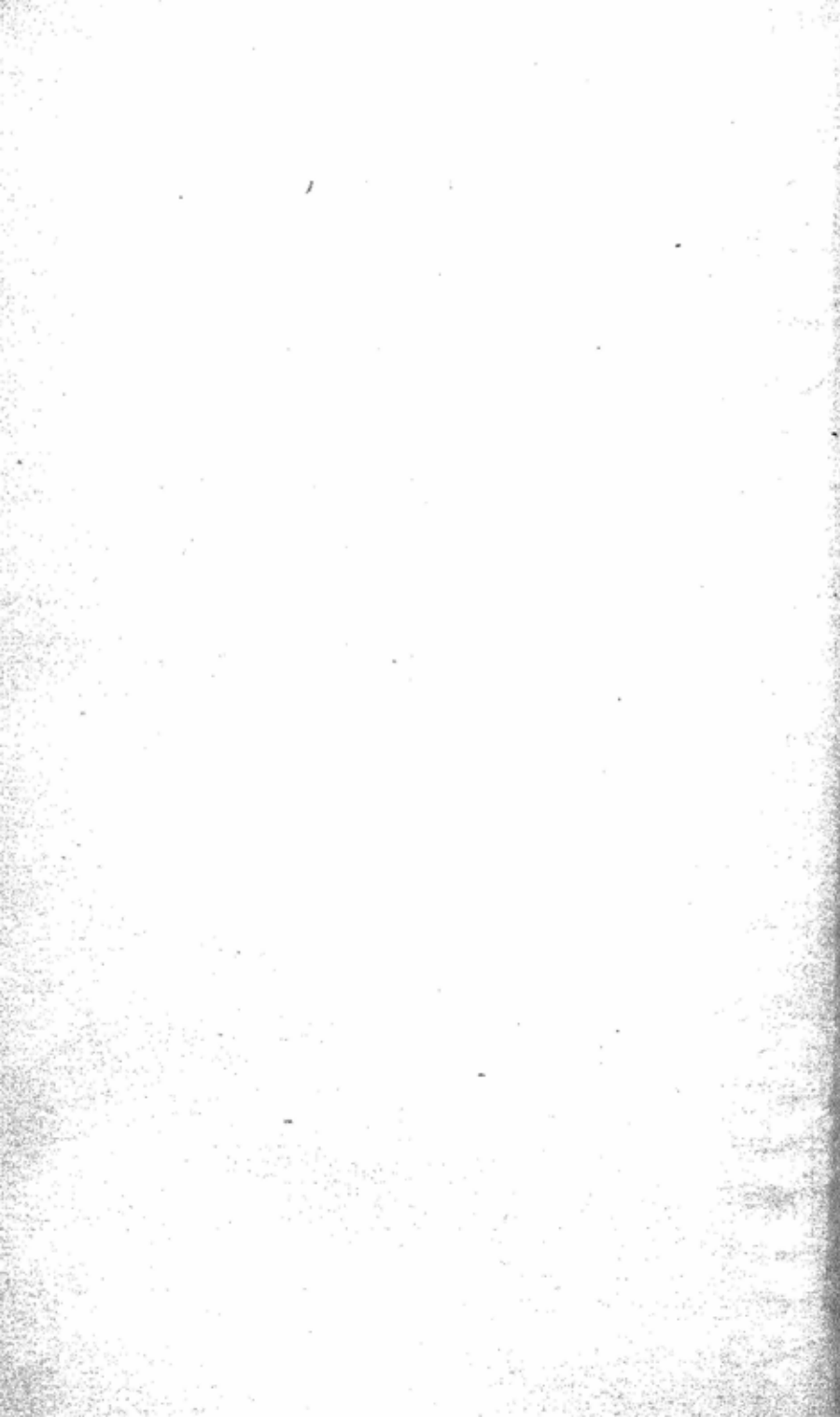
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KENOPANISHAD



DISCOURSES ON
THE KENOPANISHAD

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BY
SWAMI CHINMAYANANDA



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FOREWORD

Brother Aspirants,

In the Lord's service, His Holiness Swami Chinmayananda started a Knowledge-Disseminating *Yagna* (*Gnana Yagna*) in Poona in December, 1951.

This *Yagna* was not of the traditional type but was conceived in a spirit of research and discovery. It was not one where one spoke and the others listened, but one which afforded a forum in which everyone was an equal participant delving deep into the Spirit of the *Upanishads* to discover for himself the pearls within.

In that voyage of discovery, Swamiji functioned as a compass to aid navigation, and as a pilot, familiar with the high seas of Vedanta, to protect us on these unknown waters. While we are concerned only in charting a route, it will be for each one of the participants to follow his own course, according to his own light and ability.

It is a *Yagna* of research in the sense that the study of the *Upanishads* is a process of unlearning the wrong values and searching out the right values of life. It is an enquiry into the spirit that animated the great *Rishis* of old in enquiring into the truth of the phenomenal world and also of that which is beyond and behind all phenomena.

The emphasis, as Sree Swamiji has often pointed out in his lectures, is primarily on group study and discussion. We believe that such a study under the guidance of the great Swamiji will help to clarify and

unify our understanding of the *Upanishad Mantras* and thereby help us to build our own understanding further.

The *Yagna* provided us with an opportunity to re-educate ourselves and to rededicate ourselves to the right values of life.

The *Yagna* is an introduction to and a discussion of the *Upanishads*, and an enquiry into and a discovery of their message, *by each one for himself*. It is conceived in a mood of dedication. In this high and noble endeavour, the active co-operation and participation of everyone is a *sine-qua-non* to its successful culmination.

We therefore call upon all to avail themselves of this unique opportunity and join the noble bands of Seekers of Truth.

Awake ! Arise ! And stop not till the goal is reached !

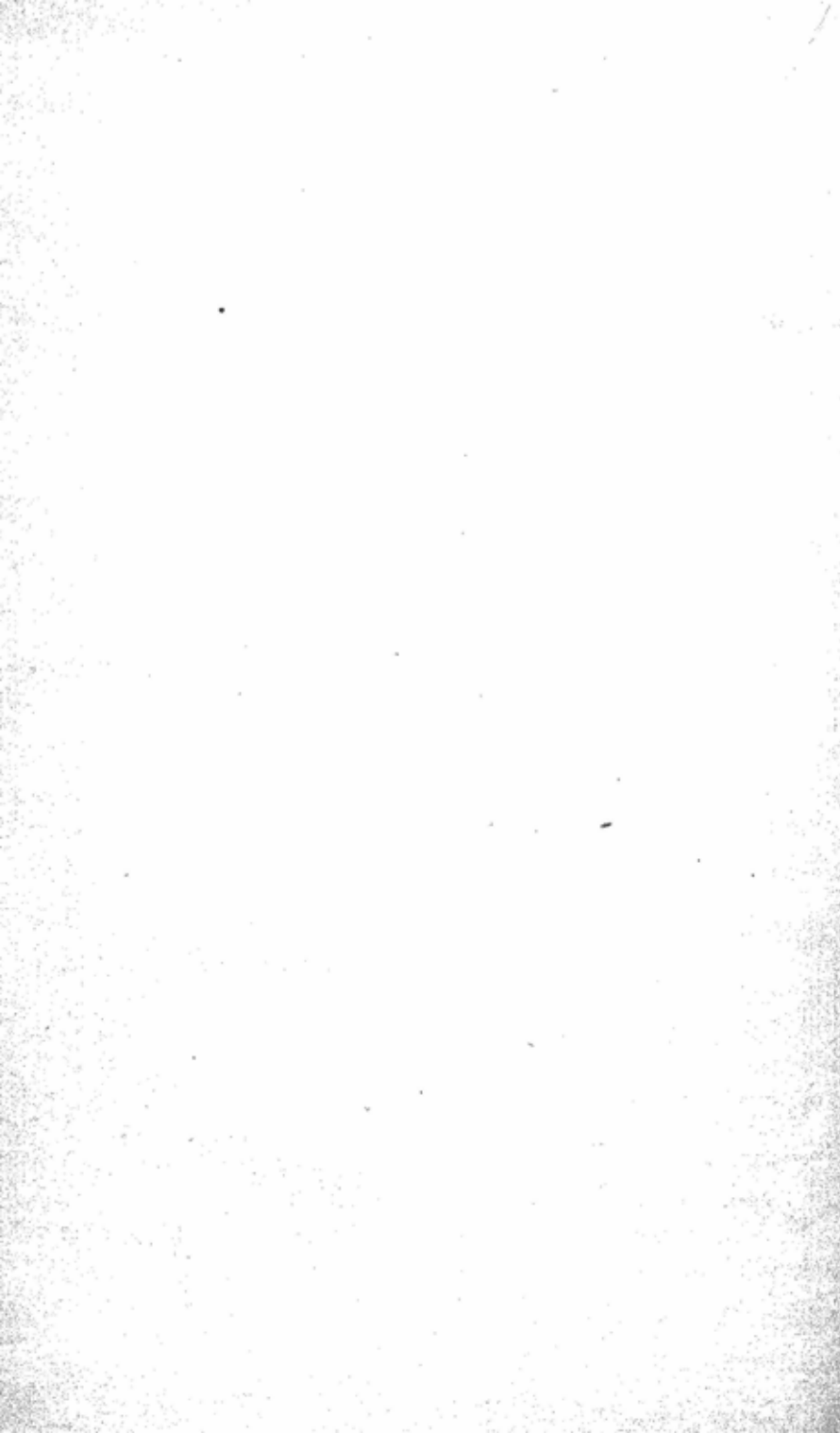
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INTRODUCTION

In the present state of general degradation of our moral, ethical and cultural standards, to totally ignore our religion would be making our dash to ruin quicker. However decadent our religion may be, it is far better than having none at all. The wise thing would be for us to try and bring about a Renaissance of Hinduism so that under its proved greatness, we may come to reach the very heights of culture and civilization that was ours in the historical past.

In India Hinduism has come to mean nothing more than a bundle of sacred superstitions and a certain way of dressing, eating, feeding, talking, etc. Our Deities have fallen to the mortal level of "control offices" at whose altars the faithful Hindu might pray and get special 'permits' for the things he desires most.

This degradation is not the product of any accidental and sudden historical upheaval. For thousands of years Hinduism has been remaining an unwanted orphan without any patronage of the State or encouragement of the rich. Once upon a time, the learned philosophers were rightly the advisers of the State. During the past few centuries, the quality of the adviser-class and the ruler-class deteriorated and their slow putrefaction in the leprous warmth of luxury and power has taken us to the regrettable stage in which we find ourselves now. The general cry of the educated class is really against this *unreligion*.

Hinduism is a Science of Perfection. There is in Hinduism a vitality which we can all reach and share.

There is in it an answer to every problem—individual, social, national and international. In our sacred books we miss many of our beliefs which are taught to us as the very backbone of Hinduism. Hinduism is the religion of VEDANTA, the Eternal Religion of the *Upanishads*.

Upanishads declare in unmistakable terms that man in reality, at the peak of his evolutionary achievement, is God Himself. He is advised to live his day-to-day experience in life in such a systematic and scientific way that, hour by hour, he is consciously cleansing himself of all the encrustations of imperfections which have gathered themselves to conceal the beauty and divinity of the Real and the Eternal personality in him. How an individual can consciously and by self-effort, purify himself and evolve to regain the status of his Real Nature, is the content of Hinduism. Hinduism has, in its vast amphitheatre, the sacred Temple of Truth, preserved and worshipped under the camouflage of heavy descriptions as in the *Puranas*, *Itihasas* and *Sastras*, and thousand and one theories and interpretations. These overgrowths have so effectively come to conceal the real beauty and grandeur of the tiny Temple of Truth that today the college-educated 'illiterates', in their ignorance of the language and style of the ancient Sanskrit writers, miss the Temple amidst its own festoons!

To try to enquire into the very text-books of our religion with a view to bringing its message to serve us in our day-to-day problems is the main aim of the *Upanishad Gnana Yagna*.

Religion becomes ineffectual if its followers are not ready to live its dictates of loving advice. As for that matter, is there any philosophy, political,

social or cultural, which can take us to its promised Land of Joy without our following the principles of that philosophy faithfully in our day-to-day life?

However great our culture might have been in the past, that dead glory, reported in the pages of history, is not going to help us in our present trials. If the barbarous cave-men of the unexplored African jungles want to become as civilised as the modern nations, they cannot achieve this total revolution through mere discourses or even exhaustive study of the literature describing the ways of modern civilised nations. They will have to *know* and *live* the civilised values of life. A mere knowledge of it will not help them. They can claim the blessings of their knowledge only if they are ready to live it. In order to live as civilised men, they will have to renounce completely their ways of uncivilised thinking and acting. In fact without renunciation no progress is ever possible. We must renounce the thrills of our childhood games in order to grow ourselves into young men of noble actions. Again unless we renounce our youthful dash, we cannot reach the revered heights of old age.

Unless we are ready to renounce the low animal values of material life and substitute them with the noble values of the truly religious life, we cannot hope to gain the blessings of religion. The study of a cookery-book, however thorough it might be, will not satisfy our hunger. However much we may meditate upon and repeat the name of a medicine, we cannot get the cure we need. The medicine is to be taken in if the cure is to be ours. Similarly, the blessings of religion can be ours only when we are ready to live the values advocated in it.

During the small span of life of every person, one

should try to discover the Eternal Happiness and Bliss which is the succulent content of all true religions. In the light of the principles of Truth declared in the *Upanishads*, we can try to get at the scientific significance of the various institutions that have come to be worked out as part of our religion in our communal living. We shall in the end come to discover the Science of Perfection which is truly what Hinduism is.

Let us then try to know what Hinduism is. Let us make an honest resolve, not only for our own sake but also for the sake of the entire world, that we shall, when once we are convinced of the truth of Hinduism, try and live honestly, as far as possible, the values advocated by this ancient and sacred Religion.

Let us be Hindus, and thus build up a true Hindustan peopled with many Shankaras, Buddhas and Vivekanandas.

WHAT IS RELIGION ?

Religion is a privilege of man and not an instinct of the animals. To the animal, life is one round of eating, sleeping and mating. Man, even when he has food, shelter, clothing and recreation, does not feel satisfied. He yearns to seek for a greater purpose in life. So long as he has not these minimum necessities of life—food, shelter, clothing and recreation—his entire personality strives for them. But once these are satisfied, he sits back as it were to listen to the muffled voice of enquiry from within.

These questionings and innermost cravings of the soul, come only to a *Full-grown* man. I mean, even among the bipeds we can recognise the animals ; we have among us tigers, wolves, deers, serpents, scorpions,

etc. Such men who are lowly evolved fail to listen to the doubts and despairs of the soul-quest from within. Having no such inner voiceless-woe, they need no remedy also.

But to one who has evolved himself into a full-grown man, such cravings of the soul flood his being and push him incessantly towards the limit of his understandings and feelings. In the unrest of the soul he comes to despair at the wonder and majesty of the most intimate fact with him—Life. The questions he asks himself are : Where did I come from ? Where do I go ? Why have I come ? Is life an empty and meaningless incident ? Has life a purpose ? Is there a mission in life ?

Only a full-grown man, who has lived his days' experiences intelligently and has throughout kept an alert critical attention upon the incidents of life, can attain an inner maturity in which he comes to feel the 'Soul's-unrest'. Religion is addressed to such an individual. Religion explains, assures and guides him. It lends a purpose to his day-to-day existence, far more divine and noble than mere eating, drinking, sleeping, laughing and weeping.

Every true Religion contains two important limbs : (i) the ritualistic injunctions and (ii) philosophical suggestions. The former alone is accepted generally as Religion by many of us. But a Religion (rituals, formalities, etc.) without philosophy is superstition, and philosophy without Religion is madness. Both must go hand in hand. Philosophy reinforces the external practices of rituals and formalities and blesses them with a purpose and an aim. Together they bring out the full significance of Religion.

Religion, in its full significance, has for its content

a vivid discussion upon the Goal of Life and its nature. It is also a description of an elaborate system of spiritual practices by pursuing which men of all degrees can start, from their present stations in evolution, on a pilgrimage to the Goal held out.

Vedanta deals more vividly and elaborately with Truth than any other Religion, and its discussions, based upon the intimate and personal experiences of the Seers, bring us to the conclusion that the Supreme is in man himself and that man, by removing certain of his misunderstandings about his own identity, can succeed in recognising himself as the Eternal, All-pervading Truth. All true Religions bring to the despairing man, struggling against his own bondages and limitations in life, the comfort and solace he so badly needs.

Figuratively it is something like this. A man who has temporarily lost his memory stands out upon his own terrace and despairs at the gathering darkness and the descending chill of the wintry night. He suffers agonies. He weeps. He sighs. He feels impotent and besieged by pain and sorrow. But a few yards behind him is the balcony window, kept half-open, through which he could see his own warm home where his bed is ready, his dinner is laid and his beloved is waiting in all devotion and love. He has only to turn round to see the welcoming, comforting, inviting sight of his own luxurious home of sweetness and joy. At will he can walk in and claim all the bliss as his own birthright.

Similarly, man stands on the open terrace of life looking outward into the deepening darkness and suffers cold and loneliness. His own beloved Religion, invitingly bids him to come in. It reminds him of

the discomforts on the terrace and appeals to him to turn back. "Renounce the terrace and walk into the lit up Halls of Joy within where I shall attend to your every comfort," cries Religion. But the mad master of the house hears not the call of Religion and thus suffers as a *Samsarin*.

The remedy is simple. We have only to turn inward. As it is, our entire attention is focussed on the external material world and we seek there joy and peace. Naturally we miss them. The finite external objects cannot, by their very nature, yield for us our demand which is in fact an Eternal Joy—a Blissful satisfaction that will be ever with us. Such a complete *Anand* and *Shanti* cannot be had out *there*. They can be had only in *here*—within each individual. "Turn within! Right about-turn and you are face to face with what you are seeking," is the saintly advice unanimously voiced forth by all the great Religions of the world. And, "It is true; It is true; It is true," is the repeated endorsement that comes to us from all the mystics and masters.

The external world of sense-objects has no real joy content. It seems to give us now and then a little joy; but this very sweetness soon gets putrefied to sourness and bitterness. In everyone's experience all circumstances have in themselves an atmosphere of sorrow.

Religion promises no magical change in the nature of the sense-objects or in the pattern of their arrangements under various circumstances. The world will remain the same and the nature of the circumstances will continue to function according to the Eternal Law. Religion enables the faithful only to face life with a greater liveliness, and lends a psychological balance

and a spiritual poise to the individual.

The external world of objects remaining the same, the experiences provided by it are different in different individuals. For example, a father lives with his wife and two sons under the same roof. They eat the same food, cooked in the same kitchen, enjoy the same radio, sit, chat, sing and laugh under the same ceiling fan. But while thus sitting together one Sunday afternoon after dinner, what is the experience of each ? It cannot be very difficult for anyone of us to know that the "experience" is certainly not the same in all the bosoms in that happy family. If the experiences are different while the objects remain the same, what is the cause for this variety ? Can we have a uniform experience ? This brings us to the question—what is experience ? Is it not the impression left on one when one's mind and intellect come in contact with an object (or objects) and react with it (or them) at a given time and place ? The same object can give different experiences to the same mind on different occasions, in different places or in a changed set-up. But the one common factor in all the experiences is that we must have our minds reacting with the world-of-objects.

We find that the world-of-objects remain, function and play their frolics according to a Law over which we have absolutely no control. But objects must come in contact with our mind in order to produce the reaction, which alone is the seed of our experience. So then, if we can control, train and culture our minds in such a way that they can only react positively with all sets of objects and under all sets of circumstances, then our reactions would all be positive. Happiness and peace is his who has thus trained his mind to

react 'positively' to the world outside. The outer world remaining the same, in this very world of imperfections and sorrows, we shall have an unbroken experience of sweet solace and full contentment. We shall gain in ourselves a capacity to remain aloof in a safe island within and watch the fierce storms of passions that madly blast about us. We shall learn to witness in a glorious sense of inner freedom and detachment the very tears and sobs in us, and if we be but true followers of Religion, gain through its practices a mental equipment which can, seek for itself and gain poise and balance under all circumstances.

Thus understanding the real function of Religion and the secret scheme of its blessings, we can approach it with a certainty of gain. What greater gift can we expect of any institution than a hearty presentation of the Philosopher's Stone, which by its touch can convert all sorrows into joy, all failures into success and all losses into gain? A truly devoted heart does not go mad with power, become boastful of success, commit suicide at failures, murder in anger, suffer in jealousy, grow arrogant in wealth, despair in poverty and dance and sing in joy. Under all conditions he is unmoved, unagitated. His heart is an ocean of peace (*Shanti*), rest (*Samadhan*) and joy (*Sukh*).

Such a one among us mortals is a Godman. He is a saint, a *Mahatma*, a prophet. Such were all our great masters and such are all true men of Religion. Religion promises us a world peopled with a generation of Sree Ramakrishnas, Vivekanandas, Shankaras, Buddhas, Christs and Mohamads. What more do we need?

The paths advocated by all Religions are the same—renounce the false ego and its consequent

variations. The sorrows and sighs belong to the *ego-phantom*. Surrender it at the Lord's feet in love. Sublimate the ego in constant *Vichar*. In your discrimination of the real and unreal, the false ego-dream ends. Divinise the ego through an inner revolution brought about by the ending of all the negativities in your character and by surcharging yourself with the dynamic positive value of a true divine life.

Religion claims that our real nature is pure Knowledge, 'pure Bliss. But the sense of ego has created in us the grievous misunderstanding that we are the ego-entities. Whether we like it or not, through a slow process of evolution, we are every hour creeping towards this Goal of Self-realisation. Life's experiences are wearing us down in a slow mill of sorrow only to make us sit up and realise the foolish delusion in which we have come to suffer.

Wake up ! Arise ! Awake ! Stop not till the goal is reached. This in short is the fundamental cry of all Religions.

Religion is the Science of all the Sciences since it guides us to the Absolute Knowledge, our own Real Nature, the Self—the *Sat-Chit-Ananda* State of total perfection.

VEDANTA—THE RELIGION OF DETACHMENT

In one of our most important *Upanishads*, the *Kathopanishad*, we have the story of an aspirant reaching the very portico of Death, and there face to face with Him, the seeker enquires about Supreme Knowledge. This must be the spirit of a true student of Vedanta. Life and Death are in reality so close together that it is ordinarily even difficult to distinguish between

them. To have the courage to continue seeking even after death, is real living. To a seeker, if he be honest and persevering, there is no death.

It is in this sense that we consider, and our *Sastras* declare, that the great Saints, Sages, Incarnations and Prophets are immortal. Sree Ramakrishna, Bhagavan Ramana, Sree Rama and Sree Krishna, to mention but a few, are immortal in the sense that they understood the meaning of life and lived that meaning in life. Their physical bodies have perished yet they live! How is this possible?

Let me explain this. An ant living in salt-hill in Poona met in Ahmedabad a friend of his from a sugar-mill in Meerut. The fat, corpulent, cheerful Meerut-ant enquired in sympathy and friendship if there was famine in Poona, for the Poona ant was thin, emaciated and melancholy. During the meeting it was decided that the Poona ant should visit the home of the fat friend from Meerut. While packing for the holiday trip to Meerut, the Poona ant carried a few days' ration with it. Even after a couple of days' stay in the mount of sugar, the Poona ant looked all the more depressed and unhappy. His host was anxious and worried. On enquiry for the cause of his depression, the Poona ant replied, "friend, there is every comfort here. But the taste of your food does not suit me". It was a shocking surprise to the host. "If sugar which is all but sweetness is not sweet to the Poona friend" he wondered, "what else can taste sweet for him?" On closer enquiry it was discovered that the Poona ant had still some salt bits in his mouth! He was however persuaded to spit them out, and then lo! the very same sugar which was not sweet before became the sweetest thing the

Poona ant had ever tasted !

We are all in life acting and suffering as true Poona ant. Spit out the saline contents of thy heart then we can taste the Sugar of Divine Life, which is nothing but sweetness. End all thy fears, limitations, disappointments and come to enjoy the joyous, unlimited, hopeful existence. This is the call of Vedanta, the Religion of Detachment. Detach yourself from the salt bits and you shall come to taste the sweetness of the Mount of Sugar.

There are in us two distinct personalities : the God and the Man. The birth right of manhood is the experiences of limitations and death. In its very nature Godhood is unlimited and immortal. Our attachments to the false negativities in us—the manhood—is the cause for all the Poona ant melancholia. Detach yourselves from manhood, we regain Godhood. This is the theory of Vedanta, and *Upanishad Gnana Yagna* is an attempt to convince ourselves that by ending the man in us we gain the God within. If there be an enemy concealed in us, who is the cause of all our imbecilities and sorrows, the sooner we unearth and destroy him, the earlier we shall come to realise our aim. Who is then this enemy? Unanimously all the *Sastras* and Scriptures cry : “It is the ego.” “Kill this little ‘i’ to live.” “End the ego and end the woe.” If the ego in us is the *Samsarin*, if ego is the tormentor, if ego is the enemy, let us spy on him more closely and come to know who he is. Once we know our enemy, we can plan our war with him.

Each of you now please ask this question to yourself : “Who is this? Or what constitutes this ego-sense in me?” Is not the I-personality in each of us nothing but the memories of certain facts of life lived in the

past such as, I am the son of so-and-so, educated, lived, loved, hated, taught, etc., etc.? In short, I am the sum total of all the retained memories of all the vivid experiences I had in the past. The I-concept includes also my hopes for the future.

Pursuing our enquiry further, we shall, on analysis of the memory bits and hopeflakes, discover that they have only a reality with reference to either the dead past or the unborn future. That means the ego in me has no existence in the present moment; it thrives in the burial-ground of the dead hours and in the womb of time.

So then, this ego, is in fact a myth, a non-entity, a dream, an unsubstantial nothing, a phantom, a mere false shadow. All the sorrow and mortality belong to this shadow of our own Reality. And in our own thoughtlessness, we have surrendered ourselves to the endless tyranny of this shadow of us lurking within ourselves. "Detach yourself from this shadow. Know thy Real self. Kill the tyrant within us. It will bring real Ramarajya in your bosoms." This is the clarion call of Vedanta.

The methods of eliminating this ghost within us are the processes advocated by all religions. Every spiritual practice is an attempt at the total elimination of this shadow-nothingness within us. All *Sastras* serve only to teach us the *unreality* of the *non-existent*.

It is by a process of superimposition that the unreal has come to veil the Real. Superimposition is a mental trick, a jugglery of our minds, by which it comes to misunderstand a thing to be something different from what it is in reality. The famous example is the serpent and the rope. In the darkness a man mistakes a rope for a serpent and suffers the-

false agonies of a "snake-bite". Any amount of assurance that it is not a serpent but is in fact only a rope, given to the "deluded" sufferer will not comfort him. He will have to be led to the place and shown the rope. The moment he recognises the rope, the "serpent that bit him" disappears.

The 'Serpent' idea rose up only in his mind. The serpent born in his mind was removed when the knowledge of the rope dawned upon him. The 'Serpent' rose from his *ignorance of the rope*, and when this ignorance is removed by knowledge, the serpent, born of ignorance, is also removed. So too, in our ignorance of our own reality we have the superimposition in ourselves, of the ego. The ego is ended with the Knowledge of the Self in us. As the knowledge of the rope ended the agonies of the 'deluded' victim, so too with the Knowledge of the Self, the painful agonies of the ego (*Jiva*) end. Detach the ego, and claim *Shanti*, which is our essential nature.

The ego in us is but a bundle of memories of our experiences lived by us in the past and our hopes to be fulfilled by us in the future. Without reference to these two, the dead past and the unborn future, if we live vitally and dynamically, the present moments in themselves, we have achieved the annihilation of the ego. The Self, living in full detachment from ego, in the Self as the Self, is the *Samadhi* state advocated and claimed by all the different *Yogas* as their sole and sublime goal. All *Yogas* end in eliminating the ego in the *Sadhaka*. The *Yogas* advocate different methods to suit different temperaments, yet their aim is the same—Self-discovery.

We shall now analyse one or two paths of *Yoga* and examine how they succeed in bringing about

this annihilation of the ego in the *Yogin*. "Without any expectations of the 'fruits' of action act and thy achievements shall be supreme," is the injunction in *Gita*. Readers superficially glancing at this idea might wonder how this can be practicable.

Let us examine this theory in application and see if it cannot be practical. Suppose we have an agent who has an appointment with an industrial magnate to strike a business for lakhs of rupees, and where he has a commission to gain. If the day before the appointment, the poor agent allows himself to be hypnotised by his own expectations, if he dreams of the amounts he would be getting, the ways in which he would spend the income in purchasing a house, in marrying the girl of his choice, in living happily..... etc., etc., he would be indeed a great loser. For, on the appointed day, at the appointed hour, when the agent enters the drawing room of the business magnate, his mental faculties—alertness, cheerfulness, clarity and poise—which are so essential in the make-up of a successful agent, would all be totally dried up in him. He has by then imagined himself to be already living in his new house with his new wife, etc., acquired from the income of his transaction. The responsibility of maintaining and protecting this hope for 'fruit' shackles him in such strong bondages of 'fears' that he trembles at the thought of not realising them through a possible fall out with the capitalist. Nerve shattered, pale and trembling he enters the room, carrying a storm within him, and in his anxiety he forgets half the points he had to emphasise, fails to canvass convincingly, with the result the business is lost.

On the other hand, another agent under the same circumstances proves successful for, he is intelligent

enough to reject the anxieties for the 'fruits' and not to indulge in futile dreams over them, and acts with ease and poise. He is jovial and almost cheeky with the business magnate who is attracted and charmed by the young man's dash and smartness. The bargain is struck with hearty hand-shakes and pleasant smiles.

If renunciation of attachment to 'fruits' is a guarantee for sure success in the market place bargainings, how much more so it must be in all the nobler and greater fields of man's social and national activities. Rejecting the 'fruits', act. Let us not waste our faculties and potentialities in worrying over the unborn future. Act on, Act on, in the living present.

But this is not so readily possible unless we have a strong faith in the understanding that Lord is the real conductor and the accomplisher. We are actors in His drama. We are His servants executing His Will in the fulfilment of His plans. "The fruits" are His and ours is only action. And the more we get aligned with Him, the more shall our actions be in line with His Will, and thereby we shall be fulfilling more effectively His plans.

None of us can ever remain without action. The greatest profit is not in expecting some immediate finite 'fruit' but in making use of the action itself as a field for us to evolve. Our gain will be more if we renounce the ego in us. Let this *Sadhoo* not have the least vanity that he is giving out the ancient wisdom and teaching you all the *Brahma Vidya*. Let him act in the humble belief that Lord, in His infinite mercy, is merely making use of him as His chosen instrument for His own progress. So too each of

you. To each of you, this assembly of hearers and, a Swami from Uttarakasi to discourse upon the *Upanishads*, are the patterns of circumstances necessary for your spiritual growth.

Thus by continuously surrendering to His Will and living as His Instrument we come to forget the false ego in us. When once the ego (the man) has ended its career, what remains is the intimate personal experience of the divinity in us. Fall flat at His Feet in love and surrender. When the ego-sense is thus offered at His Feet, the mortal limitations end and the *Bhakta* who has done thus a full and complete *Atma-Arpanam* becomes the Lord.

All *Yogas* aim at the extinction of the ego-sense in the *Yogin*. When the sense of *Jiva*-hood ends, the sense of Godhood begins. Recognise ! Re-see ! Let us come to remember our own Real Nature. Let us stop dreaming with such ideas as "I am poor", "I am a mortal," "I am rich", "I am wise", "I am a *Samsarin*", etc.

The one way to end the shadow in front of us is to turn our gaze towards the Light within. If we cannot all of a sudden do so, let us then do the easier act of self-surrender. The taller we stand the longer shall be our shadow. Bend double, the shadow is half. Sit down, the shadow is still smaller. Fall flat at His Feet, in love and surrender, and the shadow is no more. End the shadow in us, this ego, by surrendering unto Him, the *Atman*, the Self in us. Detach the false ego from the true Self. Detach the mind from memories and hopes. Cleanse our bosoms of all desires. Desirelessness is the State of Perfection. Egolessness is the State of Godhood. Attain this Supreme Goal of life through knowledge and right living.

OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH THE ABSOLUTE

In the great *Upanishads* we often meet with the scene in which a full-grown disciple meets a Master of Perfection. The brief terse *Mantras* of the *Upanishads* take pains to paint in vivid colours, the physical, mental and spiritual personality of the disciple. Without an exception we find that all of them were stalwart, full grown, healthy men : healthy in their physical, mental and spiritual personalities. They were beaming with the brilliance of health and shining in the glory of *Brahmacharya*. Mentally and intellectually they were alert and shrewd, alert to every one of their experiences in life, and shrewd in their logical analysis and final conclusions upon the experiences they had in life.

The Disciple who in the past reached his Master, living in retirement in his *Ashram* in the Himalayas, was one who having lived vividly his day-to-day experiences in the sense-world, had discovered for himself that life was hollow, empty and meaningless, in the sense that it had nothing to compensate sufficiently for the energy and effort put forth by him into the business of living.

Such a fit student, a student of life, active, alert, shrewd and aspiring, that reached the Master and asked, "My Lord and Master, kindly tell me if there is a fuller life of permanent happiness which I could lead? Is there a mission in life more sacred than eating and drinking, breeding and bothering, yearning and striving, weeping and dying? Is life to be a mere meaningless pilgrimage from as uncertain a destination as birth, to an equally mysterious and unknown end as death? Is there a Realm of Experience, having reached which, I can shake off the

shackles of my limitations and live there for ever, in perfect freedom and bliss? It is to this outpouring of a mature soul that the great *Upanishadic* teachers roared in unison—"TATH TWAM ASI" *Tath* means That; *Twam* means Thou; *Asi* means Art. "That Thou art." In this *Maha Vakya*, That stands for "That of Which you are asking me now". "O Seeker, what thou art seeking is in thyself."

To the ordinary man, his body is himself. His identification with the body is deep and strong. He lives for the body, strives for the body, and knows no other mission in life than sensuous joys. To such a one, living such a low level of existence, the only relationship he could have with the Absolute must be one of *separativeness* and *slavery*.

There is yet another class of men who have slightly grown up and have come to recognise that they are not only the bodies but also creatures endowed with mind and intellect. Such men, have, therefore, come to recognise the existence and the workings of the psychological personalities in them. To them, they being not merely their bodies, Man is not a perishable ineffectual worm but is a sacred creature possessing almost godly powers evident in the manifestations of the mind and the intellect. They review the achievements of science and poetry; they recognise the thinkers and discoverers; they take into account the total victory Man has so far gained over the mighty Nature and come to the conclusion that Man as a thinking creature has a glory and a might not much inferior to the Gods. Thus, to men of this degree of development their relationship with the Absolute is that they are a *part of the whole*.

Based on the above concept of the two classes

of men, we have in our philosophy two views of life and approaches to Truth ; the *Dualism* of Madhwa-charya and the *Qualified Monism* of Sree Ramañuja. The former concludes that the Lord and his Devotee would ever remain as two distinct entities and the relationship of the Devotee to Lord is one of complete surrender in love and reverence. The Supreme Goal of Man is in reaching His feet and Eternally remaining there ever in His *Sewa*. The latter, however, argues in a different line and arrives at the conclusion that the Devotee is a part of the Whole, the Lord.

It is only in the daring declarations of Perfect Philosophy, the philosophy that discusses the vital and final experience of man in this realms of the spiritual, the Vedanta, that we find an unequivocal emphatic declaration that Man is God. To a student of *Dualism* and *Qualified Monism* this may appear fantastic for, the former views Truth with reference to his body, while the latter views Truth from the psychological personality.

The perfect student of Vedanta has reached the Master after discovering in his discrimination that neither his body nor his psychological personality can be sufficiently sacred and divine as to satisfy himself. He has come to feel that some power subtler than the mind and the intellect is playing hide-and-seek within him, and that it is really the dynamic Life Centre which vitalises the other coatings of matter that come to envelope and hide it. The *Guru* endorses the disciple's vague and accidental conclusions. The Vedantic Seer provides the disciple with arguments and convictions and leads him to this Seat of Life, the Self, that lies within the seeker himself. When the disciple comes to understand fully the depth and

significance of the *Guru's* mystical words and comes to vitally and intensely experience first hand the Great Grand Truth that he is "THAT," he gains Perfect Knowledge.

To such a one in his perfection he is but *That*. As *That* he has once for all dropped all his wrong identifications with his body or his psychological entity. He becomes pure Spirit, and as Spirit his relationship with the Absolute is one of *perfect identity*; there cannot be any relationship, as "relationship" denotes the existence of at least a pair of things. Though the Vedantic student sought Truth within himself, yet in his discovery of It, as though in his bosom, he *experiences himself as the Whole*. This type of student is served by the School of Philosophy called *Non-Dualism* of Shankara. These three kinds of our relationships with Truth have been beautifully described in *Ramayana* when Hanuman the greatest devotee of Sree Ramachandra explains his relationship with Sree Ramachandra.

Hanuman says, "O Lord, at moments when I am steeped in my body consciousness I am *thy slave*; when I identify myself with the mind and intellect, *i.e.*, as a *Jiva*, I am a *part of thee*; and when I am in my *Swarupa*, that is as the Spirit, I am *Thyself*". Thus our relationship with the Absolute can be explained in three different ways according to our state of self-consciousness. There are moments when even the greatest Seer is conscious of the sorrows of physical pains and even of the inclemencies of weather. At such moments even a *Gnani* falls prostrate at His feet and mentally seeks the Lord's mercy. There are moments when he is conscious of some inner mental agitations or irresistible poetic outburst or high intellec-

tual fight and recognises within himself a might and a power almost equivalent to that of the Lord. It is only in those rare moments of bliss and peace in *Samadhi*, when he has completely retired from the false outer covering of matter to the Subtlest of Subtle Spirit within, that he recognises and cries forth "*Shivoham*", "*Shivoham*", "I am that"; the individual and the Absolute constitute *One Perfect Whole*.

It must also be clear to you all that the three schools of thought in Hindu Philosophy are not competing and contradicting theories, but that each explains a necessary stage we must pass through in our slow pilgrimage to the Peak of Perfection. It is only mere intellectual *Pundits* who quarrel and seek to establish one or the other declaration and fight over them. In fact, the moment we step on to the Path of Spiritual *Sadhana* we shall realise that these three are three way-side inns for the spiritual pilgrims to rest and proceed ahead. Every pilgrim must first visit Madhwa, from where he proceeds ahead to worship Ramanuja and then alone can he reach the portals of Vedanta and recognise himself to be no other than Sree Shankara himself.

Let us therefore stop our quarrels. Let us act. Let us embark on the pilgrimage, and see for ourselves what is our Relationship with the Absolute.

THE PATH

We start to-day the study of the *Upanishads*. The study is called *Brahma Vidya*. Just as various branches of knowledge (similar to Physics, Chemistry, Geography, etc.) are the themes of our different studies, this is also a branch of knowledge and, it too has a special

name, which is *Brahma Vidya*. The only difference between *Brahma Vidya* and the other subjects of study is that *Brahma Vidya* is the *Vidya* of all the *Vidyas* ; it is the Science of all Sciences. The theme of *Brahma Vidya* explains other Sciences.

Brahma Vidya teaches us a Factor which is the goal of all other Sciences. In Chemistry we experiment to find out the element, the source of all other elements. If we once find out such an element in nature, out of which we can create all other elements in the world, then there is no more research in Chemistry. Thereafter the role of research in Chemistry would be only to find out what are the reactions of the various combinations. Once we reach the "Element", the "Eternal Element", the first and the last Element, out of which all other elements have come, and in which all elements stay, we have found out all that is to be discovered in Chemistry.

We are here to seek the source of all life, the one Reality. We shall be satisfied only with Truth, from which the World and our experiences have risen up, and in which they exist and into which our experiences of the life moment to moment, get merged in. It is the fundamental substratum, the foundation, the Reality behind the seeming appearances. We are seeking the Goal, the one single Goal, which can explain not only the poverty of the poor, but also the richness and might of the rich and the powerful. It explains not merely the workings of the senses and emotions but also the total experience of life. It not only explains the physical body and the forms we see around us, but also how the mind works and with what potency it functions. Thus, we are trying to go deeper and deeper into the very source of Life in us. Seeking the

truth, we go from the gross to the subtlest. From the gross external world we are slowly and carefully going into the centre which is very subtle. The subtler the theme, the more difficult it would be to explain it and equally so for the listeners to understand. Our enquiry then shall be fruitful only when we adopt a very systematic method.

It is not haphazard conclusions that are given to us in *Upanishads* by some unknown *Rishis*. The conclusions in the *Upanishads* are not dictatorial orders thrust upon us to believe that there is a Supreme Reality. The *Rishis* help us to go step by step into the very portals of this Truth. They teach us even how to turn the key, open the doors and enter the Temple of Truth.

It is no easy task to explain the Inexplicable. It is only the gross objects that can be expressed and explained in words. In the *Upanishads*, the Masters attempt to show us the Reality only through the significance of words. We should not go to the *Upanishads* with the idea that we shall grasp *Brahma Vidya* with our mind and intellect. Mind and intellect are only two 'chappals' that we may wear, but at the Doors of the Mightiest of the Mighty, we will have to keep them away. We shall walk in and reach the Portals of God with bare feet. At His doors we leave them and enter in all reverence. Thus, we will have to progress in stages in our study, and hence, if we come here with the boastful attitude of a collegian we may miss the exact import of Vedanta. We will have to come prepared with a mind and an intellect sharpened, and trained to work for a higher purpose.

Truth is not a Factor thrust upon us. There is no force used at all. It is through logical reasoning and analysis of the values of the external world and

its conditions that we slowly get away from the false sense-objects, step by step, and ultimately reach the Real. Generally, there is a feeling that the spiritual life of God-seeking is meant for those persons who are physically deformed or mentally hysterical or intellectually abnormal, or for those persons who in life are ridden with disappointments and disastrous calamities. When we fail in life, we run frantically to Religion. There is a general belief that Religion is an open door for all the scum of society. This is absurd. Those who hold such views know not what Religion is. Religion is not for the unworthy, unintelligent and the abnormal. Religion is for the most level-headed and balanced men ; spiritually, psychologically and physically sound men.

Cowards cannot progress in spiritual life. Spiritual life is meant for those persons who enjoy good health and have a healthy physical equipment. It is meant for that man who is alert in mind and intellect, and who has a deep 'craving for the soul'. Only such thirsty, full blossomed human beings who have fully lived life can come to '*Vairagya*' or dispassion.

The directive, that in teaching the Vedas, the Teacher must see to it that the student is fit for it, is generally misunderstood. Veda is not meant only for the master-minds. It is for the people like you and me. Remember Sree Veda Vyasa was himself not a "*Brahmin*" in the now-accepted-sense of the term ! He was the son of a "*Brahmin*" born of a fisher-woman. And when a son is born to a *Brahmin* of a *Sudra* lady, the son, according to *Dharma Sastra*, is a *Chandala*. Is then Veda Vyasa in any sense of the term a "*Chandala*" ? To classify man according to birth is dangerous.

To-day if we are able to discuss the *Upanishads*, it is because of the progressive and revolutionary way in which Sree Vyasa Bhagawan collected and codified the Vedas. Before that period, Vedas were handed down from generation to generation, from teacher to the taught, by word of mouth and preserved in memory. Veda Vyasa saw that the world was leaning more and more towards materialism and he had the mighty vision and foresight to see that if they were not collected and preserved as books, the Vedas would be lost to mankind in the waves of revolutions and social upheavals that were to come in the world. He, therefore, collected them and codified the then existing and known *Veda-mantras* into the four Vedas.

Sree Veda Vyasa, the great master-mind, in his wisdom found courage for such a daring act. Similarly, we find in every critical period of history a great master-mind coming up to guide man-kind in all walks of life including Religion. What was once a great law or rule got changed by them according to the demands of the new periods. They had the vision, the authority, power and courage within themselves to make such revolutionary changes.

Similarly, when it came down to the time of Sree Shankaracharya, the need for a 'Mutt' System was felt. Before Shankaracharya, there was no organisation of the *Mutt* type. It became necessary that the Hindus must have these *Mutts* to fight down Buddhism, which was spreading at the period. So, Sree Shankara opened up the various *Mutts* where a Teacher, a *Sanyasin* of Vedanta, would be teaching the students regularly, and the teacher and the taught would tour the villages near about 8 months of the year, spreading

the message of the Vedas.

Thus from time to time, some great master comes and changes the non-essentials of Religion to suit the convenience of the age in which he lives. When, for the first time, *Ramayana* was translated into Hindi by Sree Tulsidas, what an uproar was there against it ! And yet, but for that translation, to-day, North Indians would have been totally ignorant of our great Epic !! There are to-day some orthodox shortsighted persons who are aghast at the idea of the *Upanishads* being preached at the 'market-place'. They think that *Upanishads* are only for " fit students ", with some special qualities of the head and the heart. But some of the great master-minds of our own times had the vision to discriminate and foresee that in another quarter of a century we would have so much materialism in our own country, that Hinduism would no more dare to raise its head, unless it was revived right now.

Ours is the Divine Mission for the revival of Hinduism ; therein lies the redemption of man, and Chinmaya is only one of the followers in that great Camp of Masters, who has been sent here to place before the educated class the ideals preached in the *Upanishads*. It is with this aim in view that this *Gnana Yagna* is being started.

Now before going into the study of the *Upanishads*, I shall take some of the general topics which are necessary for the right understanding of the *Upanishadic* text-books. In all sciences, we have certain fundamentals to be learnt first, and then only, can the students understand the experiments conducted and the conclusions arrived at. Similarly we too shall first go through some of the *Vedanta Prakriyas*, some of the fundamental principles of Vedanta which have been reduced into

laws and upon which the entire Vedanta the Science of Truth is built up.

As in every branch of study, the student of *Brahma Vidya* also must have certain preliminary qualifications if he were to enter the Vedanta Hall, to hear the discourses with benefit and profit by them. This is nothing new. But when it is put under the grave term, '*Sadhana Chatushtaya*'—(the four qualifications necessary for a student) we are apt to feel surprised and uncomfortable. On a little closer analysis we shall find that we all have already these qualifications.

The "Four qualifications" necessary are : (1) a capacity to discriminate the Real from the unreal, the true from the false, the object from its shadow. Who has not got this? We may not have it playing in the higher Realms of Thought, but we all have this faculty of discrimination. We are not mere worms and animals. We are a cultured society of young men who can apply their power of discrimination in everyday life.

(2) *Vairagya* or detachment is a quality of the mind which enables one to get detached from the false and painful things. Do not be frightened away with false notions about *Vairagya*. Who among us has not got *Vairagya*? When the intellect has come to a sure and definite understanding, and is, consequently, fully aware that a given thing is but a shadow and a valueless paltry nothing, the mind naturally gets detached from it. Intellectual conviction of the truth and the desirability of things are prerequisites absolutely necessary for the mental attachment for those things. For example, if in a dream you get married to a lovely princess, on waking you cannot maintain your love or attachment for her. The moment you are awake

you realise the falsehood of the dream-love, and so your mind rolls off from the lady of the dream. The detachment gained as a result of a knowledge of the untrue nature of the object is *Vairagya*. And he who has *Vairagya* is a fit student of Vedanta.

This faculty for dispassion is in man and the *Srutis* make use of it. Gradually the untrue nature of the world is realised by a close student of the *Srutis*, and then dispassion in him becomes natural and intense. The function of the *Upanishads* is not merely a negative one : one of removing us from the world. It also opens up for our view of Greater World of Perfection to be achieved.

To-day we have in us these great qualities, but not the Field for them to play. Our *Upanishads'* study would be mainly an attempt to draw the Iron Curtain. Let us go into the higher realms in that Land of Truth, unpopulated now for the last so many years ! There is plenty of fertile land. It is a Land of *Shanti*. Let us make a mass pilgrimage to that Land—uninhabited, but so fertile—a Land flowing with milk and honey—the “Spiritual India”. It is our responsibility to see that we make India regain her Spiritual Empire. We can do it, and thus take a Message to the mankind, by ourselves living up to these qualities. The *Yagna* shall be an honest and sincere attempt on our part to try and understand the Land of Hope which the *Upanishads* describe.

The two other necessary qualifications to enter this *Yagna*-University are *Sadhana Sampat* or other noble qualities of head and heart and a burning eagerness to become Perfect and Powerful.

What is there that we cannot realise ? Now-a-days much currency has been gained by the idea that

Spiritualism or Religion is for the disappointed man, for the man of sorrow, for the unsuccessful man of the world. This is far from the Truth. Vedanta is a subject for the physically able, mentally balanced and intelligent men of the world.

A fit student of Vedanta would start his enquiries by asking from where the world had come and where will it go. When once we understand the outer world, our enquiry shall be about our body, the five sense-organs or the *Indriyas*. Step by step the seeker slowly comes to the Centre within himself from the outer world. To a man born-blind there is no 'form'. To a deaf man it would appear that the cannon is only fuming but not roaring. In order to enjoy tastes and smells one needs the tongue and the nose ; in their absence his world shall be without any taste or smell. Thus if we take away the five *Indriyas* there is no world at all for us. The world would appear as an existent nothing ! That is, our conception of the outer world is gained through our *Indriyas*.

Next the enquirer comes to enquire how his mind works, how his intellect functions, and from where the joy-element bubbles forth in him. Thus, seeking on, from the gross outer world to subtler and still subtler inner Spirit, he moves in the world. In Vedanta each of these grosser external coatings is called a "Sheath" (*Kosa*), and just as the Sheath merely encases the sword blade, here too the Reality within is untouched by the matter covering it. Our body forms the grossest encumbrance, the Physical Sheath, and slightly subtler than it is the "*Prana*" or the Vital Air-Sheath. Subtler still is the Mental Sheath. In Vedanta the word subtle denotes a greater pervasiveness or "*Vyapakatvam*". Still more subtle

than the mind is the Intellectual Sheath, and subtler still is the Bliss Sheath, the seat of all joy waves in us.

In Vedanta the attempt is to reach and recognise 'face to face' the Subtlest of the Subtle, the Self. At that moment of self-vision the grosser robes fall off, and Truth, our Real Nature, comes to be recognised as the All-pervasive Intelligence.

When we recognise the Vital Forces of Life, the very Fountain Head of All Life in the Universe, the world itself shall have an existence in ourselves, and when we gain a peep into the Centre of the Centre, when we meet the Mightiest of the Mighty, the Lord of the Lords at the peak experience in Life, in our Self-Realisation, we shall gain full freedom from the thralldom of all sorrows, disappointments, successes, failures, etc., and come to enjoy the voiceless joy of perfection, the Immortal State of Godhood.

Earlier I mentioned some of the fundamental grounds upon which the entire basis of Vedanta is built up. We find that the subtlest of the subtle, the Principle of Truth, resides within us as a Divine Spark enveloped as it were by the grosser coating of matter, the grossest being our physical body. In order to drive home this fact we had the expressive and ample illustrations of the chocolates in different wrappings and shapes.

We will discuss and try to understand the Reality. If there is a Reality, what then is the relationship between that Reality and myself; how and where do the names and forms that I see all round, fit in the scheme of the All-pervading Entity, the Truth? What is a *Jeeva* and the individualised, localised Ego-Centre? What is *Jagat*, the entire visible Universe? What is God?

And if once we have a full understanding of what these three—*Iswara*, *Jeeva*, *Jagat*—are, we ought to know the relationship between *these three* and the Supreme Reality. That is, we have to enquire into and discover what is the relationship between the Individual Ego-Centres the “I, I, I”—concept which all of us constantly have.

The sum total of all the intellect of all the *Jeevas* that are living in the visible world, the *Jagat*, is the Conception of God. Not our conception of a God, as Rama, Krishna, Siva, Christ, Mohammed, etc., but the Total Concept, the God-Principle. The particular *Avatars*, Incarnations, are only manifestations of the God-Principle. “God is the Total Causal Body (*Karana Sareera*) of the ‘Universe’.”

We should now try to find out the relationship of the grosser to the Supreme Essence, the Self. Our work will not be very easy as it is very difficult for words to alight, as it were, directly upon the exact relationship. Words are finite and finite words cannot express fully the Infinite. So the method adopted in Vedanta to convey the knowledge of the Self to the Seeker is through examples or illustrations. Now these illustrations are meant to, and can only point out one or two aspects of similarity and not all the aspects. It is often said in Vedanta that God, the Truth-Principle, is like “*Akasa*”. It only means that Truth is all-pervasive, and that it is untouched by or unconnected with, any of the things that exist in it. Space has got no real connection with the outer things. Space, even if crimes be committed in it, ever remains serene, and pure, nor does it gain its purity because of the *Yugas* done in it. It is in these aspects of its subtlety, of its all-pervasiveness,

of its integral and essential purity, that the *Sastras* say that the Supreme Reality is something like "*Akasa*". We need not quarrel and come to hair-splitting arguments about it. We should not understand from words such as "*Akasa*" that there is a Sun or a Moon or clouds hanging like vapours in the Absolute Reality. These are not to be considered from the illustration. The example of "*Akasa*" is only to point out one or two aspects of it.

Similarly, in trying to find out the relationship between the world and God, the Supreme Truth, we are forced to adopt the suggestive meaning or certain illustrations. Illustrations in themselves can bring forth only a few principles, but as we go on munching it mentally, as we apply our sharpened intellect and purified mind to it, as we go on doing what we call 'rotating the ideas in our own hearts', the illustrations yield to us their sacred juice or sweetness.

The relationship that exists among the *Jeeva*, *Jagat* and God is explained by the example of a piece of cloth in which we have some decorative patterns embroidered by the very same threads ; something like our bed-sheets or table-cloths which have got some embroidery on them made by the same thread. Now, therein we have a piece of cloth ; we have threads passing in it and the same threads have woven themselves into the patterns in it. The various patterns together give us the idea for example of a family sitting at tea. Now the "conception" that we gain out of it, of a family sitting round taking tea, is equivalent to our total conception of the *Jagat* with so many oceans, continents, mountains, etc.

Now, in what does this piece of cloth exist ? Has it got an existence other than the thread ? If we

were to remove all the threads, where would be the cloth? The cloth is the thread, but in our not seeing the thread and when seeing only the thread "patterns", we come to have the conception that there is a "family at tea". The thread here stands in the place of God. *Isvara sarva bhutanam*. "O Arjuna, I sit in the heart of everybody"; "like a thread in a garland I penetrate through every form and hold them all together" says Krishna in *Gita*. In this pattern of the family at tea, what is the essence? Nothing but the thread. But for the thread, there would have been no pattern, and but for God, there would have been no *Jagat*. Thus the names and forms, tastes and smells, sounds and touches constitute the "total conception" of the outer world we have. The whole world is made a pattern in the Lord by Truth; the God-Principle of the *Jagat*, the piece of cloth. If we take away the Divine Principle the entire pattern must necessarily melt into nothingness, just as the piece of cloth ends if all the threads in it are removed. The patterns in the embroidery individually stand for the individuals constituting the world. The thread stands for the God-Principle, the *Is-wara*.

Now let us analyse and try to go more deeply into the God-Principle. Let us analyse a piece of thread. What is the thread made of? Is the thread itself a self-born thing and Eternal? Does it exist by itself and in itself? What is the cause of the thread? Certainly from the standpoint of the cloth, the thread is a cause. But is the thread in itself self-sufficient to be a cause for itself? If it has a cause, what is the cause?.....Cotton!

But for the cotton, the thread would not have been there, and but for the thread there would have

been neither the cloth nor the patterns woven upon it. In cotton, the thread, the patterns, and the cloth exist: Out of cotton, all the three came and into the cotton back again they all must go when they perish.

There are, say, some ten idols made of mud. Each idol may be named differently. Each has got, according to its form, a different name. Names change according to the form. The forms change with the names. Break them all. What do we find? Mud! Mud they were, in mud they exist and into mud they go back. Mud is the Truth-Principle in that array of idols.

Similarly, the Truth-Principle in this piece of cloth is nothing but cotton. Remove all the cotton in it and give me a piece of cloth, if you dare! And yet even so, we rarely recognise cloth as nothing but cotton; we understand but we fail to maintain the understanding. For example, a shop-boy knows the cloth-pieces in his shop only as 'cloth' and not as cotton. So too in life, we seek the Truth, while life is nothing but Truth!!

We ever strive only to have an objective understanding and not a subjective realization of Truth. The relationship between the individual Ego, the *Jeeva* and God is the relationship between the pattern and the thread. God is the immediate transformation of the permanent Truth, and the next transformation is man. From Truth, a step down, an immediate modification is God-Principle, and the modification of God-Principle is man. Now we have understood that God is man in the sense that the pattern is nothing but the 'thread'.

In Vedanta, the All-Pervading Supreme Reality has in Itself gone into no modifications. The Cotton

is ever cotton. Only that has changed its form, and we gave it the name thread at one stage and the name cloth at another stage. According to our own angle of view, the same piece of cloth changes its impressions or reactions upon us. On a casual superficial look, we see it as a bed-sheet ; here we see only the gross total form. When observed a little more closely, we see the "thread" and when we examine it closer still we gain the *Darsan* of the cotton in it ! Having seen the cotton, there is no difference between the plurality in the various patterns and the different kinds of cloths. According to our grossest of views, there is no unity whatsoever in the world of clothes but when we start seeing the "threads" our plurality is much reduced, and again our vision becomes one homogeneous whole when we see that it is all cotton.

So too the waves, their froth, the bubbles and the whirls in the ocean are all nothing but the ocean. The names change with the forms but the fundamental Truth remains the same. From the standpoint of Truth, there is no difference, there is no plurality.

In order to act up to his temperament, each person has been provided with a vehicle, different form and a different body. And because there are different forms in the object, we call them by different names. Universal oneness is the Truth-Principle. If we approach the world from the stand-point of Truth, there is but the One Reality. Thus no relationship is possible between the individual, the world and God and the Supreme Eternal Truth because, relationship connotes two things at least. If we sincerely seek the exact relationship between us and God, we have to conclude that there is no difference at all—

just as there can be no difference between the thread and the patterns in an embroidered piece of cloth.

Similarly, what is the relationship between gold and a gold ring? The ring is gold. What then is the relationship between me and God? "I am God". But the hitch comes in with the misunderstanding which I entertain regarding who and what I am. Realising my real Nature, and looking out from within as the Self, to me the Self, "I am God".

In order to achieve this State of *Iswara Darsan*, to achieve the full realization of the All-Pervasive Supreme Reality, it is an unavoidable step to seek the Lord through love and devotion. It is through interception of the Lord, *Iswara Bhakti*, that one can realise the highest Truth as Himself. Without *Iswara Bhakti*, no progress is possible and not even a distant intellectual cognition of the Truth is possible for the individual. It is an absolute necessity, an unavoidable Self-training given by Religion—the temple, the *Kirtan* and the *Satsang*. These are unavoidable.

So then when we have once understood this divine relationship, it automatically produces in our mind, a thirst to know more and we continue our enquiries. A grave question will then come to our mind as to when did all these rise up? Don't you think that if there be in reality only one Fundamental Truth, as the *Satsang* has shown, what about the many forms that I see around me? Vedanta does not say "Don't worry, keep quiet". Vedanta gives maximum licence for our intellect. It explains the why and the how of creation.

A hundred similar questions face us as soon as we step into the pages of the *Upanishads* and try to follow the *Sruti* declarations. To seek an answer

to all of them at one stretch would be a futile effort. We proceed with our studies and as we progress onward many of our riddles shall get resolved by themselves and into many of our doubts Light shall stream in from the Grace of the *Upanishad Rishis* themselves.

Vedanta never accepts that the Supreme has suffered any change in its Eternal Nature of Oneness. As a result of a mysterious trick-of-the-mind, we have come to perceive and experience false plurality in Truth just as a traveller in darkness mistakes the rope for the serpent, and the lamp-post for the ghost ! This power of veiling the Truth in us is termed as *Maya* in Vedanta.

LAW OF *Karma*

The Law of *Karma* has been often misunderstood as Law of Destiny. There is, indeed, a lot of difference between Law of *Karma* and Law of Destiny. Had our Law of *Karma* been equal to the Law of Destiny, the Hindu civilization would have been long ago ended like the Roman or the Egyptian civilization. The Law of Destiny has a corroding effect upon the human heart and in a short time it renders its devotees and followers to be mere ineffectual lotus-eaters. If a nation depends entirely upon the Law of Destiny to guide it, it shall fall and become a country of narrow-minded, inactive animals.

On the other hand, a people believing in the Law of *Karma* and who live up to it become a generation of spiritual giants and dynamic citizens. There is a lot of difference between *inactivity* and *unactivity*. The *Sanyasin* in the jungle is *not* inactive. He is no ineffectual individual ; he is potent but *unactive*. He does not,

in his selfish ego, initiate any action deliberately, that is all.

The Law of *Karma* is based upon the final conclusion that this life is not an end in itself but is just one of the little incidents in the Eternal Existence of each of us. Among us, each one is a type and has a life different from the other. The destiny of each is obviously different from that of the other. Had this been the very first and the last of our births, we should have had a more uniformity of experience in life.

Let us suppose that we have just "fallen" from Truth or Reality into this momentous and calamitous misunderstanding, then we should not have such a dissimilar scheme, of each Ego living its own life of special joys and woes. When we enquire, why there are such differences we are driven to the conclusion that, having risen from different "causes", each of us should manifest as a different "effect". Effects depend upon their causes. This life in which we are living is only one of our incarnations. We have had many incarnations in the past, and probably, many more shall come to our lot. From birth to death and from death to birth, the whirl goes on, but we do not appreciate it or understand it because we are viewing life from a very circumscribed point of view.

We think that life means the period spent by us between our birth and our death, and what we see and experience around during this interval is life. Supposing there hangs a picture painted on a canvass. In order to see the entire picture painted on it, we have to step back to some distance, and only then can we see the entire view, the rhythm of the colours, the beauty of the curves, etc. Similarly, when Life is viewed, in its nearer perspective, we find that it is

illogical, unrhythmic, etc. In detachment we will have to move away from our present Life to view the whole Life and understand it as such.

Some of us blame the Creator for our unfortunate lives, and despair by saying 'it is all our FATE'. You should understand that there is a Rhythm in the Universe, in that the Sun 'moves' regularly, the stars 'ride' their appointed paths, etc. Everywhere, there is the Law of Rhythm, and everything conforms to that Law. Only when we come to the subject of Life, we say "there is no Rhythm and there is no logic or system in it".

It is not so. We are the various 'effects' rising from different 'causes'. The 'causes' being different, the 'effects' are different. Thus, each of our actions of the past has its own reactions, and each of us must have a treasure-house of the entire-past-actions. This is called the '*Sanchita Karma*'. We all should understand that at the end of living the 'fruits' allotted for the life are called *Prarabdha*; on departing, each should take the next form according to the pattern ordained by the ripened ones in our total *Sanchita Karma*.

Let me explain it more clearly. Suppose I have a piece of land divided into plots. In one, I plant coconut seedlings, in the second seeds of ladies-finger and in the third mango seeds. In order to germinate, grow and give fruit, each seed would take its own time. This is very well known to us. Similarly, each of our action has got its own time-limit for its fruition. Every action has got its own reaction; certain actions give their reaction immediately, while others will provide their reactions only after an interval.

To enjoy and suffer the reactions of the past

actions, each of us need certain joys and sorrows, and in order to bring forth these required experiences, each must have a definite 'field' of his own experiences. The world *Loka* does merely indicate its generally-accepted meaning : the world. *Loka* means the special world in which I live my own inner experiences, the external world-of-objects remaining almost the same for all. *Loka* etymologically means a field of experience.

Again, people misunderstand the real meaning of *Prarabdha* when they take the word to mean all the failure, impotence and weakness in them. If we are to be guided by this delusion, the *Prarabdha*, in every act of ours, there is no room for self-improvement through self-efforts. There are some who console themselves by saying that, "I have no faith or love in God, and it is my *Prarabdha*". This is a defeatist mentality. So far as we entertain and live in a defeatist mentality we cannot expect progress. Without a personal morale we cannot work for our progress. In *Yoga Vasishta*, Sage Vasishta, advises repeatedly Sree Ramachandra, the true householder, to constant self-effort. Sree Ramachandra, the Seeker, used to have daily *Satsang* with Sage Vasishta and the discussions which took place constitute the *Yoga Vasishta*, the last text-book in Vedanta. While championing the *Ajada vada* and declaring all sense-objects as unreal, the Great Master ever insists on the importance of *Purushartha*, self-effort, in detecting the hollowness of life and rising above it.

From where does this *Purushartha* come in if *Prarabdha* orders every action? That we have been given by the Divine Being a limited freedom is the truth. For example, we cannot bend a piece of rail as it is, but supposing this rail-piece is beaten out

and made into a chain, the rail-matter becomes very easily pliable. Similarly, when a cow is tied to a rope in the centre of a pasture land, she is not free to graze the entire field but she can move freely within that circle drawn by that rope. Similarly, man, though he has taken his body to live a fixed *Prarabdha*, can reach the Supreme Goal of life by living the freedom allowed to him from moment to moment.

No doubt, we have come here into this world to enjoy and suffer for certain of our past *Karmas*, through the circumstances ordered by our *Prarabdha*. And there is provision for us to discriminate and act rightly. For example, is there not a certain amount of freedom in choosing whether we should go to a cinema or a *Satsang*? Every moment in our life there is a challenge on these lines : " Shall I do this or shall I do that ". There are two ways to deal with each challenge. Two distinct paths are open to us. The Path of the Good and the Path of the Pleasant. We find ourselves moment to moment standing at the junction of these two paths. Often we are at a loss to decide which path to pursue. There is a tussle between Satan and God in us at such a moment of trial. By adopting the Path of the Pleasant, man cannot get, in the long run, his full satisfaction. This is the experience of all. Have you ever been to that cinema which has given you complete satisfaction? There is no such ' picture ' yet released ! One who has adopted the Path of the Good, as in our case, one who attends the *Satsang*, gains peace of mind and learns some good things about life and himself. Slowly, the former, under the impact of repeated disappointments, comes to think that he should go through the Path of the Good.

The mind is made up of a soft matter, as it were. As each thought passes through it, an 'impression' is left, on the mind-stuff like a scratch and when similar thoughts are repeated, it deepens into a canal. Every subsequent thought wave has got a tendency to flow through that ready-made thought-canal. Thus, if the impression or the canal made is of good thought-waves, then a good character is maintained and strengthened by the subsequent thought-waves flowing irresistibly in that direction.

Let us take an example and examine the working of the mind. If you have got a tendency to get angry and want to put out that tendency you should first of all feel sorrowful or repentant about it. Then you will have already suppressed the anger to some extent. Of course, pent-up anger will burst forth at a later date if you merely suppress it. But, if you be intelligent, you should divert that anger-energy into some other profitable direction. You should not succumb to the anger-weakness, meekly saying, "It is my *Prarabdha*".

Carve out a new canal in your mind with repeated good thought-waves. Repeat to yourself, "I love all", "I am very very tolerant". Go on repeating the self-suggestive thoughts, "I am kind", "I will never get angry", "I am tolerant", etc., and in a very short time, you will observe that you have no anger at all in your mental make-up.

First of all, you should cognise things. Be aware of your weakness. Be fully aware of them. Man is his mind. He is the very composition of his mind. When one does some actions, repeatedly, one's mind gets fixed with certain impressions. It is in a world of reactions related to the outer world-of-objects that we live. The quality of one's experiences depends

upon the quality of the mind which one brings up to undergo the experience. The mind, being what it is, is ordered and set by the various impressions, it has gathered in its different transactions in Life. Thus, when we have controlled and chastened the motives and thoughts in the mind, we should have purified it.

Each moment of our life, we are not only living the fruits of the past actions, but also *creating* those of to-morrow. Each moment we are preparing ourselves for the lives yet to come. *Prarabdha* is caused by the actions done in the past. It is only the very self-effort of the past. So, if our *Prarabdha* be a sorrowful one now, let us do such acts today so that we can now determine or order a happier life for us in the future.

The Law of Destiny does not explain to us how, even while we live the preordained and *Prarabdha*-controlled pattern of circumstances, we can have in the immediate moments a freedom to create afresh. This idea is not explained in the Law of Destiny. So it shatters our morale and a soul-killing defeatist mentality comes to choke us. It takes away the fire, the enthusiasm, the grit in Man and makes him a dull inactive individual, a mere dumb animal.

A happier morrow is built up only when we live today a Life Divine. Religion has been asking us to entertain and live such values of life so that while living them we shall be creating an ordered life of fuller joys for the morrow. Not only in this life but also in the next life we shall be able to enjoy the fruits of our Divine actions. Use the main righteous path ; avoid the by-lanes, the narrow, thorny, unrighteous path. We must start and constantly keep on to the right path, to reach the Supreme, our Goal. If our course be in the right direction, then we shall certainly

reach in time, our destination, the Supreme.

Yet another way of looking at it and coming to the same conclusion is by re-viewing life in the light of Time-flow, wherein the *future*, through the *present*, is ever becoming the *past*. Anything that is now in the future must in time arrive to become the present—and ere long should pass on to be of the past.

We have already said that human intellect cannot rest without seeking the cause of things. This causation-hunting-urge in us is not generally investigated into, seriously and thoroughly, by the students. If we do so, we shall discover certain facts in it which shall reveal to us the inner meaning and the deeper significances of the Law of Karma.

From the seed the tree comes : the seed is the cause, and the tree is the effect. From cotton the cloth is made : the cotton is the cause, and the cloth is the effect. Now, in all conceivable examples the *cause* is, like the father of a child, *anterior*, and the *effect*, like the child born, *posterior*, with reference to time : father was in existence before the son was born. Cause is thus that which was, and the effect is that which is. The past *causes* the present ; the present will, therefore, come to cause the future !

In short, it is, therefore, said that the future is not a mystery—an unknown miracle that man must wait for its stunning revelations. *The past modified in the present alone is the future*. The things to come are not ordered by a mere continuity of the past ; it can never be. This freedom to modify the past, and thereby create a future, for the better or for the worse, is *Purushartha* : self-effort.

To illustrate : if down a river, running at 2 miles an hour, a log is floating, then it will also move at the

same speed as the waters of the river. But supposing now, the log is fitted with a motor and manned by an intelligent driver, the log will have an independent movement of itself—no doubt, conditioned by the flow of the river. When the speedometer shows 10 miles an hour, the log will move 12 miles in an hour down the river, and only 8 miles an hour, if it is moving up stream. The flow of the river will be always there ; but due to the machine and the intelligence of the captain, the log has developed a “ limited freedom ” of movement now.

Similarly, the plant and the animal kingdoms, like the log that floats down, irresistably in the flood of the past, move, directed and guided by their natural instincts and mere impulses. But on reaching the human level, man acquires his reasoning capacity and a captain in his discriminative faculty. Using these two, he can steer the ship of his life safely to his destination—the Goal, the Ideal.

In fact, the *present* becomes an effect only with reference to the *past* ; the present itself becomes a *cause* with reference to the future. You are the son (effect) of your father (cause). With reference to your father you are an effect. You are also the father (cause) of your son (effect). With reference to your son you are a cause. In fact, nobody can say whether he is a cause or an effect ; both these terms are only with reference to the past or the future.

The present, looked *against the past*, is an effect ; a man is now the sum total of his past, indeed. And this is true of any country, community, society or group.

But the present, looked *against the future*, is a cause ; a man would be as he is now. And this too is true of any country, community, society or group.,

Viewed carefully the present in itself has no existence : it is a mingling of the past and the futurethe passage of the future to the past is the present. The living present is at once the tomb of the past and the womb of the future. This tomb-womb present has roots going deep into the past and branches spreading around everywhere into the future.

To consider, therefore, that the present is but a product of the past (*Prarabdha*) is undignified ; to recognise then that the future is but a product of the present (*Purushartha*) is unintelligent. There is no slavery ; nor is there full freedom. There is a limited freedom, which, if intelligently used, can redeem us from all entanglements.

Thus, the Law of *Karma* when correctly understood is the greatest force of vitality in our philosophy. It makes us the architects of our own future. We are not helpless pawns in the hands of a mighty tyrant, God, who, it is believed, has created us so weak and tearful to live our lives of limitations and pains. If we are weak or sorrowful it is all because of our own wilful actions. In our ignorance, we in the past had pursued certain negative values of life, and like a Frankenstein, their fruits have come up now to give us the pattern of circumstances we are living today.

Never mind. Take heart. By living rightly today, the Divine values of love, kindness, tolerance, mercy, etc., we shall order a nobler pattern for our future.

Prarabdha is the *Purushartha* of the past. The " Stuff", while remaining the same with reference to time, has two names : the *Purushartha* and *Prarabdha*.

By careful self-policing, detect the wrong tendencies in us. Eliminate them through constant and wilful

effort. Develop positivity and thus come to be the God of your own future life. Be a GOD !

FALL AND RISE OF MAN

The *OM* in the chart (*see* page lix) represents the Supreme Reality, the Pure Existence-Bliss. *OM* indicates the Truth which is the theme of *Upanishads*. This is the source of all life. It is the Centre of Life in each one of us, and as such it is the Unchanging Eternal Truth in us—the “Real I” in all of us.

We, from that state of Transcendental Glory, from that Nature of Knowledge-Bliss, have fallen down to become Man—the limited, ignorant, sad mortal. How this seeming “fall” has happened is a necessary knowledge so that we may know our Paths to return to our own Home.

Vedanta does not accept any real “fall” in Man from the Reality. The Religion of *Upanishads* is never tired of repeating the assertion “Thou art That”. And yet you and I are feeling our separate existence, our weakness, our sorrows and our limitations. The duality about us always brings bitter experiences to us. The phenomenal world is evident and every minute, it is experienced by us in our daily life. But Vedanta asserts that this seeming world of sense-objects is not Real. This is only a finite appearance. It can be ended. The world is seemingly real to us just as the snake is real to the deluded, although there is really only a rope. The ghost is real to the frightened in his ignorance of the post which he mistook to be the ghost. Mirage can never be ; even when we “see” the mirage, desert alone is there.

Thus, the Eternal *Sat-Chit-Ananda* alone is the

world and the ego-centric-idea of our separatist existence is only a superimposition upon Truth. They are all false. Plurality is a sad delusion. The ONE alone is Real and True.

Even so, we today, in our ignorance of the Real, in our *Avidya* (Nescience), live in our own delusions. How did this delusion rise up? This ought to be the natural question now in our minds. An attempt to explain this stumbling doubt in the minds of the Seekers has been made in Vedanta by the introduction of the term *Maya*.

Maya is defined as an inexplicable Power of the Supreme which is in That, as inseparable as heat from fire, just as we cannot have fire as a "thing-in-itself", after removing all the heat from it, nor can heat have any existence if the fire-element is removed from it. So too *Maya* is a Power inherent in the Supreme. Fire is heat : heat is fire.

It is possible that we may have a superficial understanding of this term, a growing suspicion that *Maya* is a tricky word introduced by the Vedantins in their *Maya Vada* to veil the main issues of a pointed question and to confuse the questioner with a mysterious nothing. But such a feeling can rise up only out of our own ignorance of the language ; for in Sanskrit, the word *Maya*, in its etymological meaning, stands for "that which is not" (*Yo Ma Sa Maya*). It is *Maya*, a power in our mind to get itself deluded, that creates for us the delusion of the snake-in-the-rope, of the ghost-in-the-post, of the mirage-in-the-desert.

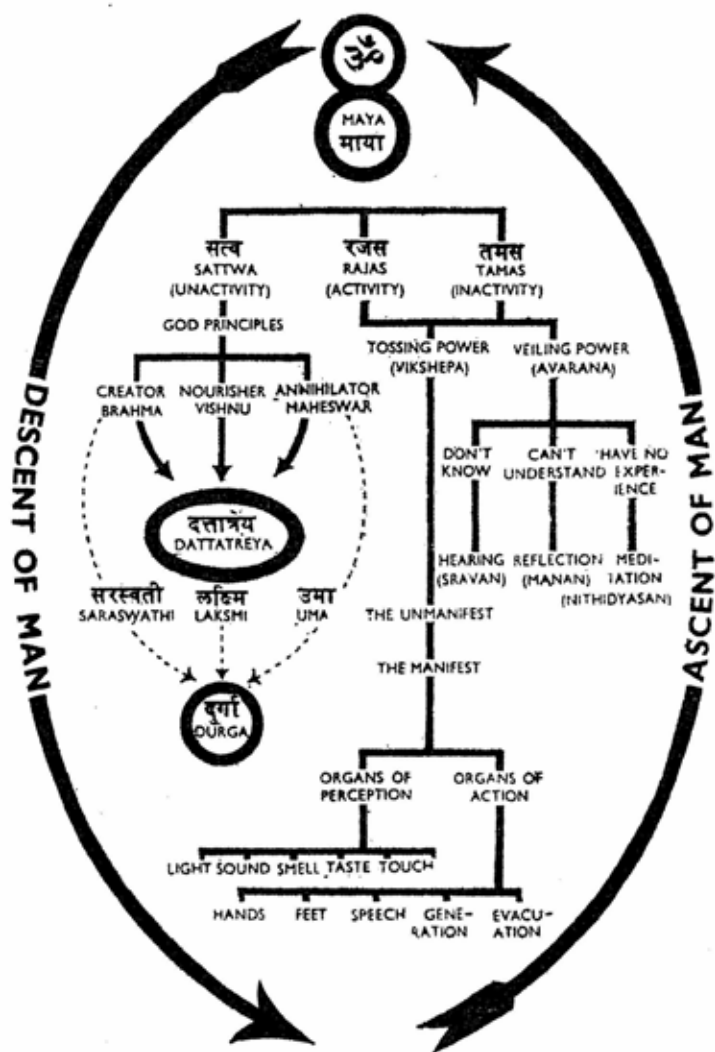
The famous story of Somadutta's father in Vedanta is often quoted to explain the *Maya* in us, deluding us, as it were, with our own active co-operation and sympathy ! Let us examine the story.

One newly initiated anchorite, during a pilgrimage, felt tired and weary, because of the hot day and the burning sun. Seeing a shaded arbour near the Ganges banks, he took shelter in it to rest. There was a narrow piece of rock upon which he stretched and composed himself to a restful siesta. As he was dozing off, his attention was attracted by two young girls who had come to the Ganges to collect water. They filled their pots and went away but the vision generated the following lines of thought in the half-sleepy anchorite : " Supposing, I marry one of them ! Then I shall have a little house with three spacious rooms. And I shall be a very severe and grave husband too ! Working in my own fields I shall live a happy life of contentment and joy ! Then the first born.....Yes, I will have a fat, beautiful son. Of Course, I must name him Somadutta. And we shall all three sleep in the same bed ! But is there space enough for my son ? " " Devi, please give some more space for our son, otherwise he might fall down." " Lord, how can I move ? " answers she, " To which side ? you move a bit to your end." " All right ", he says.....And splash !.....

Poor Somadutta's father moved a little towards his side and the stone was narrow. He lost his balance and rolled down into the Ganges water. Awakened, the anchorite swam out and reached the shore.

Now, friends, what made the anchorite fall ? And after his awakening, where should he go to regain his young wife and child ?

The poor *Brahmacharin*, created the world of Somadutta in himself, and identifying completely with it, came to live the dream-life as though ' real ', and thus suffered the fall.



So too, the Pure Eternal Self we are. The Self in a dream has forgotten Itself, and dreams of Its own *Samsar*. Wake up. Role out of this narrow plane-of-false-identifications, dip into the cool Ganges water—the *Srutis*—and get awakened. End the undivine dream at one stroke.

The power in Somadutta's father, with which he "lived" his domestic life and ultimately fell into the Ganges is *Maya* : "that which is not" in his own mind existing as its own nature!!

Maya is manifested in the world as three distinct Eternal Qualities : the *Sattwa* (unactivity), the *Rajas* (activity) and the *Tamas* (inactivity). All these three qualities are ever in a state of admixture. Their proportions, of course, vary from individual to individual and in the same individual from time to time.

When the Supreme Reality, the Eternal Intelligence gets reflected in Pure *Sattwa-Guna-Pradhana*, *Maya*, we get a very distinct and clear reflection of the Supreme in it : this is the God-Principle. And the dimmer reflection of "*Sattwa* mixed with *Rajas* and *Tamas*" (*Malina-Sattwa-Pradhana Maya*) is the ego-centric *Jiva*, the individual mortal.

Please refer to the Chart. The God-Principle manifests itself around us in the world outside as three main accomplishments. We observe that at every moment things are being created and born, at every moment there is destruction and death, and between these two points, of an unknown beginning and an equally uncertain end, we also watch things being maintained. In order to facilitate the common man to grasp these three Powers manifest in him, we have them represented as the Creator (Lord Brahma) the Maintainer (Lord Vishnu) and the Annihilator

(Lord Siva).

To create a pot, the potter must have a pre-knowledge of what he is going to make ; similarly the Creator ought to ' know ' what he is to create. We have thus Lord Brahma married to Sree Saraswati, the Goddess of learning and knowledge. In order to maintain ourselves, we need the ' capacity to maintain '. A pauper cannot be the head of the family and maintain the family. Thus, we have Sree Lakshmi, the Goddess of wealth and plenty as the consort of Lord Vishnu. Similarly, Lord Siva cannot carry on the function of annihilation unless there is for Him a field of finite destructible objects. Without the phenomenal world, we cannot have the manifestation of the Rudra—Might. So Lord Siva is ably supported by His devoted partner, Goddess Uma—the *Prakriti*.

Even when the Trinity is thus shown to be three distinct Divine Personalities, it is also shown clearly that they are distinct and separate Divine Powers. The oneness of them is the soulful song in our *Puranas*. But this subtle song is heard only by the most attentive, and the most cultured. *Sad-Guru* Sree Dattatreya, the Teachers' Teacher, is the synthesis of all the three Lords, and in Goddess Durga, we have the representation of the synthesis of the three divine-consorts.

So then, whatever be the seeming plurality among our Gods, there is but one and the same God-Principle. In fact, individually each of them is helpless, and unless there is creation the other two functions are impossible. Without Vishnu, the others are impotent. If *Shivatattwa* does not function the Creator or the Maintainer cannot come into play. Only as a well-organised team can the three work together and manifest themselves. One God-Principle alone exists. Plurality

is a delusion, a false understanding.

If the reflection of Truth in Pure *Sattwa Maya* is the God-Principle, the broken, dim reflections of the same Truth Supreme in a medium of Impure *Sattwa Maya* is the individual Ego-Centre, the *Samsarin*. *Rajas* is activity and *Tamas* is inactivity. This medium of reflection producing the *Jiva*-dream is something like a cup of cow-dung water reflecting the sun. The reflection cannot be as pure and steady, as clear and true to the original as the reflection of the same sun in a cup of pure crystal-clear steady water. How this dimness and agitation came to be, is represented on the right-hand side of the Chart.

The *Tamas* quality acts in us in two distinct ways. It produces the mental agitations, *Vikshepa* and the veiling of Truth *Avarana*. Let us examine what these are. Remember, these two Powers are not independent, each depends upon the other. The *Vikshepa* creates the veil and the *Avarana* creates the agitation.

The Veiling-Power of the *Tamas* in us plays in three distinct negativities such as (a) I don't know, (b) I can't understand and (c) I have not experienced. These three negative-concepts in us are removed by the three main Vedanta practices : Hearing (*Sravan*), Reflection (*Manan*) and Meditation (*Nidhidhyasan*).

The first of the three main tragedies, born of the Veiling-Power in us, is that, left to ourselves, few of us have the capacity to independently observe, analyse and conclude that there is a God-Principle behind the ever-changing flux in the phenomenal world. "I don't know," is the grossest state of *Avarana*. This is removed by "Hearing", directly from the Great Masters, or indirectly through the Great Scriptures.

When we have removed this negativity, a subtler one rises up into prominence, *viz.*, "I can't understand". This is surmounted by intellectual analysis and reasoning, when the seeker comes to feel that in and through the endless names and forms, is running a golden-chord of unity, a sense of Oneness, the *Atman*. But often students of philosophy at this stage learn to devalue their own intellectual awareness of this changeless Truth behind the medley of life as not a fact, since it is "not experienced" by them. This *Avarana* manifestation in us is removed by the process of practice prescribed for the Vedanta-*Sadhaka* called Meditation. Meditation is a process of inner Self-discipline by which through constant practice the seeker learns the art of keeping his mind at one and the same chosen line of thinking to the strict and severe exclusion of all other dissimilar currents of thoughts. Ultimately the *Sadhaka* succeeds in bringing his mind to a complete stillness as in sleep, in which, unlike in sleep, he has his entire awareness brightly lit up and kindling in his bosom. At this moment of Bliss and Knowledge, called the *Savikalpa Samadhi*, the *Sadhaka* comes to chop off his last traces of the *Avarana* in his inner composition.

We have had so long a discussion of one of the manifestations of *Tamas*. The other is the agitations of the mind called *Vikshepa*. From this *Vikshepa* arises the Unmanifest world—the subconscious and from it the grosser emphasis and assertion of the Manifest, the world of the Five Elements. The interplay of the Elements produce the names and forms of objects including the senses of Knowledge and the senses of Action, which together constitute the sad, tearful, ineffectual mortal, the helpless *Samsarin*.

With this, the Fall of Man (*the arrow on the left*

side in the Chart) is complete. From being the Eternal, Immortal, All-full (*nitya suddha mukta paramatman*), Pure consciousness, due to the Play of *Maya*, like Somadutta's father, we too have come to feel our own limitations and live in our unbuilt huts with our unmarried wife and unborn son.

Vedanta is not a pessimistic philosophy to leave its conclusions with a mere theory of the Fall. This very theory has been devised to explain the non-existent dreamfall so that the faithful may be shown a way to wake up and realise their own True and Eternal Nature, the *OM*.

All the different Religions of the world and all the different *Yogas* in Hinduism, however distinct they might seem to be in their approaches, all of them, in one voice, insist that man must learn to control his sense-organs of knowledge and action. Self-control, without and within, is the one point on which all sing in melodius agreement.

But this control of the *Indriyas* is not accomplished by mere violent suppression. The ten-headed monster is us, the Ravana in us, cannot be beheaded even by the Inner Ram! Sree Ramachandra had to first explode the *Amrit Kalasa*—a secret talisman of nectar which Ravana had worn in his body and so long as it was intact not even *Brahma-Astra* (arrow) could end the Rakshasa!

Deep in us lies the *Kalasa* (the jar) containing desires fed by our Nescience. Unless this is ended by drowning the very source of it, the *Avidya* (ignorance), we cannot control effectively the sense-organs. So long as traces of 'delusion' are in us, we shall have desires rising up in us. They whip the *Indriyas* to roam out among their respective Sense-objects. With

‘ knowledge ’ alone can we end our ‘ Ignorance ’.

The knowledge of our Real Nature, the realisation of the “ *Sivoham* ” state, the recognition that “ I am Chinmaya ”, the knowledge that I am not this ‘ name and form personality ’, but a homogeneous mass of Pure Consciousness, alone can end our Ignorance (*Avidya*), the delusion (*Bhranti*), the source of all the desire eruptions. But Pure Knowledge is our Eternal *Swarupa*, and thus, it is not a state to be created. We have only to end the clouding, confusing, deluding ignorance, and when the clouds move off, the Sun hidden behind them appears in all its brilliance.

This removal of Nescience is through Hearing, Reflection and Meditation, and we have already seen how the Veiling Power of *Tamas* acts upon us and how each of its strategy is met and defeated by the Vedanta *Sadhana*, *Sravan*, *Manan* and *Nidhidhyasan* (see Chart).

Thus, by the time a student reaches the *Manan*-state, he gains more and more of an intellectual understanding about the futility of seeking seeming happiness and peace in the world of sense-objects. Here starts the real control of the sense-organs. And when he gains slowly a little of sense-control, the agitations of the mind created by his contact with the world of sense-objects are reduced. This enables him to gain a thousand-fold joy, peace and tranquility within and consequently his meditation-flights reach higher levels and his concentration becomes more pointed and firm. Hand in hand the team works : the more the *Avarana* is controlled, the more the *Vikshepa* is stilled ; the more the tossings and agitations are pacified, the easier the veil gets rolled off. In course of time, in proportion to the intensity of *Abhyasa*, the twin gruesome manifestations of *Tamas* are both completely controlled, and we

shall then have sublimated the *Rajas-Tamas* defects in us, with consequent gain of *Sattwa* in us.

As we hear, reflect and meditate upon the *Sruti Mantras* (the scriptures), the disturbances and the "muddiness" in our mental lake are eliminated. Naturally the Pure Sun-of-Knowledge, the Eternal Truth, gets reflected clearly. The clearest and the truest reflection of the Eternal Truth is the God-Principle. Therefore, a *Sadhaka* slowly comes to manifest in himself Divinity and Godliness at this stage. Miracles are easy to him. Grace is natural to him. Kindness becomes his instinct. Love is his very breath. Mercy is his essence, Truthfulness becomes his very trait, and Lordliness his birthright. In short, a Godman on earth, he lives, poor or starving, suffering or in health, laughing or weeping, to rule, guide and enlighten.

At this stage if he is yet steady in his *Sadhana*, and can still maintain his Divine urge to *know* and to *become*, if he is dispassionate enough to reject and renounce even the powers and joys of Godhood, he during the highest flights of his deepest meditation, wafts even beyond the yonder summits of *Sattwa*, and becomes *Sattwatitha* or one who has transcended even the Gods. He experiences in himself the Supreme Truth and becomes THAT. And having reached *OM* and merging in *OM*, he becomes *OM*. He gains the *Paramam Padam*—the Finale, the Goal of Perfection, the Bliss Absolute.

There in Him rests all. The Universe has only risen from Him : in Him it exists ; towards Him it moves ; into Him it finally must enter and afterwards become Him, the one Eternal Truth Absolute.

The arrow on the left (*see chart*), shows the direction of the Fall of Man from *OM* to delusion. The arrow

on the right shows the Ascent of Man from the vales of tears to the state of *Sat-Chit-Ananda*, the Self.

Thus, without the control of the *Indrias*, no spiritual growth is ever possible. And no control is effective until we start the hear-reflect-meditate schooling. Study the *Upanishads*. Independently think over them. Meditate regularly. Hand in hand, learn to control your senses, through a control of the desires. Intelligently pursue *Sadhana*. Success shall be yours. "Here and Now" is the guarantee repeatedly given by all the scriptures. With patience and faith "Serve, Love, Purify, Meditate and Realise Truth" in this very birth.

THE UPANISHADS

To the Vedantins, Veda is immortal and eternal. This statement must necessarily grate against the modern educated view. They shall certainly raise serious objections against such a dictatorial declaration. But when we examine the statement closer, we shall discover that it is not after all such a dictatorial belief thrust upon the faithful from the Vedanta platform.

The word VEDA comes from the root "Vid" meaning "to know". Thus Veda means 'knowledge'. To say that Veda is eternal is not to claim indestructibility to the text-books of the Vedas. The knowledge of the Self is indestructible. Even this statement is not easily acceptable to many.

Let me try to illustrate the idea with a modern example. From the days of Newton's discovery, we know that there is a measurable quantity of force, called the gravitational force, with which the earth is ever attracting everything unto its own centre. Now, are we not right if we say that the gravitational force is

‘ Eternal ’ in the sense that it was silently acting even before the fateful afternoon when that apple fell upon the nose of Newton and made him sit up and discover the force of gravity ? And now, even when long after we have forgotten about this discovery, the force is acting upon things on and about the globe.

Just as this gravitational force or for that matter, electricity or the energy-content of each atom—is ‘ Eternal ’, so too, the Truth discussed in the Vedas is Eternal. It is not the Veda text-books ; they may get destroyed in some tragic accident. But no harm can ever come to the Truth, the Self, which is the theme of the sacred *Upanishads*.

The modern educated mind is apt to ignore the authority of the teachings of the *Upanishads* and cry it down as a set of fantastic imaginations of the *Rishis*. This view can be maintained only when we have a superficial view of the *Upanishads*. If we study them closely, we shall gain more and more insight into them, and our faith in them will be more steadfast.

The authors or Seers of the *Upanishadic Mantras* were the *Rishis*, who, having lived years of intense experiencing of the world, had come to feel the hollowness of a life of make-shifts among its endless medley of means and ends. They, in the midst of life’s sobs and sorrows, laughters and smiles, heard a “ Call ”, the Call of the Within, which had set them upon their pilgrimage of seeking the Truth. In deep dispassion they retired into the thick of the majestic forests of the Ganges Valleys and there, with a highly developed mind and intellect, scooped their bosom to observe, analyse, classify and conclude the how and the why of the deeper workings of the psychological and the spiritual man in them.

These wisdom-sparks, the findings of a life-long specialised self-effort, the Master handed down to his disciple, who also had reached him, just as he himself had reached the banks of Mother Ganges. The disciple learned from his *Guru*, and carried the torch of knowledge, maintained, tended, nursed and nourished by his own experiences and conclusions, until he handed it over, intact and blazing, to his disciple.

Thus from teacher to the taught, the Knowledge Supreme has come down, in each succeeding Master, the Self-Science gaining in authority and wealth of detail. These Master-minds were so selflessly true to their pursuit after Truth that they, in the thrill of their divine adventure, ignored even themselves! We have rarely any identity of these men left to us in the body of the *Upanishads*. In almost all the *Upanishads* their authors are unknown; they, as it were, forgot to add their signatures to their master-pieces.

To them the Discovery was all-important, not the individual discoverer. They knew that man has but a few years of bubble-like existence; they recognised the hollowness of personal fame and name. They sought immortality not in a plane of memory of the succeeding generations, but in a subtler plane of the Eternal Consciousness.

Such a brilliant line of Seekers, each crying the Same Truth, could not be false, in any sense of the term, in their statements. Probably, in our times, a modern philosopher might sing a wrong note to earn wealth, to gain social recognition, to flatter his publisher or to capture the fancy of the reading-class. But to the *Upanishad*-Seers no gain was a consideration sufficiently tempting to swerve from Truth. Even

the kings had no hold on them : for the Seers lived in absolute freedom, detached from court life and were in their inner perfections, devout nobilities, mighty in their powers of intellect, consummate in their renunciation, and thus truly kings of kings. They had the grit born of True Knowledge to declare even to the mighty emperor that he was a sad worm, helpless and pain-ridden, ever poor, and powerless !

Such mighty men, self-sufficient, perfect, daring and glorious heroes, cannot be easily labelled down as "mad". The details of their great self-discovery were not thrust down on all ; it was given out only to such mature minds who reached their presence, hungry and thirsty for this Knowledge Supreme. We shall also observe that the Teachers, though they vary in their expressions, in their lines of arguments, and their modes of approaches, all of them, without even a single exception, reach the same Divine Goal. Can we accept then, that these *Rishis* as a class manufactured the same "bluff" and gave it out to generation after generation ? For what purpose ? Such a conclusion can only be illogical, baseless and false.

The *Upanishads* are revelations, not the products of the individual mind and the intellect. By a long process of practice, control and discipline, the mind and intellect are trained to soar into the higher realms of greater subtleties and to remain there in angelic poise and grace. In their very lightness, at such dizzy heights of seeking and soaring, they seem to roll off into a vaporous nothingness ! This is the fulfilment of all *Yogas*. When thus the mind is sublimated, the faculty called *intuition* is awakened in man, and Truth is realised intuitively by the Seers and Sages. The Absolute Truth is not imagined or ratio-

nally determined. It is intuitively *experienced*. Thus it is an empty statement if an intellectual idler dismisses the *Upanishads* as "fantastic imagination".

These sacred *Upanishads* are the cream of human achievements in life, and form the third book in each of the four Vedas. Each Veda contains three books : the *Mantras*, the *Brahmanas*, and *Aranyakas*. The first contains crisp words of secret potencies ; the second comprises the apostrophies to the majesty, grandeur and beauty of Nature, and descriptions of the *yagas* and *yagnas* ; and the third book contains the *Upanishads*.

The very term by which the book containing the *Upanishads* is called, *Aranyakas*, means that which is to be taught and studied in the forest. It means that a field of peace and majesty is necessary for the mind-and-intellect-vehicle to speed out and take off from the gross, material, earth—earthly thoughts and considerations. You need not look aghast at this statement. Even when you have some small personal problem, say to resign the present job or not, what do you do? Don't you walk out of home and go to a quiet and silent park and lying down there under a tree, mentally review the pros and cons and come to a final decision? When an ordinary material problem needs this much of solitude, peace and space-sense about us, how much more should one need the help of a right atmosphere to delve within and seek the Eternal Well of Life?

The entire Vedas were in the early days handed down from teacher to disciple *only* by word of mouth. But in the time of Sree Veda Vyasa, the Master Mind detected a perceptible fall in the quality and stamina in the nature of man. Those were the days when materialism had probably started to throw wide its muslim nest of false values and false charms. Sree

Veda Vyasa rightly foresaw that soon the Science of Sciences would be lost to the future generations unless they were collected, classified and preserved in writing. At that time what a huge uproar it might have made among the orthodox little hearts! So too did the fanatical class at all great occasions such as when Sree Tulasi Das translated *Ramayana* into Hindi, or when the first translations of *Gita* and the *Upanishads* came out in English. Even today it is insufferable to the old-timers to attend a *Satsang* in English!

But greater men than mere book-Pundits, men of perfection living today the life of the *Upanishad* Truths, in divine dispassion and discrimination, away from the world, and its meaningless bustle—these great Masters who are this *Sadhoo's Gurus*, have found it necessary to start this great Movement of a Hindu Revival through a total Spiritual Revolution within each educated Seeker. And if today we worship and adore Sree Veda Vyasa as the noblest guardian of the Hindu culture and knowledge, certainly, the day is not too far off when, not only the Hindus, but the whole world shall come with tears of gratitude to adore and admire the far-sightedness and vision of Chinmaya's *Gurus*. Their progressive and daring programme of this mighty Revival Movement shall bless the world to come.

Sree Veda Vyasa collected all the *Mantras*, then known to some scattered scholars purified them and edited them all into four great Volumes; the *Rig Veda*, the *Sama Veda*, the *Yajur Veda* and the *Atharvana Veda*. Each Veda contains three books: the *Mantras*, the *Brahmanas* and the *Aranyakas*.

The fit students who followed the *Aranyakas* for purposes of specialisation, went to the majestic settings

of the thick forests on the banks of the Ganges. At the mere mention of retirement, we of the modern generation, laugh at the idea. To us retirement is "running-away". Our ancients never ran away from life. On the other hand, we may say that we do not face life and its problems even with half as much faith, sincerity, honesty and thoroughness as they did. This running away attitude is taken, even today as of old, by all men of deep thinking. It is only the dull and the 'animal', who do not, and to them life means only a stereotype drudgery of continuous exertion of earning, spending, sweating, toiling, craving and striving, sobbing, weeping and smiling. To such a crowd of toilers, the market-place is the hub-of-life, and, retirement, study, contemplation, meditation and self-sacrifice are all foolish idealisms and mad actions. But they forget that in their own times they have men suffering from the same '*Rishi*-madness'. Haven't we got them? What about the professors of the day? The scientists, who are not mere duplicating machines of the older generation but who are on the path of discovery striving to strip Nature and peep at Her secret beauties? What about our artists, and even politicians? Are they normal men? Are they not in a deeper sense of the term "runaways from life"? The absent-mindedness of learned professors is too well known to us. The artists face any amount of suffering, insult and privation, and though living in garrets yet carry on with their noble inner profession—the constant pursuit of beauty. We ignore them; and they seem to ignore us too.

An oldish man, in shabby clothes was once observed to be sitting in the early hours of a morn near a wayside tank and throwing small pebbles into the water and watching the widening ripples. When an 'honest

citizen' saw the 'idler', still at his 'pebble-play' late in the afternoon, his moral indignation was kindled. He declared ; "Such men should be shot at sight in any progressive state if it is run by responsible men of intelligence and character. Such men are a heavy burden on a country". Today many of the hasty utterances of the common educated men are almost as wide as the conclusion of the "honest citizen". But it would be a lesson for us to know that both the citizen and the idler had in time died—the citizen, like any street-dog, was forgotten and forgiven, but the idler is remembered and worshipped even today for he was no other than Medici himself, the master painter, who has left for us his immortal canvas wherein he had caught the eternal play of light and shade upon those ripples in the tank.

In short, the real, productive, original work does never give us any sign of flutter, hurry, excitement or outer sweat. It is a deep and fierce inner toil much too subtle for our gross eyes to see. It is an observed fact, even in our own Machine-Age, that when a wheel is turning at a terrific speed, it seems to be "motionless". A top at its early fast movements of spinning would look like a picture of a stationary motionless form : only when its speed gets reduced does it deflect, exhibit agitations, swing more and more across its own axis. When a man lives the greater life of thinking and discovering there is less and less of the ordinary external gross activities. In fact such men, even while living in a laboratory, studio or garrett, are men living away from the life of the townsfolk. It is not possible for them to dance or laugh along with the broad-way crowd. They live certain values more seriously and more intensely. It will be foolish and thoughtless on our

part to laugh at such great men and condemn them as "run-aways" from life.

Similarly, some men felt the urge to seek a goal far subtler than mere eating, drinking, sleeping and breeding. For such a life of deep contemplation, a quietude of atmosphere and a desireless state of divine peace within are unavoidable. And such master-minds, in the past, retired to the banks of the Ganges, and living through years of self-watching and self-analysis, slowly cut out the route to the peak of Self-perfection. They handed down their discoveries to their next generation through their disciples ; and they in their turn added miles of the path to the Unknown and themselves disappeared through death leaving the work for their disciples to complete.

Upanishads disclose to us the Road to the Within, which is the combined work of many generations of great thinkers, who lived the ideals they had discovered. These final discoveries of the Eternal, Infinite Nature of the human soul refused to be trapped within the meaning of the words of any language. Thus they had to prepare, a specialized, cultured (*Samskarita*) language. The greatest vehicle, to express the Inexpressible, had been thus arrived at in Sanskrit.

Upanishad Mantras fulfil their functions only through their pregnant "suggestiveness". They do not directly and openly express or explain : but with their 'indicative meaning', in their secret "import", in their meaningful "suggestiveness", they simply guide us to the very presence of Truth.

Hence we need always the interpretations from a *Guru* to understand fully the meaning of the *Upanishads*. Any amount of mere reading would not reveal to us their fuller and ampler wealth of meaning. These

Mantras are jealous, shy and secretive by their very nature.

Not only that we need a teacher, but we, the taught, also must have certain special inner energy to concentrate and contemplate upon the subtler factors in our own make-up. This energy is gained only when we live a noble life of ethical and moral values. and keep zealously the vow of *Brahmacharya*.

Be good. Do good. Be regular in your daily half-an-hour meditation. Maintain *Brahmacharya*. Try to get into the spirit of the *Upanishad Mantras* as we go on exploring their inner meanings and implications. May in His *Kripa* we all come to gain at least a single moment's thrill of the *Upanishad Truth* !

OM TAT SATH !

KENOPANISHAD

CHAPTER I

We have by now discussed at length the place of the *Upanishads* in the Vedic literature, the *end* pointed out by the *Upanishads*, and the *Means* advised by the *Upanishads* to achieve the end. We shall now try to study the *method* of teaching or the *style*, adopted by the *Upanishads*.

Upanishads are the various attempts made by different *Rishis* to express the *Inexpressible*. For this purpose, they in patience and perseverance, have discovered a fit medium—a chastened, reinforced, tempered language, Sanskrit. Even this pregnant language of endless and inexhaustible sense and meaning, fails to convey the Knowledge Absolute through its word-meanings. Sanskrit indeed, succeeds in explaining the *Inexplicable* much better than any other known language. And yet, we must note that the success of Sanskrit language in explaining the *Inexplicable* is due to the masterly “suggestiveness” of its words and phrases.

The method of study of the *Upanishads* is different from the study of any known material science or the *reading* of novels. The study of science calls forth from the student certain special faculties of understanding and aptitudes of reasoning. To read and enjoy a novel, certainly the reader is to have some other external circumstances and quite a different mental approach altogether. So too in the study of

Upanishads, we require some special adjustments both without us and within ourselves. The *how* and the *why* of this assertion is illustrated in Vedanta text-books thus.

Supposing a few of you and this *Sadhoo* are going for a walk on the second day of the bright fortnight. Suddenly, Chinmaya notices the glorious Crescent in the bright cloudless sky. The beauty of the Vision prompts him to share it with his friends. Naturally, he cries out, "Friends, see, yonder there, the beautiful Vision," and points it out with his finger. But his companions fail to detect it. There is in them an anxiety to see; and there is equal impatience in Chinmaya to show it to them. And since the sky is at that moment one homogeneous expanse of whiteness, the Swami finds it impossible to explain the position of the Crescent, with reference to anything other than Itself. Had the 'thing pointed out' been an object among many different objects, it would have been easy, as he could employ the simple method of, "On the right side of the table, chair or book, etc." But in the bright, cloudless summer sky, this method becomes ineffectual and impracticable. So, the only practical way left for the Swami is to start with something other than the Crescent, even if it be a tree in the neighbour's courtyard. He says, "Friends, do you see that yonder mango tree? Do you notice the branch that goes directly to the north? There, on the top of it, do you see those two leaves: yes, those which are nodding! That is right. Do you see them?" Now, if the friends have *no faith* in the Swami's sincerity and honesty, if they have *no belief* that the Swami has really "seen" the Crescent and is impatient to share the Joy-Vision with his friends, then those friends

can never be benefited by the Swami. If the friends at the very outset start asking questions as to the method and conclude that, "to show a thing in the sky why should we worry about the mango tree, the branch and the particular pair of leaves", then the poor Swami might give up at once all his attempts to impart the knowledge and to share with them the Vision of the Crescent in the sky. But supposing the friends have firm faith in the Swami's sincerity, and are ready to go through the necessary stages of the Swami's directions then, if they co-operate wholeheartedly, first to identify the exact "leaves" pointed out, thereafter the discovery of the Crescent Moon would be but a mere child's play.

Thus, the *Brahma Vidya Gurus*, in great detail strive to indicate to us the 'tree', the 'branch' and lastly the 'leaves'. From that point they only instruct "See the Self. Look ahead. Yonder is the Truth!" We have detailed, through often self-contradictory explanations of the creation processes, the explanation of the individual's body, vital air (*Prana*), mind intellect, and bliss-sheath. There are wonderful assertions of Truth in some statements and equally powerful negations of untruths in other statements, and all these are but preparations. When the disciple in faith and sincerity follows the explanations and statements, carefully and diligently, he can soon come face to face with Truth in himself as his own *Self*. He is face to face with Truth, even long before he is actually conscious of the very Vision! Even when, as in our material example, we see the leaves on the mango tree pointed out, we are indeed looking straight in the very direction of the crescent. The crescent moon is already in our eyes. But we are not *aware* of the crescent moon,

that is all.

Up to the "leaves" stage the Seer who has seen the crescent can help the one who has not seen the crescent. Afterwards, the Seer must retire with his last instructions : "look". The observer must then renounce his gaze on the leaf and look ahead to the far ! We may even say that the Seer sees it not in an *effort* to see, it is just a process of *lifting* his attention from the leaf, and with an impact, irresistible and sudden, he becomes *aware* of the crescent. And having discovered the crescent, he can with ease see in one look both the "leaves" and the crescent !

So too, the *Upanishad Rishis* guide our attention, step by step, to the Self, "the *Atman*", in us as reigning in the Centre of Life, the Seat of All Knowledge, by a process similar to the crescent-from-leaves. As such, we have to follow faithfully each of their arguments and ultimately be ready to "gaze ahead" beyond all the explanations and narrations.

Kenopanishad forms the ninth chapter of the *Talavakara Branch* in the *Sama Veda*. We have already seen before that each Veda contains three distinct "Books": the *Mantras*, the *Brahmanas* and the *Aranyakas*. Being an *Upanishad*, *Kena* falls in the third "Book".

Kenopanishad starts as the ninth chapter of the *Talavakara Branch*. The eight preceding chapters deal with the *Karma* and *Upasana* processes, constituting in them, the details of rituals and religious formalities. *Karmas* include special *Yagnas* and *Yagas* (sacrifice) to be performed and *Upasana*, which roughly are the early exercises in higher meditation to be practised.

Upasana (worship) has come to mean now-a-days that the Lord is present in an idol, symbol or picture.

Special objects are selected for special Gods : thus, in *Siva Linga* we superimpose the vision of Lord Siva ; in *Saligram stone* (a kind of nature-polished stone with strange markings upon it and often containing streaks of gold) we develop Shri Narayana idea ; in the Cross Jesus Christ ; in *Bodisattwa* Lord Buddha ; in Fire the Lord Zoraster, etc. To the devotee, the stone, is not apparent at all : his thoughts are with Lord Siva when he looks at the *Linga*. So too, the devotees who worship other symbols.

This some of the sceptical modern youngsters might say is not true. Allow this *Sadhoo* to illustrate the point more clearly. The child sees its mother in a woman, its father sees in the same woman his wife, its uncle sees in her his sister, and its grandmother sees in that very same woman a daughter. The child looks up to the mother in reverence and love. The husband looks at her with lust and craving, the brother looks at her with affection and regard, and her old mother looks at her with ' *prem* '. The woman remaining the same, four different individuals have thus seen in her four different entities : mother, wife, sister and daughter. If this is possible and is daily done in life, is it madness for the devotee to " See " the Lord-of-his-heart in the idol ? Certainly to the sceptic it is *only* a stone and not the Lord ? If this be madness in the devotee, we will be compelled to accept all living ones in the modern world as stark mad, and this would certainly be not quite acceptable even to those who cry down the idol theory.

Thus, a devotee " sees " the All-full, All-pervading God-Principle in the idol. The sight of the idol lifts him from the planes of circumscribed ego and tunes him to the Divine presence of Love. He expands

inwardly.

Bhakti seems to be a later development : it is an achievement of the *Puranas*. In the Vedic period, we had a generation of mankind more serene, unexcitable, calm and deep. To them was prescribed the various *Upasanas*. In fact the *Bhakti Marga* (Path of Devotion) and the *Upasana* processes are the same in their technical application. Through *Upasana* also the *Upasaka* attempts to gain a temporary escape from his circumscribed identity to the expanse of the Universe. There are hundreds of *Upasanas* prescribed in the *Karma* chapters of the Vedas, one of which is the *Prana Upasana* or vital-air-worship. Here the worshipper deeply meditates upon the "breath" in his own body as the very "breath" that vitalises and keeps the entire community of living organisms vibrant with life. The individual's mind is thus trained to expand beyond the iron shackles of separative consciousness.

The rituals and formalities (*Karma*) are also a great help to self-discipline. Man is essentially a creature of desires so long as he is in the mire of his own delusions. The Vedic Seers understanding the humanity intimately, prescribed these *Yagnas* and *Yagas* in order to cater to the yearnings and desires in man. If *Karmas* were performed with desires, the Vedas promise, they will give us the greater joys of the "world of the *Manes*" or the dead, and when *Karmas* are performed along with *Upasana*, the Godly joys of the Heavens.

We must notice that these instructions in the *Karmakanda* are not meant merely for the 'finite' joys of the *Pithar Lokas* or the *Deva Lokas* only. The idea that when the merits earned through the actions are over, the individual will have to descend from both

the planes of consciousness (the world of the *Manes* or the dead and the world of *Indra*) to this earth of sorrows and imperfections, is repeated in all the *Sastras*.

After endless tossings between the worlds above and the earth, one gains slowly a certain amount of dispassion. Such "growing" ones are instructed to continue *Karma* and *Upasana* in a pure selfless spirit of God-dedication, whereby the individual gains mental and intellectual purification and comes to entertain and urge to *know* and to *become*, the peak of perfection, an *Eternal State of Bliss-Wisdom-Power*.

As one thus grows in his inner purification, one gains greater and greater understanding of the hollowness of the outer world of sense-pursuits. He understands that the very best which even the heavens could give is but ultimately sorrow-ridden. Imperfection is the very stuff of the finite ; limitation is the canker that ever gnaws at the root of all pleasures and joys. Our mad futile search hither and thither, to gain Eternal Joy is as exhausting and suicidal as the mad gaspings in which the musk-deer comes to die, when it has run miles and miles of the jungle expanse, seeking after the source of the musk-scent, emitting from its own special glands.

As the stupid musk-deer, so also man is running through the endless maze of sense-objects, earning, spending, acquiring, hoarding, wasting all and striving for more, only to get himself exhausted. He ultimately dies by his own exhaustion, without getting at the joy and satisfaction he is seeking.

A child, trying to catch the head of its own shadow, moves forward and forward, but at each leap the goal too moves as far away from it, until at last it falls off

the verandah on to the court-yard. So too, man seeking a permanent joy among the impermanent things, falls into his grave. Alas !

That deer which knows that the source of the musk scent is within itself, shall no more run about and die in futile and meaningless exhaustion. The man who has recognised the Truth, that the source of all joy is within himself, will no more strive and struggle in the meaningless dust, hustle and bustle, noise and nuisance of the broadways. To him life becomes a hilarious, melodramatic scene, and not a serious tearful tragedy of his own impotence and failure.

When a *Sadhaka* with some years of unattached, selfless *Karma Upasana* gains an amount of subtlety and purity in his intellect and mind, he comes to realise the folly of his sensuous desires and yearnings. He refuses to be any longer an idiotic musk-deer or a mere child in his actions. He understands that the 'sought' is really within himself and not in the 'objects' without.

With the realisation that the seat of Joy, the goal of every act of every mortal, is within himself, the *Sadhaka*, now a fit student for Vedanta, starts understanding the greater purposes to which *Karma* and *Upasana* can be put. He discovers that he must perform the former and pursue the latter in a spirit of pure dedication, and thus earn for himself the priceless wealth of dispassion, discrimination and an irrepressible desire for an immediate liberation from the whirls of life and death.

At the very outset of the *Upanishad*, we have two important *Shanti-Mantras*, the peace invocation stanzas. Lot of significance is attached to them. The first *Shanti Mantra* says :

ॐ सहनाववतु । सह नौ भुनक्तु । सह वीर्यं करवावहै ।
तेजस्विनावधीतमस्तु मा विद्विषावहै ।

ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः ।

*Om sahanavavatu. Saha nau bhunaktu. Saha veeryam
karavavahai. Tejaswinavadheetamastu ma vidvishavahai.*

Om Shantih Shantih Shantihi

ॐ : OM, सह नौ : us both together, अवतु : may
(He) protect, सह नौ : us both together, भुनक्तु : may
(He) cause us to enjoy (the Supreme), तेजस्विनौ : being
brilliant, अवधीतं अस्तु : may we both exert together (to
discover the true inner meanings of the scriptures), मा :
never, विद्विषावहै : we may quarrel with each other.

ॐ शान्तिः : Peace be with us from heavenly wraths.

शान्तिः : Peace be with us from phenomenal cruelties.

शान्तिः : Peace be with us from bodily obstacles.

*OM. May He protect us both (the teacher and
the pupil). May He cause us both to enjoy (the Supreme).
May we both exert together (to discover the true inner
meaning of the Scriptures). May our studies be thorough
and faithful. We may never quarrel with each other.*

*"Om Peace (be with us from bodily obstacles) ; Peace
(be with us from phenomenal cruelties) ; Peace (be with us from
heavenly wraths).*

ॐ आप्यायन्तु ममाङ्गानि वाक् प्राणश्चक्षुः श्रोत्रमथो बलमिन्द्रि-
याणि च सर्वाणि सर्वे ब्रह्मोपनिषदं माहं ब्रह्म निराकुर्यां मा मा ब्रह्म
निराकरोदनिराकरणमस्तुन्निराकरणमस्तुतदात्मनि निरते य उप-
निषत्सु धर्मास्ते मयि सन्तु ते मयि सन्तु ॥

ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः ।

*Om apyayantu mamangani vak pranaschakshuhu srotra-
matho balamindriyani cha sarvani sarve Brahmapanishadam*

*maham Brahma nirakuryam ma ma Brahma nirakarodani-
rakaranamastvanirakaranam me astu tadatmani nirate ya Upani-
shatsu dharmaha te mayi santu te mayi santu.*

Om Shantih Shantih Shantihi

ॐ : OM, आप्यायन्तु : may grow vigorous, मम : my, अङ्गानि : limbs, वाक् : speech, प्राणः : vital air, चक्षुः : eye, श्रोत्रं : ear, अथ : then, बलं : strength, इन्द्रियाणि : senses, च : and, सर्वाणि : all, सर्वः : all (are), ब्रह्म : Brahman, उपनिषदः : of the Upanishads, मा : never, अहं : I, ब्रह्म : Brahman, निराकुर्याः : may deny. मा : Never, मा : me, ब्रह्म : the Brahman, निराकरोत् : may spurn, अनिराकरणं : non-denial (of the Brahman), अस्तु : may there be, अनिराकरणं : Non-denial (no spurning), मे : reposing in me, अस्तु : let there be, तत् आत्मनि : in the Atman, निरते : delighting, ये : which, उपनिषत्सु : in the Upanishads, धर्माः : virtues, आस्ते are present, मयि : in me, सन्तु : May repose.

ॐ शान्तिः : Om peace, शान्तिः : Peace, शान्तिः : Peace.

May my limbs, speech, *prana* (vital air) eye, ear, strength of all my senses grow vigorous. All (everything) is the *Brahman* of the *Upanishads*. May I never deny the *Brahman*.

May the *Brahman* never spurn me. May there be no denial of the *Brahman*. May there be no spurning by the *Brahman* ! Let all the virtues recited by the *Upanishads* repose in me delighting in the *Atman* ! May they in me repose !

OM Peace ! Peace ! Peace !

The first peace-verse gives us an idea of the team-spirit in which the teacher and the taught

approached the business of teaching and learning. How far removed it is from the modern relationship between the teacher and the taught! Today, in the higher classes, the teacher is received with hootings and howlings, paper-balls and 'stampings'. The teacher reaches the desk only to put through his job, and the students seem to be there to put in only their compulsory number of days of attendance! To the teacher, the taught has become an unavoidable and gruesome botheration; to the taught, the teachers are thorns in the otherwise soft flower-bed of their college-days!

In *Brahma Vidya*, no progress is possible without the active co-operation of the teacher and equally sincere co-operation from the taught. Hence, the special prayer. "May we never quarrel with each other." This prayer seems to be specially imperative in the study of the scripture where chances for wasteful, useless arguments can lead us into the meshes of ruinous misunderstandings and wrong-understandings of the *Sruties* at every step.

In the second Peace-chanting, we find how essential it is for a *Sadhaka* to build up a harmonious personality of all the physical, psychological and spiritual entities in him. Spiritual path is not for the broken bodies, for the constricted hearts, or for the crumbled heads. Again, it is not sufficient if we pursue only the path; we must also invoke the constant grace of the Supreme,— "May the *Brahman* never spurn me". Thus each day the Teacher and the pupil start their lessons chanting these two stanzas of peace.

ॐ केनेषितं पतति प्रेषितं मनः केन प्राणः प्रथमः प्रेति युक्तः ।
केनेषितां वाचमिमां वदन्ति चक्षुः श्रोत्रं क उ देवो मुनक्ति ॥ १ ॥

Om keneshitam patati preshitam manah kena pranah prathamah praiti yuktaha. Keneshitam vachamimam vadanti chakshuh srotram ka vu devo bunakti. (1)

ॐ : OM, केन : by whom, ईषितं : willed, पतति : falls, प्रेषितं : directed (sent), मनः : mind, केन : by whom, प्राणः : the vital air, प्रथमः : at first, प्रैति : does proceed (to function), भुक्तः : well equipped ! केन : by whom, ईषितं : commanded, वाचं : word (speech), इमां : this, वदन्ति : do (they-men) utter ? चक्षुः : eye, श्रोत्रं : ear, कः उदेवः : which divine power, भुनक्ति : directs (towards their respective objects).

(1) Disciple : By whom willed and directed does the mind light upon its objects ? Commanded by whom does the main Vital Air (*Prana*) proceed to function ? By whose will do men utter speech ? What intelligence directs the eyes and the ears (towards their respective objects) ?

The entire *Upanishad* is in a conversational style. The student of life, after living his span of experiences in the world of sense-enjoyments, has come to feel an impatience with the finite joys. He has rejected the world as a field of meaningless strife and the day-to-day material life as an endless race to catch one's own shadow. He has grown up and has discarded the world of sense-objects. He finds in it and through it a glimmer of a glory unknown and imperceptible. Thus rejecting the false, he starts his enquiry, as it were, upon himself. There he detects the sense-organs which interpret for him the outer world and helps him to "react" with men and things, with conditions and circumstances, with time and space.

As he thus enquires, he is forced to discover the Mind in him, but for which, his sense-organs cannot

contact with the outer-sense-objects, and without which he cannot live the experiences. In short he finds out that neither that assembly of limbs and sense-organs (the body), nor his mind or his intellect can, of their own accord, function without a vitalizing principle behind them all. Although he feels it within him intimately, among his own fellow-men, such a discovery is not common. Hence his confusion.

Critics who took this question of the disciple in its direct and most superficial meaning had come to conclude that the Teacher in the Upanishad had failed to answer the simple question raised by the student. Had the question been upon how the mind functions, or on the physiological functioning of the sense-organs, etc., the student would have approached some authorities on these branches of knowledge. He need not reach the sacred feet of the Rishi.

Also, had the question been merely on the biological functions and the psychological mechanism in man, the answer would not come under the scriptural literature. Scriptures of the world discuss the Eternal Reality in life, the goal of existence, the meaning and purpose of life.

It is evident from the very way he had couched his question : "*By whom willed or directed does the mind light upon its objects*", that the student is enquiring for a Factor, which lies beyond the very structure of the mind and its expressions, and which makes it at all possible for the mind to entertain feelings, and to ride on the fleet-footed steed of memory to reach, through both time and space, various objects and beings.

In themselves the sense organs and the mind-intellect equipments are all made up of matter. Insentient is matter. In a living entity these vehicles are

experienced as dynamic and vibrant with enthusiasm. What is this sacred Truth, the secret of life, in the mere presence of which matter gathers to itself a joyous radiance of brilliant achievements? How can inert matter itself act? But they are active and so what makes it active?

To resolve this confusion—the Great Riddle of Life, the disciple approaches his *Guru* enquiring if there is an independent Eternal “Director” who, by his mere “Wish”, prompts the mind to alight on the objects. If there be such a great Illuminator and Controller, Who is he? What is it? What is my relationship with the Supreme Power existing ever so secretly within me, ever vigilant ever brilliant and ever alert?

It is now the function of the *Upanishad* to point out this realisable Truth, that there is such a Divine Spark in us, which is Eternal Wisdom, the *Atman*. This Divine Entity in us is not realised by us because of our preoccupations with our Ego. Eliminate the Ego in self-surrender to the Lord, through unbroken *Iswara Smaran*, *Jap*, *Kirtan*, and by hearing, reflecting and meditating upon the great statements in the Scriptures.

May we all come to end our false little “I”—ego and come to realise the true big “I”—ego—*Sivoham*. Many have done it before. “You too shall,” is the divine optimistic assertion in the thundering message of Vedanta.

THE TEACHER AND THE TAUGHT

The most striking factor that compels one’s recognition as one opens the *Kenopanishad* is the importance of

the Teacher in *Brahma Vidya*. The great qualities of a perfect Master have been detailed in our previous discussions. He is a true Teacher who is at once well-versed in the scriptures and also well-established in Truth. As we read the very first *Mantra* in *Kena*, we see on the stage the settings of an *Ashram*, where a Master sits on his simple *Asan* beaming in the joyous ecstasy of *true* living, a divine God-man, peaceful and contented in his own knowledge of the Self. To him approaches a healthy boy clad in simple clothes carrying a bundle of fire-wood, an external symbol of the boy's internal urge to know, of his readiness to strive and eagerness to become the perfect, the Eternal.

The *Upanishad* opens with the subtle and divinely passionate queries on the nature of Truth and the means of realising It.

The *Guru* in a grave attitude of unemotional, balanced and extreme love, blesses the boy by a look of grace which beams, as it were, from a point deep within the chambers of the Mahatma's *prem*—full heart—and which seems to penetrate far into the vaults of the disciple's bosom.

Unless the *Guru* is well-versed in the scriptures, he will find it difficult and impossible to direct the gaze of the boy towards the Self, which is ever shining within him. If the *Guru* be very learned, but not one who is living constantly in full awareness of the Self, he is again incapacitated to bless the boy with the Eternal Knowledge.

The Scholar *Pundits* of Banaras are apt examples of *Gurus* who are *Srotriyas*, but are not *Brahma-Nishtas*. Once, this *Sadhoo* approached a lordly *Pundit* in Banaras and at the end of the day's lessons asked, "Punditji, the *Sastra* is insistent that once the Nescience-created

mind is annihilated, Truth is realised in its own effulgence. But can really one stop the mind through meditation". The reply of the Punditji was callously open and pointedly sincere. "My boy" said he, "if you want to know that, and really yearn to gain an initiation into the ways of living the *Upanishads*, leave Banaras and seek a Master in the Himalayas. How can we say whether the *Sastras* are true in practice? We only believe in the *Sastra-praman*. But we have not so far tried to sit at a place and try to calm the mind and enjoy even for a moment the promised bliss of the hushed-mind, and so cannot answer you or guide you".

The same question was put differently and on different occasions to different great saints of the Himalayas. On all occasions, irrespective of the persons and place, everyone of them, without a trace of hesitation, beamed out with a charming smile of joyous exclamation and roared, "It is true, It is true, It is true". These words weigh heavy, with the sincerity of their assertion and sink deep into the vaults of the aspirants' hearts.

The reserve is also true. Some of the Master men of realisation in the Himalayas, noted and recognised for their realisation, adored and worshipped for their perfections, prostrated and served for their divinity, are incapacitated to be a *Guru* to a disciple, since they have no medium with which to express their deep and subjective experiences. They stammer forth some broken words of endless import, which, as it were, fizzle out and evaporate away even before they escape their lips. Or, if at all some words fall out they convey no sense to the eager hearer. Often such Masters guide us through their Presence, their ways and their

actions, and physically they take to an *akhanda* (unbroken) vow of silence. In short, a real *Brahma-Nishta*, unless he be also a *Srotriya* (well-versed in the *Sastras*), cannot be a full teacher to all classes of students.

Such a complete *Guru* a disciple approaches in meek surrender, devotion and eagerness, ready to make any sacrifice, to serve, to purify and to realise.

Thus, in the opening scene, we have also a glimpse of the qualities of a true disciple. This question in the opening *Mantra* is an ample revelation of the psychological and spiritual man in the disciple. He is one who has faced life diligently, lived life intelligently, and has pondered for himself to realise that the value of sensuous life is hollow. He has sought for some more permanent factor to live for. The seeking has brought him to a great dispassion, born of knowledge, towards all earth—earthly attachments, and has made him sink into himself seeking for a greater and nobler Goal.

There is a general feeling that all abnormal illogical desperadoes are the only ones fit for *sannyas* and spiritual life! This declares but the wide-spread ignorance among us, regarding what spiritualism is. Only a student, as fully grown as the disciple in *Kena* or as *Nachi-Kethas* of *Kathopanishad*, is fit for *sannyas*. Such a one alone can come and claim any success in the adventure for Truth.

A strong man, who had previous experience of expeditions alone is fit to attempt scaling of Mount Everest. A man without daring, courage or an indomitable spirit of adventure, cannot be a successful mountaineer. So too, in scaling the top pinnacles of spiritual perfection, the expedition can be successfully accomplished by one who has the necessary physical, psychological and intellectual equipments. If one lacks

these necessary qualities he must stick to the lower practices prescribed as the early *Sadhana* for the *Sadhaka* till such time he has removed all the deficiencies in him.

Mainly, such deficiencies in our personalities are caused by the world's experiences themselves. The irresponsible, vain-glorious idler becomes responsible, smart and industrious when his father dies or a bank-crash leaves him penniless. So also, to each of us, measured doses of experiences are dispensed ; we have only to take it intelligently and to make the necessary adjustments within. Destiny, when received thus, becomes instead of a ruthless monster, a loving and sincere surgeon who operates to relieve pain and cure. "Bad luck" is not like a shackle upon us but is in fact a tender tie that helps the creeper in us to stand erect.

To a seeker after Truth, a *Guru* is as absolutely unavoidable as a *Siva-linga* to a *Siva* devotee. To the student of Vedanta, the *Guru* is the embodiment of his goal. Just as the *Bhakta* sees no stone, but sees his beloved *Siva* only in the *Linga*, a true disciple sees no faults in his *Guru*. To the *Sishya*, his *Guru* is nothing but pure Consciousness, Absolute Bliss, Eternal Wisdom. Anyone who can elicit such a total feeling of faith and devotion, continuously in us, is our *Guru*. You should never expect that a great *Guru* by his touch would convert you and transform you to Godhood. If you wait for such a dream-*Guru* to come to you, you shall wait in vain.

In fact, self-redemption must come ultimately from ourselves. The external props such as temples, idols, *Gurus*, etc., are all encouragements and aids. These external helps must be intelligently used by each, to his best advantage, and he should thus build up for himself the necessary inner perfections. With inner

purity and perfection, the *Sadhaka* acquires a wealth of purity and comes to be guided more and more by the pure intellect in him.

To a Vedantin, the real *Guru* is the pure intellect within. The purified, deeply aspiring mind is the disciple. This is represented for us in the unforgettable scene in our *Bagaved Gita*, where between the two opposing forces, in a chariot, the Absolute Teacher is preaching the *Gita* to the Eternal Disciple, Arjuna. When a pure mind gets aghast at the negativities arrayed against the comparatively smaller forces of positivities, in sheer despair it surrenders itself completely to the pure intellect, the Lord Krishna within. All such living Arjunas can even today hear the entire divine song in the inner *Kurukshetra* of their own bosom. Only we must make an earnest attempt and in faith wait for the critical hour when our minds glide into the voiceless state of true *Vyragya*—the true *Arjuna Sthiti*.

Thus, the most important thing is our own self-effort. In sincere *Sadhana*, purify the equipment and the *Guru* necessary for our next stage of growth *Shall* reach us. This is the Eternal Law. Hour by hour, the world about us is so ordered as to give us the necessary doses of experiences. What is necessary for the next stage of growth is always provided by the all-witnessing and the All-merciful Lord.

Shri Ramakrishna Paramahansa never went out seeking a *Guru* ; so too are all the masters of our own times. Sree Thothapuri Maharaj had to reach Dakshineswar of his own accord to instruct the Mother's perfect Son in the higher realms of meditation. Each one of you is equally sacred and precious to the Lord. When one comes to deserve a Master, he shall reach

him to guide, to help, and to enlighten.

Stick to *Sadhana*. Be Good. Be kind. Be sincere. Purify the motives. Build life upon the enduring values of Love and Mercy, Charity and Purity. Through constant remembrance of the Lord rise in spiritualism. *Gurus* shall from time to time reach such a determined, sincere seeker.

The opening *Mantra* poses a great question : " Who directs the mind, which, as it were, goes out towards its object ? " The words ' Goes out ' (*Pathati*) implies the Vedanta Theory of Perception. According to the Vedantin, the *Atma Chaitanya* riding the mind flows out through the sense-organs and reaches the ' objects ' (either sound, touch, form, smell or taste) and the mind takes the form of the ' object '. For example : when we see a pot, the mind runs out through the eye, reaches the spot where the pot is, takes the form of the pot, and when the *Chaitanya* in the pot thus embraces the *Chaitanya*-spark in our mind, we come to ' know ' that, " it is a pot ". And, it is according to this Theory of Perception that the student asks in *Kenopanishad*, " directed by whom does the mind run out..... "

What is the dynamic, vital force behind the mind that makes it vibrant with life and activity ?

SELF PURIFICATION

So far, we have seen the place of the *Upanishads* in the Vedic literature, their contents, the mode of treatment and the necessity of an interpreter or a *Guru*. We have also found the sterling qualities in the make up of a *Guru*, and we have discussed that ultimately the *Guru-Sishya-Samvada* must be within

ourselves. However full and elaborate the discussions may be outside, during the gross meeting of the teacher and the taught, they will not help the aspirant to move higher into the subtler Realms of Truth within himself.

The *Atman* in us has come to dream, as it were, of a Dream-World ; hence, our feeling of limitations and imperfections. We know subconsciously that our Real Nature is much more perfect than what we consciously feel now. It is not everyone who comes to feel this Call of the Perfect from within, which is termed as the 'Restlessness of the Soul'. This is because, to many of us, the subconscious is so dumb, that we do not realise its workings at all. When we have got an urge within ourselves to become the Perfect, we feel that we should, as it were, expand ourselves in all our capacities. This in itself is a proof that there is in our nature an Infinite Perfection waiting for its realisation and fulfilment. You may think that it is mere wool-gathering of an idle brain or an Utopian concept of an ineffectual Philosopher when you hear people saying, "Go to the *Guru* with a pure intellect and with a true urge for obtaining more of the Real Knowledge".

In fact man has come to forget his own real nature. We are now living as a separate Ego in a suffocating sphere of endless limitations. We have forgotten that we are all in fact that unpolluted, undiminished, unmodified Supreme Reality. Our strifes are all our vain attempts to become *what we are*. But we are running about aimlessly in our mad delusions after the false. We do not wait or pause, even for a moment, in our sobbing. Weeping and sobbing have become our habits. If anybody shows an Eternal True Path,

we dare not even look that way. We have become so habituated to tears and demoralised by our own negativities that we cannot cut ourselves away from our wretched habit of sobbing. We have sadly misunderstood ourselves.

If an external thing cannot be seen without light, there should be something within us also, when, with closed eyes, we say that we 'see' a pot, a chair or a pen. The mind takes the form of a *Murali Manohar* when you think of Him during your meditation ; and this is called the Krishna-Mental *Vritti*. What would then be the light that illuminates this *Vritti*? Is it not the Light of Wisdom or Intelligence? Mental *Vritti* in itself has no power to tyrannise us or mother us. Only when this dead Mental Wave is ridden by that Wisdom-Light, has it any potency to persecute us. Mind can make a victim of us only when the Mental *Vritti* is dynamised by ourselves. It is only ourselves who enable our mind to play the part of a *Samsarin*.

Stop the mind. Then there is no world *Samsara*. "Wake yourself up", that is all. And this we CAN do. That waking-up can come only when we have come to the feet of our *Guru*, with a pure heart and a bright intellect enquiring of him, "where is the Inner Self". In delving into this Truth, a Guide is absolutely essential for all but the exceptional few. From the outside, we have to take a *right-about-turn* of our gaze and turn it inwards. The Lord is certainly manifest in a *Bhakta's* meditation room at all times.

The Lord in the temple is the Emperor in his lacecoat giving his *darshan* to the populace. Each *Bhakta* gazes at the Lord standing out on His balcony, but no intimate connection between them is ever

established there. If you want to have an intimate meeting with the Lord, go to His private chamber. The greatest of *Yogis* have met the Lord in His private apartment.

Before you reach the Lord's inner apartment, you should have a certain amount of faith, loyalty and love for Him. To meet the Lord, we have to reach His bed-chamber, the Hall of Pure Consciousness : that is the Lord's Abode ! We can reach this sphere of Pure Consciousness which is the bed-chamber of Lord Himself. If we reach that Chamber we become ONE with Him. This *jumping-in* into one's own within, which is His bed-chamber, is facilitated by the *Guru* when a faithful and well-equipped student reaches his threshold and starts discussions upon the *Sruti* statements. These discussions become fruitful only when a perfect student meets a perfect Master as we have here in *Kenopanishad*.

The mind goes out and seeks the object, and takes the shape of the object. This Theory of Perception in Vedanta has already been discussed. We see the Ganges flowing to the East, and if a villager is asked why it is so, he would say "it is so, because, it had been so even at the time of my father, grand-father and great-grandfather". But if you were to ask the same question to a modern student of Science, he would say that as East happens to be a low-lying area and as 'liquids find their own level', the river flows Eastwards. Thus, you see, things can be better explained in their behaviour, when we have the true knowledge of them.

In order to gain a Godly fact or make a profit you have to live every moment vitally aware of what is happening not only outside yourself but also within

yourself. But unfortunately the instruments, our mind and intellect, are left to rust just as the great-grandfather's razor is left in the wall-shelf rusting. For generations past we have been allowing the mind and the intellect, our great instruments of knowing, understanding, feeling and thinking, to lie in neglect. Let us repair them and make use of them. It is accomplished by sincere and long *Sadhana*.

Questions such as those asked by the disciple in *Kenopanishad*—"What projects the mind out? What orders the mind to go to its objects?" will not come to the mind of an individual who has not spent many years of intelligent analytical thinking. Unless he has vitally lived the life himself, such questions will not mean anything to him. Here the Seeker has, it is clear, come to a conclusion that the physical eyes cannot see of their own accord. There must be a very subtle Power behind the eye instrument that vitalizes it. And that Power is so subtle, that our gross intellect cannot reach anywhere near it. It is something like the instruments used in miniature carving. The work calls for the finer instincts in man, a delicate touch, and intricate movements of the hands, etc., and in addition to these it needs finer instruments for the engraving. Similarly, we need a very pure mind and intellect-instrument to delve into the depths of the Truth behind the sense-organs.

Without understanding the Total Knowledge we cannot discover our Real Nature. We are now-a-days building up our life with such false values of selfishness and egoism that we fail to earn the real *Shanti*. A Total Spiritual Revolution, so to say, is what is wanted. You can bring real salvation to the world only by going into your own innermost abode and seeking the

Truth. Self-perfection alone can pave the way for world perfection. The World around us in itself is a dead matter ; we have to vitalize it by our own self-perfection. This idea should be inculcated in every educated man's mind ; this is the urgent necessity of our times, *if we were to escape the damnation we have created for ourselves with our own animalism !*

Let us tune up the noble instrument of mind given to us through a careful policing of our motives and thoughts. Let us, with such a prepared instrument, search out the Wealth of Light-Power-Wisdom that is lying in ourselves. *In our own redemption lies world redemption.*

श्रोत्रस्य श्रोत्रं मनसो मनो यद् वाचो ह वाचं स उ प्राणस्य
प्राणचक्षुषश्चक्षुरतिमुच्य धीराः प्रेत्यास्मान्लोकादमृता भवन्ति ॥ २ ॥

*Srotrasya srottram manaso mano yad vacho ha vacham sa u
pranasya pranachakshushaschakshuratimuchya dheeraha pretyas-
manlokadamruta bhavanti.*

श्रोत्रस्य : of the ear, श्रोत्रं : the ear, मनसः : of the mind, मनः : the mind, यद् वाचः : of that speech, ह वाचं : this is the speech, स उ : the very same he is, प्राणस्य : of the 'life', प्राणः : the 'life', चक्षुषः : of the eye, चक्षुः : the very eye, अतिमुच्य : having abandoned (having transcended), धीराः : the bravely wise, प्रेत्य : having gone away, अस्मात् लोकात् from this world (of senses), अमृता : Immortal, भवन्ति : become.

(2) Preceptor : it is 'the Ear of the Ear, the Mind of the Mind, the Tongue of the Tongue (Speech of the Speech) and also the Life of the Life and the Eye of the Eye. Having abandoned the sense of Self or 'I'-ness in these and rising above sense-life the wise become Immortal.

For a direct question such as "Who is the Director?" the preceptor answers that He is "the Eye of the Eye", "the Ear of the Ear", etc., because a direct definition of the Infinite and the Eternal Life principle would be impossible. To define God is to defile God.

SINCERE PURSUIT

We found earlier that to a question of the disciple, "who is that, that directs and guides the mind and the intellect", the Master answered, "It is the Mind of the Mind, etc." To such a direct question of the disciple, the Master's answer is not so direct, but appears to be couched in evasive terms.

Obviously it is so, if it be viewed from a superficial standpoint, but as we go on digesting his replies, we shall discover that there is no evasiveness on the part of the Master, but on the other hand, his solicitude towards the disciple is so great that, under the circumstances, any other answer given by the Master would have certainly caused misunderstanding in the mind of the disciple as regards its purpose. By saying that there is an "Intelligence of the Intellect" and "an Eye of the eye", "Ear of the ear", etc., it has been indicated beyond doubt that the external organs, the *Indriyas*, and the Intellect are not capable of functioning by themselves, but are motivated by a Power from within.

The Master has thus not only answered the pupil's question but at the same time has initiated him into a subtler world beyond the grosser world of the Mind and the *Indriyas*. The Master seems to imply that, unless the disciple is ready to renounce his conception

of the world outside and the sense of reality in the perception of the gross *Indriyas* and the Mind, and is ready to walk with him, hand in hand, into the *Atma-Loka*, he cannot help the disciple in his search.

The World of Truth is something not known to us. To us it is a strange region, a Land of Dreams. Really speaking, the majority of us here are listening to the "*Upanishads*" not because we have the requisite *Vairagya* to proceed on the path indicated by them, but because, it is something strange to listen to. Some of you here, while actually gaining only some idea of the *Upanishads*, will have the intellectual vanity to assume that you have become Masters of the same. Such intellectual vanity has been the stuff of all men throughout the ages and that is probably the reason why the ancient Masters have often proclaimed that the Road to Perfection is long and arduous, and the *Gnana marga*, the Path of Knowledge of the *Upanishads* is not for the many, but only for the chosen few. The *Upanishads* themselves proclaim that the way to salvation is as difficult as it is to walk over the sharp edge of a razor. Nevertheless, the idea that after all there is a greater purpose in life than mere eating, living and having a "good time", should give the average, educated person something to fall back upon, or else in the midst of his pursuits of ambition, greed and material values, he gets himself buried and destroyed. It is such men, not knowing that they are playing with fire, when they revel in false values, get disillusioned, disappointed and in despair attempt to end life in cowardly suicide. This Divine hope that there is a Reality, greater than all that he has come across in his work-a-day experience, will give him comfort, solace, encouragement and hope at severe moments of life's

poignant trials.

The Master indicates by means of his tactful answer, that the student must prepare himself and be ready for getting himself initiated into a strange land which remains sealed off from the ordinary viewpoint. It is thus to alert the student and prepare him for the great adventure of travel to the Beyond for the great Discovery of Truth, that the Master has answered the question which is seemingly no answer at all. The answer is in fact intended to be the key which opens up a new Gateway to the mind's eye of the student. It contains in germ the whole of the later development of the idea that Truth is not that which is heard, seen or understood by the *Indriyas* and the Intellect, but it is in fact the Seer or Knower Himself.

All men are endowed with the Divine Light even though they may not be aware of it. Truth need not enter into the Soul, for, it is there already, only it is lying unperceived. It is because we do not know who we are, because we are unaware of the indwelling Truth, that we have, which is generally termed as human nature, the general feeling and experience of limitations and imperfections. The *One Truth* can be known only by one's own spiritual perception. Others can only awaken the spirit and indicate the path. The experience must and for ever remain as a gift of one's own self-effort.

In the second part of the stanza, there is a clear indication that the seeker, after departing from the world, attains immortality. Many Masters have applied their minds to this point and, from their mature thought and discussion, two crystallised schools of thought have emerged : one proclaims that Perfection cannot

be achieved so long as we are living in the Physical body, and that a great mind can achieve Perfection only by shedding the mortal coil. According to this viewpoint, great men such as Veda Vyasa and others could have attained Perfection by casting off their physical bodies! This viewpoint is a very literal word-meaning of the *Upanishads*. He, who has made himself fit by self-preparation, alone can understand what *Upanishads* are.

The children of the *Sruti* search the Mother and coax the milk of love to flow. They have to nurse and suck at her breasts in love and tenderness. *Sruti* teaches you to walk: she takes you to the inner perception of your intellect first, before you can independently come to grasp the subtlest of the subtle.

When we analyse both schools of thought without prejudice, we come to the conclusion that the Vedantic standpoint of Sree Shankara is the correct and most acceptable one. Certainly, the other school has also gone into the matter with the profoundest thoroughness, but at the same time, its view appears to be a little coloured, a little prejudiced or distorted. According to this school, *Karma* is to be continued till death, and *Karma* is to be accompanied by lessons in meditation called *Upasana*, and these *Upanishads* are only *Mantras* to be meditated upon. According to them, the *Upanishads* are not a particular path of *Yoga*, but are only *Mantras* to be meditated upon. But we find Shankara's explanation to be more logical. He says that the *Guru* must be well-versed in the *Srutis*, besides being also well-established in Truth Consciousness.

Shankara argues that if what the *Sruti* says is literally true, we cannot expect to get a perfect Master or *Guru*, because as soon as the Master becomes perfect,

he has to die, for only after death he can have the pure experience of Truth. This literal interpretation, according to Shankara, is obviously wrong. That it is not the intention of the *Srutis* is supported by the very style of the *Sruties*.

Then what should be the meaning which we must understand from the *Srutis*? It is that the Master-mind delves deeper and deeper into the Land Beyond, and if he were to reach the subtler World, he must necessarily leave the grosser outer world. In order that I may have the Consciousness of the Homogeneous Truth, I must leave once for ever, at least for the time being, the mortal world of duality and egoism. Unless I surrender myself completely, I cannot reach the shores of the New Realm. In a homogeneous mass of joy, the Eternal Joy, the Bliss Absolute can there be a world sorrowful and pain-ridden? We with our vain intellect and mind start creating our own pains and sorrows in the world. Thus, we live in the world of false values and false terms, attaching ourselves to things ephemeral and finite, and despair by saying that this is the life destined for us by our creator.

Can we then come to possess the Knowledge Absolute? How have the saintly men of discrimination, after renouncing everything, acquired the Knowledge of the True? Stop all your attachments to false values. In this ever-changing world there is nothing worthwhile for us to desire for or weep for. Joys and sorrows are bound to come in human life. They are just like the two sides of the same coin.

Only through the instruments of the gross *Indriyas* we gain an impression of the gross world; then comes the feeling that we are a crowd of sorrowful creatures. But we *can* cognise the Life-source pointed out by the

Sruti Vakya, "the Mind of the Mind", etc. Only after transcending these thoughts in our intellect can we hope to have at least a psychological perfection.

It is the value which we put on the world, as we cognise it, that really matters. But the time the outer world is reflected in us, the reflection seems to be something similar to our looking at the shining bonnet of a car. The reflection of the outer world in us results in our seeing the world as ugly. It is a distortion of the Real that the imperfect mortals see. To the Seer, the world is nothing but THAT : even while the mirage is actually being "seen" every bit of it, is nothing but the desert. Once the desert is recognised, there is no more the ripples or the waves or the bubbles of the Mirage. All is *now* to him the Desert only.

Vedanta teaches us that one can reach this State of God-Consciousness, if we were to follow these processes. Even if it be only an auto-suggestion, it is certainly better than maintaining an auto-suggestion that "I am a *Samsarin*". If we persist in living in the misunderstanding of the unreal for the Real and the ephemeral for the Eternal; it is only to provide and sustain the Ego. Go to the world of the Self, because that *Land* is the Land of the Truth.

Where can this Land of Truth be? What is the world beyond the horizon? How do we come to know the world beyond? Let us consider what are generally the sources of our knowledge. Remember, in spiritual life, we are not taken away into a new world ; nor is it true that the *Guru* gives us some new powers and that with those new powers we live there. We reach Truth, by self-effort, striving consistently with our moral faculties.

How do we gain the knowledge of a thing that is

unknown in this ordinary life? For example, how do we know that there is a war in Korea now? The same processes by which we have come to know that there is a Korean War may be applied in knowing that there is a World of Perfection. We come to know of the war through the newspapers, through hearing others' opinions about it, talking about it, day in and day out, and also through disabled soldiers, who have returned from the front. Let us now see what the newspaper reports are. Newspaper reports are description of incidents and happening in the field, reported by persons who are quite unknown to us, and who, we believe, had first-hand information of the war. The brightness of the Master-Minds of the *Upanishads* are unknown to us. *Sruti* is the newspaper for the Seeker of Truth. Similarly, I hear news on the radio, *i.e.*, through an instrument. I am listening to the voices of some persons whom I have never met. Likewise, if within me I have certain thirsts and spiritual unrests, in spite of the external circumstances which ought to have made me happy and satisfied the urge within me received through my "radio", the mind makes me seek in the far off realms of thought, a Reality—a Truth.

The Vedic words which repeatedly emphasize this we do not easily believe, since, as in the case of the Korean War, it is not an external fact. We have the great text-books the *Koran*, the *Bible*, *Ramayana*, all of which cry out unanimously that 'Thou art God'. If Korean War is reported in newspapers, Truth is declared by the mystics of all Religions. Unless you renounce the present mode of living, you cannot have perfection. Perfection is only the return to our real nature and this can happen only when we voluntarily

relinquish the God-eclipsing antispiritual Ego-sense and its actions.

There is yet another source—the living Masters who are rooted in Truth Consciousness. By their very touch the soul of a man is thoroughly changed ; there are immediate signs of visible divinity. Whatever are the sources of our knowledge in our day-to-day life, they are also the very sources of knowledge to know THAT. Only, in spiritual enquiry, we must be as sincere as we are in seeking material possession and knowledge of things in this world. When in passionate sincerity we uncover the dung heap of memories and anticipations, and discard them as accumulated products of our age-long ignorance, then alone shall we return to our real nature, the *Atman*.

The Vedas are the newspapers ; *Satsang* is the club talk ; meeting *Mahatmas* is like meeting the disabled soldiers ; watching the joy of Divine Life in the faces of the new converts is listening to political discussions. All the day-to-day sources of world-knowledge can be used in our enquiry into the World-of-Perfection.

CHAINS THAT SHACKLE

Recently, a black-marketer left Delhi by train for Madras. Noticing that this merchant had a lot of cash on his person, another person, a rogue posing as a big wholesale merchant, also started by the same train. He pretended to hold good business connections with the various merchants and talked in terms of lakhs and millions to the former. The first night he searched the belongings of the genuine merchant with a view to looting all his cash. But, for all his efficient search, the rogue could not find any trace of the fat

purse of the Delhi merchant. Next morning, the merchant was actually seen counting his wad of notes, as if nothing happened. Satisfied, the merchant thrust the purse into his coat-pocket. The rogue wondered where the merchant had concealed the purse during the night. The second night too was spent in a vain attempt to get at the treasure. Again, in the early hours of the third morning, as the rogue emerged out of the toilet-cabin, he saw the merchant counting his wad of money. Again, he tried the third night, but again he met with disappointment. Never before did his deft fingers know such disastrous failure! When they alighted in Madras, they saluted each other and parted. The rogue could not control himself and so he asked the merchant where he kept the bundle of money. The latter replied that he had been keeping the money under the very pillow of the rogue!

Just like that, friends, Vedanta says that Real Bliss is within ourselves, just under our own very noses. Yet in our ignorance we search for it among the objects of the world plodding on and on endlessly through *Samsar*. Truth is so near that we cannot see it for ourselves.

Going back for a moment to the opening two *Mantras* of this Upanishad, we find that the student asked a direct question to which the teacher seems to give a not too direct an answer. It is the "*Eye of the eye*", the "*Ear of the ear*"—this appears to be not an entirely satisfactory definition, this is begging the problem. Why not the Teacher answer the question directly? Such a doubt must have been seen expressed in the eyes of the disciple, and so the Teacher, here in the following stanza, explains how the theme cannot be expressed better in language. Why?

न तत्र चक्षुर्गच्छति न वाग् गच्छति नो मनो न विदो न
विजानीमो यथैतदनुशिष्यात् । अन्यदेव तद् विदितादथो अविदिता-
दधि । इति शुश्रुम पूर्वेषां येनस्तद्व्याचक्षिरे ॥ ३ ॥

*Na tatra chakshurgachchati na vag gachchati no mano
na vidmo na vijaneemo yathaitadanusishyat. Anyadeva tad
viditadatho aviditadadhi. Iti susruma poorvesham yenastadvya-
chachakshire.*

न : never, तत्र : there, चक्षुः : eye, गच्छति : goes,
न : nor, वाक् : speech, गच्छति : goes, न : never, मनः :
the mind, न : never, विदः : do we know, न : never,
विजानीमः : do we know perfectly, यथा एतद् : how it,
अनुशिष्यात् : can be instructed, अन्यत् एव : very distinct,
तद् : That is, विदितात् : from the known, अथ then,
अविदितात् : from the unknown, अधि : extremely (dis-
tinct), इति : thus, शुश्रुम : we have heard, पूर्वेषां : from
the ancestors, ये : who, नः : to us, तद् : That व्याचक्षिरे :
perfect stated (taught us).

(3) The eye does not go there, nor speech, nor mind.
We do not know That. We do not know how to instruct
one about It. It is distinct from the *known* and above
the *unknown*. We have heard it, so stated the preceptors
who taught us That.

Eyes cannot reach there. It is plain where
“Consciousness” resides ; it is the very Consciousness
that make it possible for the eyes to see ; it is the Light
or the Truth with which the eye sees things ; and it is
the Seer behind the eye, just as the observer in the
observatory sitting peering into the eye-piece of the
telescope. The telescope by itself cannot see, but it is
the man behind the telescope who sees. Similarly,
it is the *Atman* that sees or rather the Seer in us, the

Real Eye that sees. In utter misunderstanding of this Truth, we boast that we are the 'eyes' and we think that through this eye we can gain knowledge, *i.e.*, through the five *Indriyas* we can gain all the knowledge. All the time we know not what are the *Indriyas* within us. When by a certain discipline of the outer *Indriyas* we control the mind, the mind generates a certain power, now latent in us, called *intuition*, and only with this wisdom-eye can we experience the Truth.

To the question, "What is that which makes the mind go out?" the answer given by the *Guru* is "the Mind of the Mind". If I, for example, ask a certain youth, who he is, he would naturally answer that he is the son of so-and-so. But if the youth has some standing, some so-called position in life, he would automatically say that he is the Sub-Collector of Ramnad or some such designation. Likewise, in our world of conscious living, we know the eye as the seeing instrument. But the *Guru* says the "Eye of the Eye" sees, "the Ear of the Ear" hears, etc., etc.

The Ear of the Ear cannot be the Ear itself just as Mr. Dorai, son of Sri Ram cannot be Sri Ram himself. Thus, only some indication of what Truth is, is given to the Student by the *Guru* in this seemingly indirect answer. It is also a fact that the *Atman* is the theme or the Subject. It is not a thing with quality or actions, and hence *cannot be a substance*. Naturally the usual explanatory methods by which we generally understand other things are not available in *Brahma-vidya*.

"What is a *Substance*?" Substance is a finite thing having certain qualities. So, if the *Atman* has any quality, it should be a finite thing and naturally it becomes a *substance*. A *substance* must be different

from me, a thing which I can perceive through my finite sense-organs. So, when we say that Truth is beyond the grasp of the *Indriyas*, it is equivalent to saying that it is a Factor without any qualities. It is the Eternal Divine Presence without qualities.

When a thing is thus beyond all qualities, how can a *Guru* explain it to the *Sishya* in specific terms as such-and-such-a-thing. In olden times, Bhasmasura, after much *Tapas*, got the power from Lord Siva to reduce all that he touched to ashes. Then in the end he met with his own destruction when he tried to destroy Lord Siva Himself. Our Intellect is a Bhasmasura. Mind and Intellect cannot gain a knowledge of the homogeneous. Let us analyse the processes that take place when I say that a certain thing is black. Firstly my eyes observe and the intellect says, from its previous memorised experiences, that it is black in colour. Then his blackness recognised as itself is added on to the object and we know that it is black. Thus, observation, classification and codification are the processes adopted by the intellect and mind. Like Bhasmasura the moment, the intellect reaches to know a thing, it is dissected and analysed into its component parts. Thus the Truth, which is ONE cannot but disperse the beam of light. Only a lens can converge a pencil of rays into ONE point.

This intellect, even when it reaches the higher planes of thought, can only understand the qualities. It can live and act only in terms of its own experiences gained previously through the *Indriyas*. The mind and intellect are no doubt efficient in the laboratory, but they are to be considered as shoes and are to be kept away as we enter the higher realms of Religion and Truth. We should develop Intuition to glide

into the Realm of Pure Consciousness. Intuition is not to be created all afresh. It is there within ourselves. As we go on analysing the values of things and as we go on thinking on *Sruti Vakya*, we develop this nature. Only by "listening" or "hearing" can we learn Vedanta. You will feel in course of time what a better texture of joy you are getting from Vedanta *Sravanam*. It is not the run-away from life that can start the noble adventure of the Eternal Truth.

Neither eyes nor any of our sense-organs can reach our Self. We, therefore, do not know how to instruct about the Self to others. It is different from what is *known* and it is beyond what is unknown. The only way then to explain Truth is through *Agama*. We often come across instances where the ancient *Rishis* themselves proclaimed and defined Truth to their students, saying, "This is what our *Guru* had taught us". Our vehicle of flight to the higher realms of thought is not the intellect but intuition. The Eternal Truth finally experienced by all the Saints during *Samadhi* is the same. The routes may be different, and yet the place or destination, the pilgrimage or the Temple, is one and the same for all pilgrims. *Atma-Anubhava* of *Samadhi* is the same, though the explanation of the experience given by the Seers may differ. You should take in and learn to appreciate every bit of religious knowledge, because to a Vedantin all Religions are welcome. If you have got the urge to reach the Truth, you are justified in doing anything that contributes to your progress and realisation.

As knowledge experienced by the five *Indriyas* alone can be expressed in words, I cannot explain the Truth, which is lived through intuition, to you. When the theme for expression belongs to the plane of sense-

experience, we can explain it away in terms of its qualifications, species, manifestations, etc. Neither the sense-organs nor the organs of action can reach the Supreme Reality, the *Atman*. In order that the *Indriyas* can perceive, there must be an object that could be perceived as other than the sense-organs. For instance, I can see my body, because the body is an object and I am the Seer separate from it. In the case of the Moon in the sky, the Seer in you sees it as an object. When it is nearer you say "I am happy". You are seeing that mental-*Vritti* within yourself. Similarly, you see the Seer, who is the Truth, and only the subtler activities of the mind can see the Truth. When we reach the Goal, there is no language to explain that transcendent Experience.

There is an ocean of difference between what is *known* and what is *to be realised*. When it is said, it is beyond known, it cannot be cognised by the five *Indriyas*, as all the *known* are known only through the sense-organs.

THE SEER

A wealth of meaning is compressed into this *Mantra* especially in its words "*Anyadeva Ishta Vidadadho Aviditadadhi*". (That is verily different from the Known as also from the Unknown.) The *Upanishad Mantras* do not easily become familiar with us. They are rather shy and a lot of courting alone can win their confidence and encourage them to lift their veils and give their courtiers the "Vision" of Divine Beauty.

Hasty courtiers fail. Often the modern readers rush into the harem and frighten these beautiful ladies into indignation and reserve. We invariably reach

the *Upanishads* with our own prejudices. We approach the *Mantras* with a view to argue and criticise. Naturally, we are repelled by their persistent reserve. But, if we were to approach the *Sruti* in devotion and love, and coax her blessings with our sympathetic tenderness for her and eagerness to know her, she will make her courtiers soar into realms of *Pure Bliss*.

The passage now under discussion, "Truth is Beyond the Known and the Unknown", is a fit example of the above. To the impatient, matter-of-fact, business-like attitude of approach, this statement has no beauty to reveal. A pure intellectual approach is not the technique of love! Love-making is an intelligent use of the flowing heart sparkling in sincere Love. We shall therefore try to discover its deeper meaning by making love to the *Mantra* and try to win her.

The *Known* (*Viditam*) means the entire objective phenomenal world which can be perceived through the sense-organs, mind and intellect. Since we have found already that these are but agents of Truth, mere inert instrument of Pure Knowledge, they in themselves cannot perceive the *Known* without the *Perceiver* behind them. The *Seer* or the *Perceiver* cannot be perceived through the very instruments of perception. So then, the *Knower* is not the *Known*, but is beyond the *Known*. When we look at the Moon, say, we see the Moon but the *Seer* of the Moon is not the Moon.

Again, the *Perceiver* cannot be the *Unknown*. When the teacher said that Truth is beyond the *Known*, naturally, the student is apt to conclude that Truth then must be an *Unknown* entity. To remove this possible misunderstanding in the disciple that Truth is a factor 'Unknown and the Unknowable' (as Kant claims it to be in the West), and to assert that It is a

positive factor beyond the Unknown also, the *Sruti* insists "*Aviditadadhi*"—"Above the Unknown".

This term "Above the Unknown" seems to be very tricky and intriguing only to one who is not ready to sit up and ponder over it. To an intellectual idler alone, the term is hollow and mysterious. It is with such "safe locks" in the *Upanishad Mantras* that the ancient seers protected and preserved the *Brahmavidya*, and the Divine glory of it is in the fact that while they are safety-doors against intruders, they are also training grounds for the worthy ones to become fit for the Experience in the Sanctum Sanctorum. We shall thus sympathise rather than laugh at that child of the West who had criticised the Vedas to be "mere babblings of a humanity at childhood!" What then is the meaning of the Factor "*Above the Unknown*". Shankara in his commentary explains the word "Above" as "Something other than", for, he argues where we say 'a bird on the rails', the bird is "something other than the rails" indeed!

Let me try to help you to understand this by an example. Do you know the date of birth of Asoka? No! No! No! will be your immediate answer. Please try to understand exactly what happens, in each one of you, as you say that you do not know. At the question, what is the date of birth of Asoka, each of you started seeking for this information in the memory-store, and finding that it is not there, cried out "No, I don't know". Then your mind declared, "I don't know". We know this to be mental-*Vritti*, that is, each of us had a *Positive knowledge* of the *Negative idea* "I don't know". In short, you knew that "You don't know". It is clear that a *Positive Illuminating factor* illumined for you this negative idea. That

factor is Truth, and certainly it is above and so “different from”, the *negative Unknown Idea illumined*. The Sun illumines things other than himself; He being of the nature of light, we are not right when we say that he illuminates himself. Fire illuminates and burns other substances, but not itself.

If the Absolute Eternal Truth is beyond the *Known* and the *Unknown*, what else can it be but the *Knower* himself. The *Knower* knows the *Known* and It equally knows the *Unknown* also. That Eternal Knower is the Self, the *Atman*.

Even this explanation of Truth is not in any sense of the term a satisfactory definition. The great Seer in *Kenopanishad* is specially emphasising that His statement “Beyond the *Known* or *Unknown*” is a teaching he has heard from his *Guru*—*Iti susruma poorvesham*..... The emphasis on *Agama*-proof* is a constant factor met with in Vedanta. Absolute Truth is not available for us through direct perception of It with the sense-organs, mind or intellect. Nor can we deduce or infer Truth. No proof is available in this wondrous field of Self-enquiry. The only proof is *Agama*, the traditional knowledge, repeated, endorsed and given out to their respective disciples by a long and unbroken line of teachers. And, hence the Master in *Kenopanishad*, defines *Truth*, in terms of the *Agama*, as beyond the *known* and the *unknown*. “*Iti susruma poorvesham*” meaning, “so have we heard from the ancient.”

यद्वाचानभ्युदितं येन वागभ्युद्यते । तदेव ब्रह्मत्वं विद्धि नेदं
यदिदमुपासते ॥ ४ ॥

Yadvachanabhyuditam yena vagabhyudyate. Tadeva Brahmatvam viddhi nedam yadidamupasate.

* The traditional knowledge given out during repeated generations by the Master to their Disciples.

यद् : that which (was), वाचा : by the speech, अनम्युदितं : not revealed, येन : by which, वाक् : speech, अम्युद्यते : reveals (itself), तत् एव : That alone, ब्रह्मत्वं : the State of Brahman, विद्धि : know, न इदं : not this, यत् : that, इदं : this (here), उपासते : worships.

(4) What speech cannot reveal, but what reveals speech, know THAT alone as *Brahman* and not this that people worship here.

According to Shankara, 'speech' is not only the instrument of speech but also the letters and the accepted order (and number) in which they must be pronounced to produce each word by the organ of speech. The power of speech is not in the words or in the instrument of utterance. It is a manifestation of the Eternal Self, the *Atma-chaitanya* in us. The dynamic Life-Centre in us, because of which speech is being uttered while we are "alive", and in the absence of which speech ends, is the *Atman*. Again though words are uttered because of the *Chaitanya*, words cannot themselves explain It. Just as fire can burn and illumine other things, but does not consume or lit up itself, so too, speech uttered as a manifestation of Truth, cannot itself illuminate Truth. "*Tat*" (the *Atma-chaitanya*). *Eva*—alone: this word *alone* has a very deep significance). Our attempts to explain or indicate Truth can be only of a conditioned *Atman*. We cannot indicate the pure Truth as such, it being without name or form. Electricity as such cannot be explained to a layman; the easiest way would be to explain to him the filament and the glass encasement of the lit-up bulb, then indicate to him that "Electricity is THAT power running uniformly all over the city-circuit and which on reaching

the filament manifests as light". Now the layman, must learn to understand that "current in that nameless and formless power without any reference to the bulb, the filament or the light even". So too, here, though the *Guru* indicates to the aspirant that Truth is "that Life-Centre which manifests as the power of sight in the eye, the power of hearing in the ear, the power of speech in the tongue, etc.", he is equally anxious to warn the disciple that "the Absolute Truth is *that power* which is in no way associated with any of its seeming conditionings, such as the ear, eye, mind, etc.". To indicate the Pure Self, without Its conditionings, in Itself as the Absolute All-Pervading Truth, we have in the *Sruti* the emphatic and divinely powerful word *Eva*, meaning 'alone' in "Know That *alone* as *Brahman*".

Though the enquiry held was into the Dynamic Factor, presiding over the evident functions of life in the student's own physical body, the advice of the Teacher ends by a vehement assertion: "know THAT alone to be *Brahman*". Here, it is significant, that the Scripture encourages by an unequivocal declaration that the Self, so discriminated and experienced, is the Absolute All-Pervading Pure Existence, the Supreme Truth. This is not in any sense a self-contradicting statement. This is a Vedāntic Truth, that the Self in us, at the time of its experiencing, is realised as the Self of All, the Eternal, Unconditioned Substratum for the Supreme *Brahman*.

That the Self realised within is the All-Pervading Absolute Self was discussed by us during our earlier lectures. You must be remembering how we proved the *actual* oneness of the room-space with the all-pervading space. This room-space can come to claim

an identity of its own only with reference to the four walls of the room. Thus, a Master who has experienced the Self and thereby fulfilled the Vedantic realisation, must necessarily experience the Oneness of the Absolute Truth.

By stating that "That alone is *Brahman*", *Sruti* is not falling into an abrupt silence. Had she done so, a doubt would have risen in the mind of her children : "What about these that we see? What about Rama, Krishna, Siva, etc., the team of *Ishta Devatas*?" By a plain and open denial, she sweeps clean all possible doubts when she asserts : "*Na idam yaditamupasate*" meaning, "Not this that you worship".

Whatever we might express by the pronoun "this" must be an object "*Known*"; that is, it must be an object perceived by any one of our sense-organs, mind or intellect. That which is perceived cannot be the *Perceiver* and what we are seeking is the *One* who is behind all the instruments of human cognition. All that we can express as "this" must necessarily be only a conditioned *Atman*. No *reflection* of the Sun can be the *true* Sun; similarly, everything cognised as "this" is *not-Atman* and the *not-Atman* is not, and can never be the Eternal Truth. The Master is here, by a positive assertion, removing every trace of doubt in the disciple who is yet apt to feel, under the earlier *Bhakti Sadhana*-impressions, that Truth is the Lord conditioned by His name and form.

This portion of the *Mantra* should not be misused to deny idol-worship or laugh down the *Bhakti Marga*. The one who has evolved into higher stages of Perfection through *Keertan*, *Tapa*, *Dhyana*, etc., is here initiated into a still higher camp in the pilgrimage to the Pinnacle of Truth. The anxiety of Mother *Sruti* is not to damn

the aspirant, but to lovingly stretch out a helping hand to pull him up nearer to his Spiritual Goal. The gracious *Rishi* of the *Upanishad* is helping the disciple to go beyond the famous *Coronation picture of Sree Ramachandra* into the Ocean of *Rama Tattwa* behind His Golden Throne. Through *Rama* to *Rama-Tattwa* ; through *Krishna* to *Krishna-Tattwa* : through names and forms to the *Beyond* !

The *Upanishad* helps the Devotee to merge into the very Essence of the Beloved of his Heart, the Lord. Vedanta accomplishes a nuptial ceremony between the *Bhakta* and his *Ishta*. The fulfilment of all *Sadhana* cannot be reached when the *Sadhaka* realises that the Lord alone exists and even the I-ness and My-ness are nothing but superimpositions and dream-stuff playing their games of self-delusion.

“This can be directly realised and subjectively lived by every ‘Love-seeker’, if his devotion be deep and ardent enough,” is the repeated assertion of the Religion of Vedanta. Where other Religions seem to end, there the Golden Avenue of Joy, the Vedanta, starts. Man is but God, as God alone is True, everything else is false. Vedanta guides and encourages, leads and pushes us out of our painful *Samsar*-dream into the joyous realisation of our wakeful personality.

Vedanta is no annihilator of *Bhakti*. No *Bhakta* can be a true one unless he be a Vedantin ; and no Vedantin is perfect unless he be a lover of the Lord. “Philosophy without love is madness ; Love without philosophy is superstition.” This has been the tacit and the explicit declarations of all great *Acharyas* even down to our own era. Let us not forget this great fact.

MIND IS MAN

What is the stuff of the mind? How many of you have thought over it? Even to create good character in you, you must know what the mind is. No doubt it is very difficult to understand what the mind is, but with our intellectual perception, the mind is capable of being explained to some extent by means of parallel stories and illustrations. The mind has been explained in our *Sastras* in different ways. According to one definition, the mind is nothing but a bundle of "*Vasanas*" (impressions). To the modern psychologist, the mind is nothing but temperament. One of the explanations given by Hindu *Sastras* to understand the mind, is by likening it to the River Ganges.

Now what is a river? The river is not a mere column of water between two banks. It is not water stagnant within the bunds. The essence of a river is in the *incessant flow of water* from its source to its end. Similarly, the mind is the *unceasing flow of our thoughts*. Thoughts are the manifestations of the mind. When thoughts are "flowing" at a great speed, one following the other unceasingly, that *flow of thought* is called the "Mind". If you can stop that *flow*, there is no more the mind.

Again, take the illustration of a lighted *Agarbathi* (Jaw-stick) rotated by the hand. One gets the illusion of a golden, effulgent ring, but in reality the circle or ring has no existence apart from the whirling movement of the glowing *Agarbathi*. Stop the movement and there is no more the golden circle!

The delusion of a shining brilliant ring of gold was given rise to, because at every movement the lighted point was moving and occupying as it were all the

points in the circle. But, to the mind of an innocent child, the golden ring is something absolutely real, solid and luminous. Similarly, we, in our poverty of intelligence, petty human desires, selfishness and misunderstandings, instead of realising the priceless heritage the great Masters have given to us in the shape of *Vedas*, the golden keys to the Treasure-Houses of Hinduism, waste our life in chasing the shadow for the substance, and in running about aimlessly. Spiritually starved, we have become a nation of proud Hindus, making a mockery of Hinduism.

Sit up! Awake! Prove yourself worthy of the glorious heritage. Unlock the doors of the wonderful Treasure-House. Make India regain her great Spiritual Empire. "Let us be Hindus!!"

If we explain that the mind is the *incessant flow* of thoughts, to cognise that flow of thinking, we need a light. We can read a paper in daytime because there is sunlight. The writing on the paper is not self-luminous. Where there is no light, the inert thing cannot be seen. Similarly, thought is not also self-effulgent. We can see the flow of thoughts only when we close our eyes and not while they are open.

Subtler than the physical body are thoughts, and the *flow of thoughts*, i.e., the mind, is illumined for us by the intelligence of the intellect. Thoughts, which are the products of the mind, seem to possess a vitality greater than the body and while most of us would with comparative ease feel convinced that the body cannot be real, everlasting or true, we would not be able to discard the mind so easily. Being nearer to the Centre, the *Atman*, it has an aura, a glory and a vitality, although only reflected, having all the

appearance of the Real.

The *Atma-Prabhav* is transmitted to the mind and in that glory, it functions. It is this light that illumines the mind and gives it a semblance of Reality. When thoughts are illumined for us, we have the understanding of the thoughts. The existence of a state of worry, anxiety or happiness in our mind is understood by us under the illumination of the intelligence of the intellect. That we are living so very near the Centre of Truth, is not obvious to us. For, in the secret chambers of the very obvious, resides the Lord. Because it is so evident, we invariably fail to understand it.

The light that illuminates the thought current in us is called the 'Chit'. So then, the thought current is the mind and the mind has got an existence because of the wondrous Light that illuminates it. How can it reflect for you the light "SUPREME"? The *Atman* (*Chaitanya*) within illuminates the mind and gives out a semblance of light, and it is with the help of this light that it is moving about. The mind gets nearer to reality than our physical body can, through its sense-organs.

But we, in our preoccupations with life, refuse to look into the within—the Centre of Light, the Light of Truth—but fix our gaze turned ever outwards! We attach much value to things—material, gross and physical. We miss the Divine Spark and see only the reflected beam! We applaud a modern scientist, a psychologist, who has thrown some light as to the secrets of the psychical elements or the superficial human characteristics. If reflected light can give so much glory, then what would be the condition and glory of one who is the very embodiment of Truth.

THE CENTRE OF THE CENTRE ?

यन्मनसा न मनुते येनाहुर्मनो मतम् । तदेव ब्रह्मत्वं विद्धि नेदं
यदिदमुपासते ॥ ५ ॥

*Yanmanasa na manute yenahurmano matam. Tadeva
Brahmatwam viddhi nedam yadidamupasate.*

यत् : that which, मनसा : by the mind, न : never,
मनुते : (one) can never feel, येन : because of which,
आहुः : (they) say, मनः मतं : mind is called by its name,
तत् एव : That alone, ब्रह्मत्वं : the State of Brahman,
विद्धि : know, न इदं : not this, यत् : that, इदं : this (here),
उपासते : (man) worships.

(5) What one cannot feel with the mind, but because of which they say that the mind feels.....know That alone as *Brahman* and not this which people do worship here.

As a result of self-forgetfulness, the Supreme Spiritual Centre seemingly comes to experience and feel for Itself a superimposed sense of limitation and the consequent confusions. This very "ignorance of the Self", expressed in the intellectual zone, is the Self-veiling negative thoughts (*Avarana*) and the same ignorance actively functioning in the mental arena gives rise to the stormy insurgence of mental agitations called *Vikshepa*. Identifying ourselves with this mind and intellect in us—*veiling and agitations*—we come to recognise that the mind is the potent factor in us and that the glory of man is entirely due to his intellectual capacities.

The sharp intellect of the *Rishis*, dissecting and observing life, to discover its Ultimate Reality, did not

spare even man. Like a scientist of today, who would in his appetite for knowledge, dissect open an innocent guinea-pig merely to observe the behaviour of its liver, the great *Rishis* also stripped naked the personality of man to observe the core of vitality in him. Thus, they discovered that the belief in the potency of the mind is but a transferred glory experienced in the feeling-and-thinking instruments in man. Mind in itself, being but a product of food (matter), cannot have as such any life-potencies. If the mind looks as though it is alive and is vibrant with consciousness, its vital activity is because of its contact with the Source of Life—the Self.

The labour of the teacher in *Kenopanishad* is to arrest the disciple's attention from its usual channels of superstitious beliefs and direct them towards a nobler line of thinking by which he could independently become aware of his own Real Nature. Thus, here, in this stanza, the Master says that the Principle of Reality cannot be cognized by the perceptions of the mind but, at the same time, all the mind's "capacities to perceive things" can function only when the mind is presided over by the Life Aspect in it.

A bulb has no light of its own but it becomes incandescent when it is energised by the current. Thus, the current is that which makes the filament in the bulb glow ; but at the same time the illumination in the bulb is not itself the current. Similarly here, the mind cannot of its own accord feel spirituality, but all the feelings of the mind are possible only because of its contact with the Spirit.

We have already seen how a driver cannot get himself run over by the very same car he is driving. The moment the driver comes in front of the car,

since it has no independent movement of its own, the car stops ! Similarly, when the mind takes a "right-about-turn" to face the Conscious-Principle, it becomes naturally incapable of perceiving anything. An inert pot cannot perceive anything that is happening around it. Similarly, bereft of the Spirit, the mind has only as much power of perception as a pot in the kitchen !

During *Upasana* (devotion), the devotee is apt to feel that his mental vision of the Lord is the Supreme Reality. This has been absolutely contradicted in the uncompromising and clear statements of the *Upanishad*. A devotee may come to 'see' or he may 'feel' that he is seeing, in an ecstatic experience, visions of Rama or Krishna. Whether it be the inner vision of a *Devata* or the outer vision of a cinema star, the mental vision is only a "vision", and it cannot be of the Supreme Reality. The *Rishi* here says, "That alone is *Brahman*" by which the mind comes to perceive things which of its own accord cannot perceive and "not that which you worship here in the world".

Here, it must be carefully noted, that the intentions of the *Rishis* are not the same as the intentions of the atheists. They are not here crying down the faith of people in *Upasana* and worship. It is said here with a sacred intention of shaking the spiritual seeker from the *Sadhana*-rut into which the wheels of his progress have entered and have got themselves jammed ! They are to be hauled out with a jerk, and thus, there is no severity at all in this statement, if one correctly understands the purport and intentions of the Master.

The Life-Centre in us, in the presence of which the mind seems to be moving about, and because of which it has got an existence, is the Total Centre of

All, the Centre of Centre that vitalises you and me, the ' CHAITANYA ' that would be vitalising your children and grandchildren, the Total Truth—*Brahman*.

The mind being but the unceasing flow of thoughts, the cessation of thoughts bring about the Knowledge of the Power behind the mind. The process of restricting the area over which our thoughts roam about can be achieved by regular and continuous practice of *Japa*, *Dhyana*, etc. This process of limiting our thoughts by concentrating them in *Japa*, etc., helps in transforming even our character. We are the product of our thoughts. What we think we become. The nobler our thoughts, the nobler we become.

So *Japa* and *Dhyana* serve the dual purpose of limiting thoughts and changing our nature. In the course of our *Sadhana*, mind gets gradually restricted to the form of Joy, the Lord. From the concentration of the entire height of the Lord's Form, we come to fix our concentration more and more upon that divinely sweet smile on the lips of the Lord. Ultimately, even the form loses its meaning and significance for the *Sadhak*, when he realises the Bliss in its purest form, without a physical form, and without any lip or smile. In the maturity of practice, in the knowledge that the Bliss is that in which he is enveloped and pervaded, he cries out his vivid intuitive experience " I AM THAT ".

The goal of the seeker after Truth is BLISS ABSOLUTE and Vedanta shows the path to reach this goal. Vedanta is nothing if it is not a universal Religion. It will make a Hindu a better Hindu, a Christian a better Christian, a Mohamedan a better Mohamedan. When we dive deeper and deeper, we realise that our real nature is BLISS ABSOLUTE. Let us surrender to the

LORD, and understand Him to be but the Real Self in us. When we have realised the Self, we have realised every deity known, every prophet born, every Seer living.

A CAUTION

We have reviewed the First Chapter of this Great *KENOPANISHAD*. We saw therein that the teacher was explaining to the disciple the Source of All Life living within ourselves, called the *Atman*. Although you must have noticed that the Master has been referring to one or the other of the sources of knowledge (the *Indriyas*) and concluding that the sense-organs function because of the *Chaitanya* or the *Atman* in us, he had earlier said that it is the "Eye of the Eye", "the Ear of the Ear", "the Mind of the Mind", etc., and in the concluding stanza he had further elucidated that It is That "which the eye sees not, but with which the eye sees". It is that "which one breathes not but by which one breathes". It is that "which the mind cannot reach but because of which the mind functions". Thus, the Master has in so many different ways explained to us this Centre of Centre, the *Atman*, to be the source of All Knowledge, and this explanation has always been with reference to the various sources of knowledge that we are blessed with. He has never told us directly that such and such is Knowledge or that *this* is the Soul. He has only explained all the circumstances to make it circumstantially evident that it is the Self. The eye that sees, the breath that breathes, the ear that hears, the tongue that tastes, etc. When closely observed, all are found to be impotent without an independent Life-Force in them, and,

therefore, there must be a Source of Life which alone can vitalise them to perform their allotted functions.

यत् चक्षुषा न पश्यति येन चक्षूंषि पश्यति । तदेव ब्रह्मत्वं विद्धि नेदं यदिदमुपासते ॥ ६ ॥

*Yat chakshusha na pasyati yena chakshoomshi, pasyati.
Tadeva Brahmatvam viddhi nedam yadidamupasate*

यत् : that which, चक्षुषा : through the eye, न : never, पश्यति : (one) sees, येन : by which, चक्षूंषि : the eyes, पश्यति : (one) sees, तत् एव : That alone, ब्रह्मत्वं : the State of Brahman, विद्धि : know, न इदं : not this, यत् : (this) here, (जनः) उपासते : (man) worships.

(6) What cannot be seen by the eye, but by which the eyes are able to see.....know That alone as Brahman and not this which people do worship here.

The idea expressed in the previous stanza is again repeated here taking the example of the eye perceiving its forms and colours in the outer world of objects. The eyes do not see ; the eye is only the instrument of seeing. The " Seer in the eye " must be something different from eye itself and the Conscious Principle that works behind the eye is the Eternal Subject, which is the fundamental Truth sought by the Vedantic Seeker.

यत् श्रोत्रेण न शृणोति येन श्रोत्रमिदं श्रुतम् । तदेव ब्रह्मत्वं विद्धि नेदं यदिदमुपासते ॥ ७ ॥

Yat srotrena na srinoti yena srotramidam srutam. Tadeva Brahmatvam viddhi nedam yadidamupasate.

यत् : that which, श्रोत्रेण : through the ear, न : never, शृणोति : (one) hears, येन : that because of which, श्रोत्रं :

ear, इदं : this, श्रुतं : is being heard, तत् एव : That alone, ब्रह्मत्वं : the State of Brahman, विद्धि : know, न इदं : not that, यत् : that, इदं : (here) this, उपासते : (one) worships.

(7) What cannot be heard by the ear, but by which the ears are able to hear.....know That as *Brahman* and not this which people here do worship.

The same old idea, that behind the finite organs of the body, mind and intellect, there is a Conscious Principle, has been more and more brought home to the student's intellectual appreciation by yet another analogy. *Brahman* directs the ear towards its object, the sound. A dead man's ear cannot register any of the finite sounds, since the ear in itself is not the hearer. A gramophone in itself can enjoy no music !

The rest is all as we had explained before in the earlier stanza.

यत्प्राणेन न प्राणिति येन प्राणः प्रणीयते । तदेव ब्रह्मत्वं विद्धि
नेदं यदिदमुपासते ॥ ८ ॥

Yat pranena na praniti yena pranah Praneeyate. Tadeva Brahmatwam viddhi nedam yadidamupasate.

यत् : that which, प्राणेन : by the vital air, न : never, प्राणिति : breathes, येन : That because of which, प्राणः : the very vital air, प्रणीयते : is breathed. तत् एव : That alone, ब्रह्मत्वं : the State of Brahman, विद्धि : know, न इदं : not this, यत् : that, इदं : this (here), उपासते : (man) worships.

(8) That which one breathes not with his breath, but by which breath is breathed.....know That to be *Brahman* and not this which people do worship here.

In the last of the series of the examples taken from the body organizations by the great *Rishis*, here we have again an explanation of how the matter envelopments, in themselves impotent and lifeless, generally come to exhibit a semblance of life, because of their contact with the Spark of Life in the person and which is known in Vedantic philosophy as the *Atman*.

A piece of iron has not got any heat-potency of its own. But when the piece of iron comes in contact with fire, it begins glowing, as though it were a piece of kindling fire. If a piece of iron happens to be very hot, we know from our experience and knowledge, that its heat is derived during its contact with fire. Heat is not the nature of the iron-bar. Similarly, life is not the quality or the property of the sense-organs. The *Indriyas* can cognise their respective objects only when there is the *Chaitanya* behind them vitalising it. Thus it is only when the Life Source in us is connected with the sense-organs that they seem to be alive.

A piece of wire, in its own nature, has no capacity to give us any "shock"; and if a piece of wire does so, it cannot be a mere wire, but it must be in contact with a live circuit. It is not the wire that gave us the "shock"; it is the 'current' flowing through it. So far, the labour of the *Guru* was to point out to us the Self, with reference to or as conditioned by the mind and the intellect. You have read in history the story of the conqueror Allauddin and Padmini. Allauddin wanted to have a glimpse of the divine beauty of Padmini. But she, the true Indian *Pativrata*, would not allow herself to be openly gazed at by the Muslim conqueror. At last arrangements were made to give Allauddin a *darshan* of Padmini as reflected in a mirror.

The outcast soldier had to be satisfied by looking at the reflected form and beauty of Padmini : his eyes could not " see " the real Padmini of flesh and blood. Similarly, we being " outcasts " in the *Atma Loka* cannot be given a direct *darshan* of the Padmini in us. The *Guru*, therefore, arranges a reflection of her for our gaze as it were ! All descriptions and narrations of the self in the *Srutis* can only be a reflected glory of Pure Existence, the *Satchitananda* within ourselves ; we can be told, and we can understand only the Self, as reflected in the various avenues of Knowledge we have got, *viz.*, the *Indriyas*, mind and intellect. The *Guru* cannot and will not introduce us face-to-face with the Self as " this is the Self ". All that he can do is to show us the *Prabhav* of the *Atman*, as evident in the workings of the sense-organs and in the functions of the inner instruments.

It is something like our conception of the State. The State is not in the King nor in the ministers. It is neither in the standards nor in the people, and yet it is the might enveloping all. In it we function, in it we the governors and the governed, have their individual rights and duties. Similarly, the Self is a might of Truth dwelling in us and pervading about us ; it is not in any sense-organ and yet all the sense-organs exist and function, because of the Self. The eye and other members, in themselves though impotent, inert and helpless, when they subscribe their selves to the " State " in us, gain potentialities and become vital " citizens ". The " State " in us is the *Atman* or the *Self*.

Thus, so far we have dealt with, in the first chapter, only the conditioned *Atman*, and not the Pure Truth, the Absolute Self. The Supreme Reality is known as

the Absolute because of its infinite nature, inexplicable in terms of finite words. We cannot produce the terrible noise of the rolling thunder through the frail melodies of a flute. Similarly, words cannot represent or express fully the roaring silence of Pure Consciousness. In their attempts at reaching the Absolute, words pant and fall back as it were !

So then, the only way to explain It, is to explain the conditioned *Atman* ; that is all that words can do. It is just like explaining the electric current in the wire. Electricity by itself is absolute in the sense it can be felt and measured but not perceived by our eyes directly. And yet the current has many manifestations, such as light in bulbs, heat in stoves, cold in refrigerators, etc. The light in the bulb is not electricity, but its manifestation, when it passes through the bulb conditioning the filament. The conditioned sun would be its reflection, say in a cup of water, and the conditioning would be the water-surface. From the conditioned sun, we can have some conception of the sun, his glorious nature of light and even heat. But to consider that we have known the sun from a vision of his reflection would be a lie ! Thus *Atman* being beyond words, the only way we can give an idea of the Self through words is through the conditioned *Atman*.

Thus all that we have so far gained is only a knowledge of the Relative-Reality, the conditioned *Atman*, and of the Pure Self.

And there is no other way to express in words the Infinite. At best It can only be indicated in terms of Its expressions through the matter-vehicles. The seeker has to *realise* this Great Truth for himself, by himself, in himself.

One may probably come to stop all the enquiries upon and all the independent seeking for this Self Divine, when one has *understood* intellectually what all have been so far said in this chapter. This intellectual appreciation of the Presence of Life is not in itself the spiritual unfoldment. Each student must come to apprehend this Truth in himself, in an intimate subjective experience. To emphasise this salient idea, we have the following chapter.

CHAPTER II

यदि मन्यसे सुवेदेति दभ्रमेवापि नूनं त्वं वेत्थ ब्रह्मणो रूपं
यदस्य त्वं यदस्य देवेष्वथ नु मीमांस्यमेव ते मन्ये विदितम् ॥ १ ॥

*Yadi manyase suvedeti dabhramevapi noonam twam velththa
Brahmano roopam yadasya twam yadasya deveshvatha nu meemam-
syameva te manye viditam.*

यदि : if, मन्यसे : you think, सुवेद : “very well I know,” इति : thus, दभ्रमेवापि : even a little too, नूनं : certainly, त्वं : you, वेत्थ : understand, ब्रह्मणः : of the Brahman, रूपं : form, यत् : that which is, अस्य : of that, त्वं : you, यत् : that, अस्य : of that, देवेषु : in the Devas, अथ नु : now then, मीमांस्यं एव : is to be ascertained, ते : to you, मन्ये : I think, विदितं : that which is known (to you).

(1) The preceptor here hastens to warn his disciple :
“If you think, I knew well, it is certainly but little—the form of the *Brahman* you have known is also the form of the *Devas*. Therefore, I think that what thou thinkest is still to be ascertained.”

The warning is probably because the *Guru* could see in the face of the disciple a glow of satisfaction and self-confidence and pride at the understanding. The teacher reads the face and gives a timely warning “If you think that you know the *Atman* well, you are indeed a fool. I have said that the *Atman* is the ‘Eye of the Eye’, etc., and the same is the *Chaitanya* in the heavenly forms of the *Devas* also. But because of these statements in the last chapter if you conclude that you have ‘realised’ *Atman*, you are sadly mistaken”.

A poor man might mistake that he has seen all that is to be seen by merely gaining an entrance up to the open portico of a palace. By standing at the outer door of the portico he has seen nothing of the glory of the palace. He has to enter in and walk round and visit the most inner chambers of the palace, then only he can have thorough "ideas" of the luxurious magnificence of the palace *Prabhav*. Likewise do not run away with an idea that you have known the Self by what has been so far heard. Walk in! Roam within! Watch, look, observe and *live* the palace atmosphere. Enquire more and more into the conditions, nature and the lay-out of that voiceless palace of Truth, the *Atman*. Gain through the use of intuition and intimate personal experience of THAT, much intellectual comprehension of the Conditional Truths, Delve deeper, Realise the Pure Existence : what we see, hear, etc., are all Conditioned Truths. Pure Truths lie behind and beyond all names and forms. And, at the realisation of the Pure Existence, all names and forms get merged into That, for all that is there beyond the palace of existence is non-existent !

The coat and the pant hanging on the hangers have limbs and possess their forms and names. But even if it be the royal lace-coat it shall receive no salute even from the ordinary *Chowkidar* of the palace. Your coat hanging upon the hanger is not embraced by your wife, nor your hanging trousers hugged by your children! Neither the lace-coat nor your suit of clothes can excite any emotion so long as they are not vitalised by the wearer! The king puts on the suit and every one adore, revere and respect it. Similarly, the police-officer's kit gets no salute as long as it is hanging on a peg ; but the moment he enters it, every

one salutes it! So also the physical body has its respect only when the *Swami*, the *Atman*, is within it. The moment the *Swami* has walked out, there is no salute to that carcass, no adoration and no respect.

One of you the other day raised a very pertinent question. The questioner asked "Swamiji, you say that the *Atman* as it were walks out when the body falls down to rot and decay, a condition called death. But even if the *Chaitanya* has gone, there is existence for the mass of matter left there as the dead body. Is it then right to accept two different existences; the existence that has walked out and the existence that remains?" First of all, let this *Sadhu* register his deep appreciation for the glorious student's independent thinking. It is only a few who can come to have such a doubt. This doubt can easily be solved by an illustration. Yonder is the wall on which sunlight is spread out evenly. I take a mirror and flash on the wall a beam of reflected light. The spot where the reflected light falls is certainly a particularised spot, brighter and easily distinguishable in the Sunlit wall area. We may, by tilting the mirror slightly, change the position of the reflection on the wall. But wherever the reflected beam is, beneath it would always be the light which is spread out generally all over the wall. The beam from the mirror only adds to the intensity at its point of striking on the very surface.

Similarly, Truth, Pure Existence, is spread out everywhere. But a reflected pool of light is created, as it were, by the individuals mind-intellect-equipment (*the antahkarana*) which is the Ego in each individual. The particularised entity is no more cognizable in the body of the dead; but the general all-pervading existence is the bones, flesh, skin, etc., of the body.

They decompose ; but the decomposed matter also has the general spread of the Absolute Existence.

Now I have answered your question. The coat on the hanger has no "personality" so long as the wearer is not in it. So long as the *Atman* is not 'pervading' over any given name and form, it is not a living entity, but dead matter. The house of matter, the body, is sacred only so long as the Divine Presence is gracing it. Once the Lord, the *Atman*, has departed, the temple collapses.

The difference between man and man, man and animal, and the consequent plurality are all caused by the difference in the "reflecting" surfaces but the Source of Light, the *Atman* is the same. Only we have some mirrors which are dusty, some clean, others convex, etc., like the differences between you and your brothers, you and your uncle.

In other words, plurality is only in the conditioning and is consequently in the 'conditioned *Atman*'. In its reflections we see differences but the Sun is ever only one. Beyond the mind and the intellect, beyond the *Indriyas* is the Truth, the vitaliser of them all, the Source of all their reflected glories. Conditioned *Atman* alone can be explained, discussed and grasped by the intellect. The Scriptures and the Teachers explain only the Conditioned *Atman*. Pure *Atman* is to be experienced individually by the disciple all by himself.

Often the Master repeats, at the end of the discourse, that what was discussed was only "the conditioned ; remove the conditioning and realise the Self". Chinmaya was compelled to ask his *Guru* one day : "Swamiji, why not then remove the conditioning and explain the Pure *Brahman* ? Why say that It is the

‘Eye of the Eye’ without the eye-conditioning?” There was no direct reply. The *Satsang* was in full progress. Even Chinmaya was slowly forgetting the doubt, as the lesson proceeded. All of a sudden Shri Guru Dev said : “Chinmaya, get me some water to drink.” Surprised at this unusual thirst in such a cold climate as *Gangotri* and at such an early hour, the disciple brought a clean *Lota* of water. He placed it in front of the *Guru*.

“What is this?” asked the *Guru*, in an assumed air of anger. “Swamiji, this is the water you wanted,” murmured the over-awed disciple.

“But did I ask you for a *Lota*?” roared the Master “or for water? Take the *Lota* away and bring me the water.”

“But Swamiji, how.....*Lota*.....without *Lota*..... water.....how water.....*Lota*.....,” murmured the agitated, confused and confounded disciple.

“Never mind,” said the Master, in a soft encouraging tone “nobody can convey water without a vessel. So too in conveying the Knowledge of Truth. Absolute Truth cannot be explained in words. Just as you cannot bring water without a vessel, so too we cannot express Truth except through the medium of some one or the other of its conditionings. Hence it is that the *Srutis* as well as the *Gurus* explain only the Conditioned Truth, instead of the Absolute Truth”.

Any amount of intellectual understanding of the Conditioned *Brahman* will not take us to our goal. The spiritual thirst in man can be satisfied only when he breaks away from the shackles of his limitations and soars high to his full divine stature of Godhood. And this can be accomplished by the *sadhaka* only through an intimate subjective experience of his own

Real Nature to be the Eternal Existence-Knowledge-Bliss.

To gain this intuitive experience, the instruments necessary are a purified mind and intellect. A mind that tosses the least is called a pure mind. The tossings are caused by desires, hatreds, lusts, passions and such other negativities in our psychological make-up. The mind, scared as it were, by its impressions (*Vasanas*) throws out for us the external world of objects, just as the picture in the film-reel gives us the story on the screen. The cinegoer during the show identifies himself completely with the picture and comes to suffer or enjoy the sorrows and joys of the hero and the heroine.

Similarly, we have the external world, thrown out for us, by the play of *Vasanas* in us, as objects and circumstances, forming among themselves the world for us. Identifying ourselves with this world, we weep and laugh, sob and smile, dance and roll. Torn between hope and despair, failure and success, loss and gain, the mortal lives the gruesome pains of a life of limitations.

The reality with which we should accept the external world of objects and circumstances is only as true as the *reality*, we claim for the 'hero' in the pictures during our stay in the picture-house !!

But when we are entirely engrossed with the outside world, the ATMAN-DARSHANA, the vital, intimate, subjective experience of our real self, becomes impossible. We have to remove the *Vasanas* in our mind ; such a pure mind can no more throw any intelligent "story" on the "screen", and so we will not be forgetting ourselves in our preoccupation with it.

The only known method of erasing the *Vasanas* is by scraping the mind clean ! This is equivalent

to holding, say, a piece of sand-paper close to the "film rolls" in the machine room as it winds and rewinds itself, revealing the "story" to the audience. In time, the scratches on the "film strip" shall erase much of its distinct charm. Soon we shall see but a blurred vision of filtered light interspersed with patches of darkness!

In the mind-film, the *Vasanas*-picture can be erased by scraping it with *Bhakti-Sadhana* consisting mainly of constant repetition of His Names. *Nitya-Nirantara-Iswara-Chintan*—constant remembrance of the Lord—is the cleansing agent to be used if Man's mind is to be purified of its *Vasanas*. In a "clean" mind Divinity comes to manifest in all Its Absolute Glory "Thou Art That". Even a rogue or a sinner can attain the final and supreme concentration. "Here and now," is the promise of Vedanta.

Live in constant remembrance of the Lord. Fight down the wrong negative values in your psychological make-up. Lead a pure life of positivity. Serve all. Love all. Be kind. Be pure. Be patient. Be tolerant. Be sincere. Bathe your life in unrestricted limitless love. Surrender unto *him* and thus eliminate all selfishness. Rise to your own Divine Nature.

Serve, love, purify, meditate and realise the Godly nature through constant NARAYAN SMARAN.

PURE TRUTH

So then we have found that fire cannot burn fire, though fire burns other objects that are thrust into it. Water can wet all other things in the world but not water. We cannot say that the Ganges water is wetting the well water even though the well be

near the Ganges. Similarly, the Absolute Knowledge cannot know Itself, because that Supreme Reality cannot be known by the instrument of Its own "play".

We have been finding that all the descriptions given by the *Gurus* were the descriptions of the Conditioned *Atman*. A play-ground is for students and children to play, and not for its own play ; it cannot play in itself by itself. The play-ground is only a field for the children to play on. The field is not playing.

Similarly, the Supreme Knowledge is the field in which these avenues of knowledge come to play and, therefore, these avenues of knowledge cannot by themselves independently reach It. So then, when we find the *Guru* warning : "Don't go with the idea that you have known the *Atman* well, and if you think so, you are a fool", we have to carefully inquire into it so that we may understand the *Conditioned Atman*. Then we shall be able to get an idea of the Pure Eternal Self.

What you have asked me is only about the *Conditioned Atman* as your question is, "what directs the mind to go forth?" I have given you the answer too, but I know you much better than you know yourself! I know from the nature of your question that you are asking for something more than the *Conditioned Atman* because, you are a seeker of *Moksha* (liberation), and the Knowledge of the Self alone gives us Eternal Supreme Satisfaction. The disciple in short had asked for the *Unconditioned Atman*. The *Guru* explains further to the *Sishya* and says that the dynamism behind the eye which makes that instrument see things, is in Itself, the Life-Centre, the Centre of Centre, the Eternal Blissful *Atman* !

A villager visiting for the first time a city, in

wonderment would ask, "how is this bulb lit?" And if his friends are sympathetic, they will not stop merely by explaining that the "light is lit when the switch is on", but will explain to him the current and the filament, etc., and thus satisfy him completely. Thus, even though the disciple asked for an explanation of the visible manifestations of the Supreme Reality, understanding the unsaid query behind the question as a desire to know the Pure *Atman* or the Life-Centre, the *Guru*, in kindness continues to explain. "So then," he says, "if you think that what I have explained till now gives you what you asked for, you are mistaken. I have not explained!"

The manifestations as light, heat, air, etc., are first explained to the villager and through them, he is introduced to what lies beyond them, *i.e.*, the cause of that manifestation which is the power running through the wire. Similarly, the *Guru* explains to the student, the Vitaliser behind the "Eye of the Eye", "the Ear of the Ear", etc., and then he says that if you think that this is *Atman*, you are again mistaken. The *Guru* indicates that beyond this *Conditioned Atman*, there is the Truth which has nothing to do with the conditioning. The conditionings ever keep on changing. The ear, nose, intellect, mind, etc., are indeed necessary for us to provide a proof of the Vitality of the Life-Centre, just as we must have a vessel in which to convey water. Through the conditionings alone can we have an idea of the Life-Centre or Life Power. First we understand it with reference to these manifestations, and then we shall reach the goal and experience it without the manifestations.

We have got here the warning that "if you think you know well, you know very little", because none

of us, not even the Masters can say that *Atman* is "understood" or "known", since the *Atman* is not knowable, but *is the knowing principle*. *Brahman* or *Atman* is not seen, heard or understood or known as an object. I can see this form of the microphone, and you too can see this form, because this form is different from me and you. You can see your hands or fingers and admire their beauty in your spare moments. Why? Because the fingers are something different from the instrument of seeing, the eye! But you can never see your eyes yourself! Similarly, the *Atman* that sees, understands, knows and perceives cannot be perceived, known, understood nor seen!

What can we do then? When we have ended our Ego, there is no question of the "I". The *Atman* alone remains then as a vital personal experience. There is no "I" at all, at the end of successful *Sadhana*, so that this despair need not be ours. We shall become Truth!

A man bathing in the river loses his gold ornament and desperately searches for it repeatedly in the water and at last gets it. His joy is inexplicable at the moment of recovering it. But how will he explain his joy? Under the water his sense of speech is hushed and so he cannot express his joy at that very moment. Similarly, the *Atman* is beyond explanation at the very moment of experiencing it. You can only *meditate yourself into it*. There is no 'I' and 'you' remaining at all during the final moments of Beatitude. "This merger is possible," is the daring assertion of all the Vedantic Seers.

Every day, we are living through three planes of consciousness. What we see in the waking-state is contradicted by that in the dream-state. The food

that we have taken in the waking-state is not available in our dream-condition, because after a sumptuous meal, we *can* go to bed, and yet, can experience, within a few minutes, a dream of starvation. Also the moment we come out of the dream-world, the feast we had consumed there will not at all end our waking-state-hunger ! What is real in one plane is not real in another. When you go to the deep-sleep-state there is neither the waking-state-world nor the dream-world ; both of them are contradicted !

There is *yet another* state of consciousness, called the fourth state, discovered by the great masters of the *Upanishads*, viz., the *Thuriya State*, otherwise known as the God-consciousness. The plane of God-consciousness is thus the *Fourth State*. In this State of Perfection, we shall realise that all the other three planes of consciousness are but a long, long dream. All *Sadhanas* are but conscious efforts to transcend the pain-ridden limitations and rise into the All-Bliss, All-Perfect-Realm of the *Fourth State*. Now we do not have any experience of this transcendental *Fourth State* or its Divine might, as we have come to believe the *Jagat-Dream* as real.

A doll made of salt, tied to a string and dipped into the ocean will not come back when pulled up to report the depth ! The doll gets melted into the very form of the ocean ; the salt-doll was the ocean ; it was born from the ocean. But it had for a time an identity of its own and a form. But once having reached the bosom of its own "Nature", and remaining there for a time, it becomes the very ocean that it Eternally was.

That is, the doll-ego which exists as a superimposition upon Truth Pure Salt, assumed for a time, certain false forms and names. But when actually it

entered the mass of its own *nature*, it got merged there with its own *Swaroopā*. Similarly, in the *Fourth State*, the *Thuriya State*, because there is no instrument for *Vikshepa* (tossing of the mind), the Bliss of our oneness with the entire universe is experienced.

On OM, we superimpose, as on an idol, the three States of consciousness. OM is made up of three sounds, A, U, M, wherein the *Sadhaka* superimposes on sound A, the waking-state, on U, the dream-world, and on M, the deep-sleep-state. The long-drawn M-m-m-m hum of OM is to represent the *Thuriya State**, and the silence between each OM chanted, is the final subtlest point to fix the attention of the meditator. By then, the mind of the meditator becomes so pure and steady that once he succeeds in plunging into the depths of this Bliss-Silence, his mind is no more there and he experiences the Transcendental Truth.

This subjective Experience alone can give us the Knowledge of the Pure *Atman*, *Truth*, without its conditionings. In this subjective *Atma-anubhav* alone can man reach the fulfilment of his life's Divine Mission.

THE DREAM MIRAGE

We have so far examined the Illuminating Factor, the *Chaitanya* in us, with the aid of a metaphor from a beam of light striking a reflecting surface and producing a pool of reflection. The reflection thus thrown forth by the Intellect is called technically, in Vedānta, as "*Chitabhasa*"; *Chit*, the *Chaitanya*, or the Illuminator and its *Abhasa* meaning Its reflection. Just as the Sun is seen reflected in a pool of water, so too, the

* Refer Mandokya and Karika Discourses by Sri Swamiji, for more details on OM Upasana.

Chitabhasa is recognised in the mental pool when the Light of Truth strikes the mind. This *Chitabhasa*, thus playing a false dalliance in the mental theatre, is the false toy-monster called the Ego. The annihilation of the Ego, it is said, with a divinely sweet persistence in Vedanta, is the experiencing of Truth. This being the promise given by the *Srutis*, we shall be better equipped to undertake our pilgrimage to Truth, if we know some intimate characteristics of this Ego.

The Supreme Intelligence, the *Atmachaitanya*, eternally self-effulgent, shines ever-bright at the Centre of the Centre in the human heart. It gets reflected as it strikes against our intelligence. As we are living today in a passionate hunt after sensuous objects, our intellect, along with our entire attention, is turned totally outward. Thus the Flame of Reflection, the Intelligence, is slightly at an angle, like the hood of an angry serpent just before it strikes. Naturally, a pool of reflected light is thrown as it were in front of the original Supreme Light.

Like innocent children, who get frightened at their own shadows, we fall a prey to many a hallucination produced by our own misunderstanding that the reflected light is the Truth Absolute. The reflection, as we know, depends entirely upon the condition and nature of the reflecting surface. At the moment of mental and intellectual agitation, the *Chitabhasa* seems to tremble and dance in mad revelry. When the intellect is dimmed by the fumes of jealousy, anger, passion and lust, the ego-centric entity in us undergoes corresponding modification. Thus we see one who is ordinarily a quiet innocent and decent individual, under the stress of anger and lust, suddenly deforming himself into a dreadfully ugly monster. In every Dr. Jekyll there is a

manifestation of Mr. Hyde every now and then.

So long as the intellect is turned outward, propped up by our mortal desires, this ego-centric delusion and the consequent sense of separateness will continue in us. With the sense of separateness, naturally, the entire chains of sorrows come to shackle us and make us victims of our own bondages. The attempt of a *Mumukshu* is to end these limitations and rise to a plane of existence where he shall rest in peace eternally: *Sukhaprapti* and *Duhkanivarti* is the aim of the aspirant.

Brahmavidya, as contained in Vedanta, caters to this nameless and formless—and yet all the same most poignant unrest of the Soul—by prescribing a certain discipline of the mind and intellect. The extrovert nature in us is the cause of the Ego-sense : ending Ego is reaching the perfect. When by practice or self-control, our sense-organs have come to a certain extent under our control, we the Divine-Lives, start the practice of enquiring the self within through deep and long meditation. This Vedantic *Sadhana* when continued for a long unbroken interval, brings about a slow closing down of the extrovertness in our intellect.

We have already found that the intellect when it raises its serpentine hood, in its outward running nature, throws a pool of reflected *Atmic* Glory called the Ego. When during *Sadhana*, the student, through self-discipline, effects (develops) more and more introvert nature, the false pool of light moves towards its origin, until at last when the intellect is entirely turned within, the reflection coincides with or merges into the Eternal, the Reality. The Ego then gets totally sublimated and ours shall be the transcendental experience of our own true nature Godhood. This is the fulfilment of our life. This is Supreme success. This is achievement.

Truth, the Self, which is the sacred theme of the Upanishads lies beyond the intellect, and It illumines constantly the very intellectual experiences themselves. So to declare "I have understood" is not the final realisation of the Consciousness by which I have recognised the idea "I have understood". Hence the student is advised to continue his investigations.

This Final Experience of our Eternal Nature is not an objective knowledge but an intimate subjective experience. As such it is rather difficult for words to express this deep experience, just as we can only mumble eloquence and yet fail to express our deep love for our mother, sister or son ! However much we may explain the joys of eating *laddu*, we may succeed to an extent only in expressing the grosser objective aspects of it. We fail in our attempt to convey the subtler subjective experience of the *laddu*-taste as such ! Hence we have the disciple's words in the following *Mantra* :

नाहं मन्ये सुवेदेति नो न वेदेति वेद च । यो नस्तद् वेद तद्
वेद नो न वेदेति वेद च ॥ २ ॥

*Naham manye suvedeti no na vedeti veda cha. Yo nastad veda tad
veda no na vedeti veda cha.*

न : never, अहं : I, मन्ये : think, सुवेद : (that) "I know very well"; इति : thus, न न वेद : "not that I do not know," इति : thus, वेद च : "I know too," यः : (He) who, नः : amongst us, तत् : that, वेद : know, तद् वेद : knows that, न वेद इति : "I know not" thus, वेद च : (he) too understands.

(2) I do not think that "I know it well." But not that I do not know ; I know too. Who amongst us comprehends It both as the *Not known* and as the *Known*—he comprehends It.

The *Guru's* kind and critical warning was that the Self is not known as an object other than the knower himself, and that all such understandings are but the comprehensions of the Intellect and Mind and not the true Experience of Truth through the Divine-Eye, the Intuition. The disciple's answer as contained in the stanza is quite revealing and expressive.

There is an entire drama packed in this single Mantra : a drama of the student's inner mind. In utter obedience to his teacher he first admits that he does not think, "*I know It well*". But when he looks within, it is a lie and so he confesses "*but not that I do not know*". By the time he has finished this much of a true confession, he has become overwhelmed by his own intimate personal experience and, therefore, he emphatically asserts "*I know too*". These statements would look like the mad-ravings of one who is not right in his senses. This language of confusing contradictions alone can be employed in dramatising the feelings of the student who has really risen above the ordinary planes of experiences and has come to live the transcendental Divine Consciousness.

The student admits with reference to the memories of his own Transcendental Experiences of Pure Self, that certainly, his knowledge of it is not similar to his knowledge of chairs and tables. An object other than yourself can be known by you as 'well' or 'not so-well', etc. But your knowledge of yourself is not the same as your knowledge of your son or wife. I know myself through and through better than anything else in this world. The Self-Knowledge is a million times more subjective and, hence, the Knowledge of Self-awareness is too deep to express in words.

Words, after all, can express and convey knowledge

only through a series of references to known experiences. In short, language must break in its attempts to express the Inexpressible, because the Experience of Truth is not an *impression* received by the mind of an 'object', but is the Self-awareness of Pure Consciousness, gained when the mind of the *Sadhaka* gets annihilated through his *Yoga Sadhana*. Language plays only in the field of the mind and intellect and their death-dances !

The more the intensity of an experience, the subtler become the words and the more loose the construction of the sentences. Hence, we have in this sacred *Mantra* a statement seemingly self-contradictory but in fact an expressive representation of the feelings experienced. The student comparing his intuitive experience of Truth with his ordinary sense experiences of the world says, "I do not think I know well". His knowledge of Truth, though complete and full, is not, he feels, anything like his knowledge of a table or a chair. The knowledge of the objects of the world is gained through the functionings of the sense-organs and through a process of estimating the mental reactions caused by them. But the student has gained, certainly, a very intimate knowledge of the Self in him, and yet it is not as "an object other than himself". That the Self is recognised as one's own real nature, is the uniform experience of all Masters.

Though strange be the student's discovery, stranger seems to be his mental condition after his self-discovery. He has realised that he is Knowledge Itself. And yet, his difficulty is in that his realisation is not in the knowledge *of*, but it is in the knowledge *as* : that is, he has not realised the Self as we realise, for example, our thoughts in us, but he has realised the Knowledge *as such*.

To the Western philosophers such an experience is so strange and abnormal that they cannot understand or appreciate the student's mental situation. Thus, in the foreigner's unsympathetic approach, he reads in the *Upanishadic Mantras* nothing more intelligible than, "mere blabberings of a humanity in its childhood". And indeed, even to the modern educated Hindus, this *Mantra* is but the mad ravings of a youngster suffering from hysteria and melancholia !

Though he admits that his experience is something novel, strange and unparalleled, yet, he is not ready to accept it, because, his awareness of It is so intimate and full. The only way in which the poor mortal in him could express the Immortal he is, is by quoting (or with reference to) others who have experienced intuitively the same Truth. "Who amongst us comprehends It, both as the *not-known* and as the *known*, he comprehends It."

Agama (tradition of Masters) is the only evidence with reference to which one can express transcendental experiences. Even the Scriptures adopt this means and often put statements into the mouth of some ancient Master or other. The same method is adopted here by the disciple in *Kenopanishad* when he tries to discuss his inner intuitive experience of Truth with his *Guru*. "Who among us comprehends It.....comprehends It, both as the *not-known* and as the *known*, he comprehends It."

यस्यामतं तस्य मतं मतं यस्य न वेद सः । अविज्ञातं विजानतां
विज्ञातमविजानताम् ॥ ३ ॥

*Yasyamatam tasya matam matam yasya na veda saha.
Avignatam vignanatam vignatamavignanatam.*

यस्य : He to whom, अमतं : there is no comprehension (about the Brahman), तस्य मतं : his comprehension is real, मतं : (the real) comprehension, यस्य : To whom, न : is not, वेद : knows, सः : he, अविज्ञातं : (It is) unknown, विज्ञानतां : to the real Masters of True Knowledge (to those who know perfectly well), विज्ञातं : perfectly known, अविज्ञानतां : to those who know not.

(3) He understands It who comprehends It not ; and he understands It not who feels he has comprehended It. It is the *unknown* to the Master of True Knowledge but to the ignorant It is *the known*.

This *Mantra* is a direct statement of Mother *Sruti* explaining the Truth for the benefit of Her students. The maximum that the words can do in explaining the Infinite is to state as she has done in the second line of the *Mantra*.

The moment we comprehended a thing, it is always through the instruments of our comprehension and understanding. They being limited, they cannot but fail in grasping the whole. Whatever words can express must necessarily be something grasped earlier by our understanding. Thus, as we have already noted, Truth expressed can be but the conditioned or the limited Truth.

The stanza may also be considered as the declaration of the Teacher himself. When the best of his disciples, after listening to the first chapter, answered the teacher in a confused self-contradictory statement as contained in the previous *Mantra*, the lesser students in the class must have either felt stunned by it, or giggled to bully the boy. Here the Teacher endorses that what was stated by the pupil is

quite acceptable and that it is the only way the transcendental experience can really be expressed.

Language of intuition alone can soar to the Realms of Pure Consciousness. Truth defined in words is Truth defiled. The Supreme Reality when experienced shall be *known* as our own real Self. A pen in a dark room when brought into the verandah may be considered as illumined by the sun. But it would be absurd to say that a thing in the sun is illumined by the sun : illumination being the very substance of the sun. The function of illuminating can have a play only where there is darkness also. The Self which is Knowledge Absolute cannot be known by another knower other than Itself. The sun never illuminates itself since it is light itself.

KILL THE EGO

Some years ago a Marwari merchant of Bombay suffered six months of sleepless nights due to the persecutions of a bug that one night entered his brain through his ears ! Every fifteen minutes, and sometimes oftener, the bug would creep round inside the skull seeking for a more edible portion of the brain. The merchant went round the globe, meeting all the possible specialists, and yet had to return to India with his pet disease uncured. However, the merchant heard of a great doctor in Lucknow and reached that city with newly lit up hope. The doctor examined him elaborately and reserving his opinion to himself, declared that he would try his best. Weeks passed. The merchant was almost raving and hysterical as repeated sleepless nights of agony and pain broke down his nervous system bit by bit. One day the doctor approached

the patient to inform him that in case the merchant could afford to send a man to the Western-Front, the doctor could exert his influence with the Red Cross and procure for him, a special medicine prepared by the Germans.

Any expense, if it could only relieve him of the agonising pain, was cheap for the merchant. Again months passed. Despair and hopelessness was choking the merchant, when one day the doctor in all cheer and smiles approached the patient and showed him a parcel and said, "here is the medicine! Now the miracle will be done. There are three tubes here; with one we can make the bug swoon down for at least two, three days; the second, injected after a week, would kill the bug; and third would make the dead bug come out of the ears." The merchant was naturally much relieved and felt extremely hopeful. Was not the rare German specific for all bugs in the brain procured at such a heavy cost?

The next day the doctor with half a dozen of other specialists attended the patient in a well-equipped operation theatre and administered the *first* of the three injections. As told by the doctor the bug in his brain did swoon, and the patient had a restful night probably, the first night he had slept so soundly after many a month. However, after three days, the bug had started as usual creeping and crawling round, eating the brains and burrowing holes in it! The merciless bug! A week passed. Again the operation theatre scene was repeated and the patient then onwards *felt* that the bug was really dead. During the week the patient was not even once, disturbed by the enemy in his brain.

On the day when the last of the injections was

to be administered all the medical college students were called to be in the operation theatre. All the elaborate precaution required for this serious and strange injection of the costliest and the most rare German medicine was enacted faithfully and last of the injections was successfully carried out. After half an hour the patient's ear was carefully washed, and lo !, in the ear-basin was seen floating a *dead bug* ! The doctor lifted it with a pair of forceps to the gaze of the satisfied and contented patient. The patient was wheeled out of the operation theatre. The doctor went up the door and after closing it carefully wheeled round to face the silent audience of wondering students who were surprised that they should be invited to witness but a mere injection !! "Friends," addressed the practical scientist "you have been watching so far the cure of a very painful disease for which the patient could not get a cure all over the globe. And strangely enough, the German injection bottles were nothing but tubes of distilled water which I had procured from the local chemist round the corner in the street. The most difficult part of the operation was, confessed the doctor, the hunt that I had to make yesterday night for a live bug. When at last I got one I pressed it carefully between my fingers in one end of my kerchief and preserved the dead carcase, which was dropped into the ear before washing it, and it was that dead bug, which I had hunted out last night, that you saw in the ear ! May be the means are unfair but, for an unreasonable patient's imagined diseases, the only cure can be only the false medicines of mere attributed powers".

Viewed spiritually, we all are living the delusions of the merchant. We are suffering the pangs of an imaginary 'bug' in us. Identifying ourselves with

the Ego we come to entertain the wrong notions of 'I'-ness and 'My'-ness and the consequent sufferings, sorrows, limitations, finiteness, etc. Now we need a Lucknow doctor who will kill for us the bug-in-our-brain, the Ego-sense, with the rare medicine, the *Atma Gnana*, which, when its purpose has been served, shall be recognised as nothing new or rare but as our own Real Nature !

The Truth, ever effulgent in its own Light-Wisdom-Power nature, presides over all our activities outside in the world and inside in our minds. We found how this Supreme Light gets reflected in the Intellect and produces the 'Bug' for us, the Ego Pool of Light ! And there, the metaphor was deliberately stopped so that you may get some time to think over those ideas.

On realising the Real, the unreal vanishes ; when the *Bhakta* in devotion and love melts himself into the *Prabhav* of the Lord of his heart, the experience of this *Para Bhakti* is one of Supreme Consciousness. The experience of all Masters is the same at the point of final culmination of all their *Sadhanas*, whatever be the path pursued. Truth is the central temple where the pilgrims must finally reach. In the presence of Truth, at the moment of his experiencing it, there shall never be an experiencer separate from the experienced.

The *Vaishnavites* who belong to the Madhava and Ramanuja orders, in their philosophies, based upon duality, claim that the realised God ever remains eternally separate from an equally eternal quantum called the separative ego-sense in the *Sadhaka* ! But, to the Vedantin in his realisation of the Non-dual Truth there is nothing but one Homogeneous Experience of

Divine Pure Consciousness at the summit of his spiritual perfection. The *Dwaitin* complains that if we become ourselves, Bliss Absolute, who will then enjoy the joys transcendental? They seem to be worried with a desire to enjoy although it is of a transcendental nature. To the *Vedantin*, in his extreme sense of renunciation, dispassion and discrimination, he has discovered the futility and hollowness of an enjoyed joy gained by even the experience of a God other than himself. The *Srutis* are unanimous in their declaration that anything other than the Enjoyer of the Knower is false and that Infinite Peace can only be gained by one who has come to live in entire identification with the Self, the Knower. The *Sruti* declaration, that It is beyond the *known* and the *unknown*, the Knower himself, is self-evident.

Taking our metaphor of the reflection in a strip of mirror, we may now make an attempt to understand this process of the merger of the Ego with the Source of Ego. Supposing a very powerful arc-light is placed before a strip of mirror. We know from the rules of reflection that the reflection would be always as far behind the mirror as the object is in front of it. Supposing the arc-light is three inches in front of the mirror, the reflection is three inches behind the mirror. The Knowledge Absolute shedding Its Light of Intelligence is in front of the reflecting medium, our intellect. A spiritual aspirant, through discrimination, comes to live the nobler values of the higher intellectual life and thus gains slowly and slowly a degree of introvertedness whereby the Pool of Light, the false Ego, gets merged with the Source. The *Bhakta* becomes meek, tolerant, selfless and divine. And yet, even at that state of full divine life, the *Sadhaka* gains no subjective experience of the Truth that he is.

From this state of spiritual progress, the next lap of his pilgrimage is, what is generally termed as *Abhyas*. What actually happens when one continues his meditation exercises is, figuratively speaking, that the reflecting medium, the intellect slowly gets moved nearer and nearer to the object, the Light of the Self. Soon a state comes when the reflecting surface is in contact with the object.

When the arc-light on the laboratory table is in contact with the mirror strip, what should we expect? For a short interval of time the mirror would certainly provide for the observer, a clear reflection. The reflection is as far away from the object as the thickness of the mirror, but at the same time it is an observable fact that in the heat of the arc-lamp the mercury surface of the mirror melts off and the strip of mirror shall no longer provide for us any reflection of the lamp. The reflection, since it cannot go anywhere else, the *Sastras* say, has merged with its source.

The intellect during constant practice of daily meditation gets steadily moved nearer and nearer the Self, until at last, in the white-heat of intense experiencing of that transcendental Truth Absolute, the false Ego-centric notions disappear, and the intellect merges itself with the Infinite Ocean of Bliss and Perfection, our Real Nature. That is the final experience of *Samadhi*, and in the perception of the Self through the intuitive eye, the God-Man becomes the Self and shall not experience the Truth as something other than himself. This is the declaration of all the *Srutis*, nay, of even the living Masters of our times—not only in Hinduism but in all the known religions of the world. This achievement, the real fulfilment of the life's journey is within the scope of every mortal.

It is this experience, so subtle and full, that has compelled the great disciple in *Kenopanishad* to cry out, as he has done, his vital experiences, in such a mumbled jumble of words of seeming madness as in the *Mantra* we are now discussing : “ *He understands It who conceives It not, and He understands It not, who conceives It.*” The difficulty felt by the disciple is, that at the moment of perfect God-consciousness, there is no I-ness left to perceive It as an “object”, and the moment he is aware of his I-ness he is not experiencing the state of Godhood.

We cannot have a false vision of the ghost and the real understanding of the post at one and the same time. The moment the rope is recognised, the serpent is not there. Where the Ego is felt, God is not there. Vedantic realization of Oneness is not the monopoly of the Hindus. Shree Yung-Chia Ta Shih, the Chinese philosopher also sings :

“ It is only when you hunt for It
That you lose It;
You cannot take hold of It,
But equally, you cannot get rid of It,
And while you can do neither,
It goes on Its own way.”
“ You remain silent and It speaks;
You speak and It is dumb.”

All *Yogas*, be it *Bhakti*, *Gnana*, *Karma* or *Hata*, are but different techniques to reach the same Perfection by means of total annihilation of the inner enemy, the Ego. “ Kill the Ego, die to live the Divine Life,” so cries the Saint of Ananda Kutir. Listen to this call of self-redemption. Act diligently. By pursuing the path of the True, through devotion and love, reach the Goal of Perfection, Thy own Self.

THE GOAL

In the Ego-less state of God-consciousness there cannot be the seer other than the seen. The attempt of every *Yogin* in the field of self-perfection is a conscious move to prepare his inner instruments of understanding and perceptions to a single-pointedness, and thereafter to apply them in the adventure of discovering, in a quick review, how all the various *Yoga* techniques are but different methods of purifying and perfecting the inner instruments and bringing them into the state of sharp single-pointedness.

When once the *Sadhaka* has reached this perfection, he strives to get himself detached from the physical body-consciousness. The outer world exists only with reference to our consciousness of our body. The moment we leave our body-consciousness, we are not at all aware of the sense of the world-objects and their sorrowful persecutions. This may not be quite palatable or acceptable to those who hear it for the first time, but it can be subjectively felt and lived, as in our experiences of the dream-stage or the deep-sleep stage. In both these conditions of awareness, we are not conscious of our physical body and naturally the physical world is also negated.

Thus, a *Yogin* with the help of his divinely sharpened mind and intellect, turns his gaze inwards towards the centre of life, the *Atma Tatwa*, the Self. To get detached from the external gross envelopment of matter is to get ourselves identified with our real nature as the spirit.

The declarations of *Sastras* are thus simple, direct and unambiguous. But a mere understanding of the technique of the *Brahma Vidya* science will not give its fruit and liberation from mortal limitations. The

barbarous junglemen of Africa cannot come to enjoy the blessings of civilisation by a mere reading of the great text-books. They will have to renounce their present way of living the barbarous values of life and take to the cultured values of life advocated in those text-books. In short, however often we may repeat as *Mahamantra*, the name of Aspro, we cannot gain the blessing of relief from our headaches unless we swallow the medicine. Similarly, for all the greatness of Vedanta as a philosophy, it cannot and will not give us any solace or joy, merely because we have come to grasp its science intellectually. We must live it ; live it entirely. No compromise is possible. No betrothal is a practical proposition between two opposite things. Light cannot be where darkness is.

A Seeker starts his pilgrimage with renunciation—enunciation of the wrong negative values. This is the negative aspect of a positive *Sadhana*. This is achieved by not merely the efforts of mere will or determination, but is hastened to a success by a positive cultivation of the qualities of righteousness. When such a divine life continues for long his practices in any one of the four main paths of Self-Perfection, he comes to gain a Divine Power called Intuition. This faculty is now lying dormant in almost all of us. *Yoga* awakens it, and it is through the help of this newly discovered faculty that man reaches his native land of perfection.

This intuitive perception of Truth is not in any sense of the term a perception of an object like the table. Intuitively the successful *Sadhaka* becomes perfection itself. Hence the *Guru* warns the disciple : " It is the ' unknown ' to the man of true knowledge but to

the ignorant It is the 'known'."

Mere book knowledge will not help in fulfilling the edicts of Indian philosophy. Unlike the philosophies of the West, for us Indians, a mere academic understanding of an intellectual *view of life* is not philosophy. To the Indian mind, philosophy is at once a view of life and a *way of life*. A philosopher to us is not a mere idle dreamer or an *intellect-spinner*, but a hard and factual man of life who should show us also a certain value of life and how best his philosophy can be lived and realised. It is very significant in this connection to note that the word philosophy is termed in Sanskrit "DARSHANAM", the emphasis being in the availability of those ideas for realisation in the given life.

Merely hearing Vedantic discourses may give the listeners a vague concept of it, but will not make the listeners men of perfection unless they are ready to live as Vedantins in life. It is an ill-informed idler's cry, that Vedanta is divorced from life. In fact, there is no known method of living a fuller life than by organising it upon a firm foundation of the Vedantic values of Oneness and Truth.

A true Vedantin is a balanced individual : neither he is over-intellectual nor has he allowed his emotions to erupt into a dust-storm and sully the intellect. Discrimination and dispassion have developed his intellect to an acute subtlety and in his practices of love, kindness, tolerance, etc., he has expanded his mental qualities and emotions. When such an equally powerful mind and intellect are brought to play in a happy synthesis, in a given field of enquiry, out of the combination rises, as it were, a third Divine Power in his bosom, called the Intuition, the "*Gyana*

Chakshu”. And the Self is experienced through this instrument.

प्रतिबोधविदितं मतममृतत्वं हि विन्दते । आत्मना विन्दते वीर्यं
विद्यया विन्दतेऽमृतम् ॥ ४ ॥

*Pratibodhaviditam matamamrutatvam hi vindate. Atmana
vindate veeryam vidyaya vindate amrutam.*

प्रतिबोधविदितं : that intuitively It in and through every
modification (of the mind), मतं : the conviction,
अमृतत्वं हि : Indeed immortality, विन्दते : attains, आत्मना :
Through the Atman, विन्दते : attains, वीर्यं : real strength
(vigour), विद्यया : through knowledge, विन्दते : attains,
अमृतं : Immortality.

(4) Indeed, he attains immortality, who intuitively It in
and through every modification of the mind. Through
the *Atman* he obtains real strength, and through Know-
ledge, immortality.

The Absolute Truth presiding in us as the Self is
'known well' only when it is knowingly understood
as the witness of the three States of Consciousness. A
witness is one who is standing apart from the incident
and who witnesses and views the incident without in
any sense taking part in it. The witness has not even
any interest in the incident nor has he any prejudice
against it. Unmoved and uninterested, a witness
beams on the passing panorama in front of him. Simi-
larly if Truth, the Self, were to retain Its status as the
Eternal, the Immortal, the All-pervading, It has to be
a non-doer and a non-enjoyer—a mere dynamic
witness.

The experiences gained in the waking-state are
contradicted in our experiences of the dream-state

and both these are negated in the world of sleep. And yet, the same individual can remember his experiences in his waking-state and in his dream-state, as well as he can remember that he knows nothing during the condition of deep-sleep. It is well known in order to remember incidents or happenings, the experiencer must himself have had the experiences. Unless I have lived an experience, I cannot remember it ; however good my memory may be, I cannot remember any of your experiences. So too, must you necessarily fail to remember the happenings in my life.

From the above we must conclude that there is an unchanging entity in us who experiences all our waking-life, dream-world and the sleep-bliss. The waking-state Ego, the Mr. so-and-so entity, is not in the dream-world. But on waking up from the dream, he remembers that he had dreamt. That factor in us, in consultation with which we have this continuity of awareness and personality, through the different fields of consciousness, is the All-Witnessing *Atman*.

Thought (*Bodham*) by thought (*Bodham Prati*) is known (*Viditam*) the Presence of Consciousness Infinite. For, all thoughts are known to us : the knower who becomes conscious of all thoughts is the Light of Consciousness, the Supreme.

Thought is but a disturbance in the mental stuff, a ripple (*Vritti*) in the mental pool. As the thoughts rise, dance and die down, it is the Consciousness that illumines the birth, existence, activities and the final death of all thoughts. Thus, at each thought-disturbance there must be a flicker of the Consciousness.....and this Consciousness in intuitively realised as separate from the thoughts that It illumines. One who realises This becomes Immortal—Changeless. The change is in the

thought-flow : the illumining Light of Consciousness, as a Witness, merely looks on the changing thought-procession.

To identify with this "Witness" is to end the Thralldom of the Ego. Death and limitation, sorrow and despair, success and failure, pleasure and pain, love and hate and the thousand and one other poisonous weeds of life that embitter life, all belong to the Ego. To the All-Witnessing Truth, *Samsar* is foreign, and to Its Light, Power, Wisdom, is the Bliss-content of the *Samsar*. In this identification with the Self lies the secret of knowing the *Atman* as beyond the "Known" and "Unknown".

इहचेदवेदीदथ सत्यमस्ति न चेदिहावेदीन्महती विनष्टिः । भूतेषु
भूतेषु विचित्य धीराः प्रेत्यास्माल्लोकादमृता भवन्ति ॥ ५ ॥

*Ihachedavedeedatha satyamasti na chedihavedeenmahatee
vinashtihi. Bhooteshu bhooteshu vichitya dheerah pretyasmallo-
kadamruta bhavanti.*

इह : here, चेद् अवेदीत् : if (one) knows (That Brahman), अथ : then, सत्यं : the true fulfilment (the very essence of human aspiration), अस्ति : is (acquired), न चेत् : if not, ईह : here, अवेदीत् : knows, महती : very great (is the) विनष्टिः : destruction, भूतेषु भूतेषु : In all beings, विचित्य : seeing clearly (the Atman), धीराः : the subtle intellects (men), प्रेत्य : having gone (risen), अस्मात् : from this, लोकात् : world (of senses), अमृताः : immortals, भवन्ति : become.

(5) If one Knows (That *Brahman*) here, in this world, then the true end of all human aspirations is gained. If one knows not (That) here, great is the destruction. The wise, seeing the one *Atman* in all beings, rise from sense life and become immortal.

Kind Mother *Sruti* is here pouring out her anxious Love, in a clear warning to her grown-up children, that in this birth alone shall we attempt and gain a degree of success in totally cutting away from our bondages and shackles. Freedom is the birthright of man. To seek and achieve it, he has taken his incarnation. After thousands of lives in various embodiments, as a result of the gallons of tears shed, the All-Kind Lord has given us the rarest chance to be born as man.

An embodiment in a human form is rare indeed. Even having got the form to have all *Indriyas* intact is again an added blessing. Again, to possess a well-developed and balanced, physical, psychological and spiritual personality is the result of, the *Sastras* declare, many lives of continuous *Tapascharya* and devotion. Lastly to have all the above qualifications and yet, to be without a chance to hear the secret knowledge of the Truth Absolute, as contained in the *Srutis*, is to grope endlessly* in thick darkness along an unending vale of tears. Glory to you all ! You represent indeed the cream of generation who have gained by your own self-effort in endless previous births, the rarest of chances to study the *Upanishads* and come to know at least the Conditioned Truth.

Each of you is a representative of at least a million in the world of mere two legged worms crawling in filth, hapless and deluded. Hence, Mother *Sruti* says, "Great Indeed the Destruction if one strives not and thus fails to *recognise* himself as the *Atman*".

Without renunciation, no enduring successes can ever be gained by any one, at any time, in the annals

* Read Swamiji's Talks on Vivekachudamani of Sree Sankara the opening stanza of the Text.

of human endeavour. Nature herself is roaring this truth. The fishes must renounce their capacity to swim if they were to gain the greater glory of gliding through space on their wings as birds. The birds must surrender their power of flying if they were to rise higher in evolution and reach the instincts of animals. The animals must slowly give up their hardness and gross physical capabilities if they are to gain the subtler power of a blossomed mind and intellect. The ape-man, if he were to renounce his tail and the jungle life, and lo ! we have the coated-booted insurance agent and the thundering politician. The last stage in the pilgrimage of man towards Godhood—towards the state of Super manhood—is chalked out and directed by the *Srutis*. The Masters of wisdom unanimously cry that if man were to make one little renunciation he shall step over to the Realms of the Divine. Renounce the Ego and be a God. And this is possible Now and HERE. In discrimination learn to see the One Truth that lies self-evident in every name and form. This is the greatest worship and shall in the end take us directly to the audience chamber of Truth. We shall meet Him face to face and get ourselves merged into HIM. Having seen God the man ends by becoming God.—“ *Brahmavit Brahmaiva Bhavat.*”

NOW AND HERE

We have tried to understand Mother *Sruti's* anxiety at man's futile existence in the pursuit of mere physical desires and passions. She earnestly appeals to man to recognise what a rare chance he has in being born as a human being with all the *Indriyas* intact,

with a well-developed mind and intellect, and also with a glorious chance to have the contact of *Satpurushas* and learn from their mouths the Wisdom of the Sages. It is her loving declaration and kind warning that she expresses in her words, "One who has not known That here, great is the destruction !"

A wise man seeking for and discovering the underlying Truth Principle, in all names and forms, lives happily in the Wisdom of the Self. Such a one "*pretyasmallokāt*" (having left this world) "*Amrutabhavanti*" (becomes Immortal).

Built upon this line and similar ones, we have two schools of thought among the Vedantins, one claiming that perfection cannot be achieved unless one leaves his physical body in death, and the other arguing in a different line and coming to an altogether different conclusion that the *Sruti* declaration points out that Godhood can be reached even while living as a man in this mortal world. The former accepts, therefore, only *Videha Mukti*, while the latter recognises the State of *Jeevan Mukti*.

Of these two, Shankaracharya is a champion of the latter view ; and his arguments certainly seem to be more appealing to all reasonable men. Chinmaya also endorses, that all the present-day living Masters, whom he has met so far, do emphatically assert, in words as well as in their actions, that man can rise to Godhood and live the Divine perfections even while he is in this body. Self-realisation is *Here* and *Now*.

Sree Shankaracharya bases his arguments mainly upon scriptural definition of the *Guru*, which we had already examined thoroughly and we found that the *Guru* is one who is well versed in the scriptures

and well established in God-consciousness. A mere knowledge of the scriptures cannot give the *Pundit* the status of a *Guru*. If an aspiring individual by his self-effort reaches the state of perfection, pointed out by the Great Text-Books of *Brahma Vidya*, he must die instantaneously if we were to *literally* understand this line of the *Sruti*, and thus meekly accept the *Videha Mukti* concept. But then, we shall also never have a *Guru*, who is a *Brahma Nishtha*. Shankaracharya however concludes his arguments with the acceptance of the *Jeevan Mukti* state.

Then what does the *Sruti* here mean when she says, "Having left this world, he becomes Immortal?" According to Shankara, it is not a physical disappearance from this world scene through the trap-door of death, but it is the emergence of the individual from the mortal delusory planes of existence, spent in the pursuit of the lower animal values, to a higher plane of Divine Consciousness, wherein he reveals as God Himself.

Amruta-bhavanti, becomes Immortal, is the fruit promised by the *Sruti* for a man who has perfected himself in Vedantic *Sadhana*. The individual body-mind-equipment, being products of matter and consequently finite, cannot be Immortal in any sense of the term. Perishable as they are, how could a Saint be said to enjoy Immortality? The right view in which this portion of the *Sruti* is to be understood is not in its literal sense but to the suggestive meaning of these pregnant words.

Self-discovery is a process of ending our false identifications and building up our true nature as the Self. Having thus once understood, through a vital subjective experience, that one is the Immortal Soul

and not the mortal body, we shall no more have the agonizing fear of death ; to him death has no sting ; to him death is but an incident in his life, as insignificant and common as one of the ordinary meal times or his daily dip in the Ganges ! To him death is but a change of clothes ; nay it is like stepping out of the cage of stink and filth where he is compelled to act the part of a slave to the limitations of the dream-body, in which he is so far compelled to stay out of respect to the Lord.

CHAPTER III

The third chapter contains a story, which is a symbolic representation of the truths so far discussed in the Scriptures.

The Gods once won a victory over the demons with the help of the Supreme Truth, but blinded in their success they started gloating over their achievements. In order to bless the Gods, the Absolute Truth, in the form of an enchanting *Yaksha*, gave a Vision to the Gods. The Gods surprised and amazed at the unusual glorious Vision against the yonder horizon, approached Lord Agni and requested him to make personal enquiries and ascertain the identity of the Adorable Spirit. Lord Agni consented and hastened towards the vision in full confidence of his own might and power. On being interrogated by the Supreme, Lord Agni boastfully declared that He is the mighty Lord of Fire, who can scorch universes at will. The Supreme Lord placed a piece of grass in front of Lord Agni and requested him to reduce it to ashes if he could. For all his vehement attempts the God of Fire, Lord of Meteors and Suns, could not even warm the grass blade even by a degree. Thus completely crushed by his failure, Lord Agni returned. And to all the enquiries of the waiting crowd of Gods he only replied with a shrug of his shoulders, "I don't know".

The curious denizens of the heavens, for the second time, chose Lord Vayu and sent him on a commission to enquire and ascertain the identity of that strange Vision. Equally proud and vain-glorious, egoistic and

self-conscious, this mighty God strode forward to enquire and to know, and gain a better status for himself over Lord Agni.

The Mightiest of the Mighty, who has taken unto Himself a form in time and space—I mean that Adorable Spirit—inwardly laughing at the arrogance and vanity of this ineffectual Lord of the Winds, beamed down upon the approaching heavenly agent. As before, the *Yaksha* asked who the visitor was. Lord Vayu disclosing his identity and status boasted that he is the mighty trodder of the skies, who can as though in play, toss the universes hither and thither as though they were paper balls and balloons. The *Yaksha* placing the same old blade of grass in front said, “Please move this a bit if you can in my presence”. Without Him and His grace who can accomplish anything? Poor Lord Vayu had to return in disgrace at his own strange and sudden impotency?

When the Gods thus found both Lord Agni and Vayu failing in their commission, they *en masse* made a deputation to their Sovereign King, Indra. Accepting the commission entrusted to him by his divine populace, the faithful King made a royal pilgrimage towards the Adorable Spirit. Seeing the approaching Royal Visitor, as though to register an extreme contempt and to make the King of the Gods feel His significance, the Supreme chose to withdraw his manifestation as the tantalizing Vision against the heavenly horizon. But Indra was not in any sense of the term blindly egoistic as the boastful self-conceited earlier investigators. The Ruler of the Heavens was not despaired at the disappearance of the Vision; on the other hand, the very disappearance added a greater poignancy to his earnestness to know.

Instead of turning back from his sacred quest he strode forward—, hoping, expecting, wishing!Lo! At the very spot from where the Supreme had disappeared, Goddess Uma, daughter of Himawan, a splendour in precious stones, appeared to bless the honest seeker in Indra. From her, on enquiry, Indra heard in devotion, that the *Yaksha* was none other than the Eternal-Non-dual-Truth in assumed name and form manifesting to bless the Gods, by warning them of their stupidity in believing that they had won a victory over the demons.

THE INNER ESSENCE

The story in itself, when read as such, is but a skeleton, fit to be no greater a work than an Arabian Night's Tale. But, in fact, to the assiduous seeker, who is approaching this seemingly childish story of the *Yaksha*, there are depths of significances to investigate, understand and profit by. We must make an effort to grasp the inner essence of this narration in the *Sruti*.

In this story we have an exhaustive restatement of the *Upanishadic* Truth so far discussed. In it we have a gloriously successful attempt to objectify the highly philosophical and subjective narrations we so far had on the nature and significance of the Self.

In order to understand the full depth of the story a certain preliminary knowledge of the *Sastric* traditions and beliefs is necessary. We have already discussed how from the Unmanifest, the Manifest world emerged out, in descending series of grosser and still grosser matter. Thus we had the *Akasa* (Ether), *Vayu* (Air), *Agni* (Fire), *Jala* (Water) and ultimately *Prithvi* (Earth), the Five Elements enumerated in order of their

grossness—the Earth being the grossest Element.

We also noticed that each Element has its own special quality. *Akasa* has sound as its property. Air has, besides the quality of the previous subtler Element (Ether), its own special quality of touch ; air has thus two qualities : sound and touch. Similarly, all the subsequent Elements possess not only all the qualities of the previous ones but also a special quality of their own. Thus in Fire, we have sound, touch, and its own special quality, Form ; in Water, besides the qualities of Fire, the Water has taste, a quality strictly belonging to the Element Water. In Earth, we have all the four qualities of all the four preceding Elements and its own special quality, the Smell*.

This being so, the *Sastras*, in their own language, say, that the Elements are the presiding deities of the corresponding sense-organs that illuminate these qualities. The ear, which is the apparatus to receive the *Akasa*-quality, cannot and will not register form which is the sense-object to be perceived by the eye presided over by Fire.

With the above-mentioned *Sastric* tradition in our mind, if we were to re-read the seemingly impotent story, we shall discover its purpose in *Kenopanishad*.

Since there is not much of a difficulty in interpreting in the word-meanings in the story-part of this *Upanishad* we propose to give below all the *Mantras* and their translations at one stretch.

ब्रह्म ह देवेभ्योविजिग्ये, तस्य ह ब्रह्मणो विजये देवा अमही-
यन्त । त ऐक्षन्तास्माकमेवायं विजयोऽस्माकमेवायं महिमेति ॥ १ ॥

* For a more detailed discussion upon this topic please refer to the chart in Talks on Atmabodham by Swamiji.

Brahma ha devebhyovijigye, tasya ha Brahmano vijaye deva amaheeyanta. Ta Aikshantasmakamevayam vijayo asmakamevayam mahimeti.

ब्रह्म ह : Brahman, देवेभ्यः : for the Gods, विजिग्ये : won a victory, तस्य ह ब्रह्मणः : (though) due to the Brahman, विजये : in the victory, देवाः : Gods, अमहीयन्त : became elated, ते : they, ऐक्षन्त : thought, अस्माकं एव : for us alone, अयं : this, विजयः : victory, अस्माकं एव : only to us, अयं : this, महिमा : glory, इति : thus.

(1) Preceptor : It is said that *Brahman* once won a victory for the Gods (over the demons). "Though the victory was due to *Brahman*, the Gods became elated by it and thought : To us belongs the victory, to us belongs glory."

तद्वेषां विजज्ञौ, तेभ्यो ह प्रादुर्बभूव तन्नव्यजानत किमिदं यक्षमिति ॥ २ ॥

Tadwaisham vijagnau, tebhyo ha pradurbabhoova tannavyajanata kimidam Yakshamiti.

तत् : that, द्वेषां : vanity, विजज्ञौ : knowing well, तेभ्यः हः : (before) them, प्रादुर्बभूव : appeared, तत् : that, न व्यजानत : never understood, किं : which is, इदं : this, यक्षः : adorable spirit, इति : thus.

(2) *Brahman*, knowing their vanity, appeared before them ; but they did not understand who that Adorable Spirit was.

तेऽग्निमब्रुवन् जातवेद, एतद् विजानीहि किमेतद् यक्षमिति तथेति ॥ ३ ॥

Te agnimabhruvan jalaveda, yetad vijaneehi kimetad Yakshamiti tatheti.

ते : They, अग्नि : fire, अब्रुवन् : said, जातवेद : All knower, एतद् : this, विजानीहि : know well, किं : what, एतद् : this, यक्षः : Great spirit (adorable creature) is, इति : thus ;....., तथा : as you say, इति : thus (He agreed)

(3) They said to Agni thus : “ Oh Jataveda ! (All-knower) find out what this Great Spirit is.” He agreed.

तदभ्यद्रवत्, तमभ्यवदत् कोऽसीत्यग्निर्वा अहमस्मीत्यब्रवीज्जातवेदा वा अहमस्मीति ॥ ४ ॥

Tadabhyadravat, tamabhyavadat ko aseetyagnirva ahamasmeetyabraveejjataveda va ahamasmeeti.

तत् : That, अभ्यद्रवत् : hastened ; तं : him, अभ्यद्रवत् : asked, कः : who, असि : are you, इति : thus, अग्निः वा : either Agni, अहं : I, अस्मि : am, इति : thus, अब्रवीत् : replied, जातवेदा : Omniscient, वा : or, अहं : I, अस्मि : am, इति : thus.

(4) Agni hastened to the Spirit. The Spirit asked him who he was, and Agni replied, ‘ Verily I am Agni, the Omniscient.’

तस्मिंस्त्वयि किं वीर्यमित्यपीदं सर्वं दहेयं यदिदं पृथिव्यामिति ॥ ५ ॥

Tasmimstwayi kim veeramityapeedam sarvam daheyam yadidam pruthiviyamiti.

तस्मिन् : of such a nature, त्वयि : in you, किं : what, वीर्यं : power (is there), इति : thus, अपि : even, इदं : this, सर्वं : all, दहेयं : I can burn, यत् इदं : whichever is, पृथिव्यां : on the earth, इति : thus.

(5) He (Brahman), in the form of Yaksha, asked him : “ What power hast thou Who art of such a nature ?”

Agni replied, " I can even burn whatsoever there is on Earth ".

तस्मै तृणं निदध्वेतद् दहेति, तदुपप्रेयाय सर्वजवेन, तन्नशशाकं दग्धं, स तत एव निववृते नैतदशकं विज्ञातुं यदेतद् यक्षमिति ॥ ६ ॥

Tasmai trunam nidadhvetad daheti, tadupapreyaya sarvajavēna, tannasasaka dagdham, sa tata eva nivavrute naitadasakam vignatum yadetad Yakshamiti.

तस्मै : before him, तृणं : a blade of grass, निदध्व : placing, एतद् : this, दह : burn, इति : thus, तत् : that, (तृणं), उपप्रेयाय : (Agni) dashed, सर्वजवेन : with all his power, तत् : that, न शशाक : could not दग्धुं : to burn ; स : He, तत एव : at once, निववृते : returned, न : not, एतत् : this, अशकं : could, विज्ञातुं : to know, यदेतत् : that which is, यक्षं : spirit, इति : thus.

(6) He, *Brahman*, placed a blade of grass before him asking, " Burn it ! " Agni dashed at it with all his power. He could not burn it. So he returned to the Gods saying 'I' could not find out who that Adorable Spirit was.

अथ वायुमब्रुवन् वायवेतद् विजानीहि किमेतद् यक्षमिति, तथेति ॥ ७ ॥

Atha Vayumabruvan vayavetad vijaneehi kimetad Yakshamiti, tatheti.

अथ : then, वायुं : (to the) Wind, अब्रुवन् : (the Devas) said, वायवः : Oh (the Lord of) Winds ! एतद् : this, विजानीहि : know, किं : what, एतद् : this, यक्षं : spirit, इति : thus.

(7) The *Devas* then said to Vayu (Wind), 'Oh ! Lord of the Winds, find out who this Adorable Spirit is.' He agreed.

तदभ्यद्रवत्, तमभ्यवदत् कोऽसीति, वायुर्वा अहमस्मीत्यब्रवी-
न्मातरिश्वा वा अहमस्मीति ॥ ८ ॥

*Tadabhyadravat tamabhyavadat ko aseeti, Vayurva aham
asmeetyabraveenmatariswa va ahamasmeeti.*

तत् : that, अभ्यद्रवत् : hastened, तं : him, अभ्यवदत् :
replied, कः : who, असि : are you, इति : thus, वायुः व :
either Vayu, अहं : I, अस्मि : am, इति : thus, अब्रवीत् :
said, मातरिश्वा वा : or the Trodder of the skies, अहं : I,
अस्मि : am, इति : thus.

(8) Vayu hastened to the Spirit. The Spirit asked
him who he was, and Vayu replied, 'I am Vayu, I am
really *Matariswan*' (The Trodder of the Skess).

तस्मिंस्त्वयि किं वीर्यमित्यपीदं सर्वमाददीय यदिदं पृथिव्या-
मिति ॥ ९ ॥

*Tasmimstwayi kim veeryamityapeedam sarvamadadeeya
yadidam pruthivyamiti.*

तस्मिन् : (in) such (a powerful), त्वयि : in you, किं :
what, वीर्यं : power, इति : thus, अपि : even, इदं : this,
सर्वं : all, आददीये : I can blow away, यत् इदं : in this,
पृथिव्यां : earth, इति : thus.

(9) "What power resides in thee, why art thou of
such a nature?" asked the Spirit. "Why, I can blow
away everything whatever there is on Earth," said Vayu.

तस्मै तृणं निदध्वेतदादत्स्वेति, तदुपप्रेयाय सर्वजवेन, तन्न-
शशाकादातुं स तत एव निववृते नैतदशकं विज्ञातुं यदेतद् यक्ष-
मिति ॥ १० ॥

*Tasmai trunam nidadavetadadatsweti, tadupapreyaya sarva-
javena, tannasakadatum sa tata eva nivavrute naitadasakam
vignatum yadetad Yakshamiti.*

तस्मै : for him, तृणं : blade of grass, निदध्व : placing, एतद् : this, आदत्स्व : blow away, इति : thus, तत् : this, उपप्रेयाय : having approached, सर्वजवेन : with all the might, तत् : this, न शशाक : could not, आदातुं : move, सः : he, ततः एव : 'Then only, निववृते : returned, न : not, एतत् : this, अशकं : could, विज्ञातुं : find, यदेतत् : that which is, यक्षः : Adorable spirit, इति : thus.

(10) The *Yaksha* placed a blade of grass before him saying, "Blow this away". He approached it with all his power not able to move it. So he returned to the Gods and reported, "I could not find out who that Great Spirit was".

अथेन्द्रमब्रुवन् मघवन्नेतद् विजानीहि, किमेतद् यक्षमिति तथेति,
तदभ्यद्रवत् तस्मात् तिरोदधे ॥ ११ ॥

Athendramabruvan Maghavannetad vijaneehi, kimetad Yakshamiti tatheti, tadabhyadavat tasmāt tirodadhe.

अथ : then, इन्द्रः : Indra, अब्रुवन् : said, मघवन् : the Chief of Gods, एतद् : this, विजानीहि : know well, किं : which, एतद् : this, यक्षः : Adorable spirit, इति : thus, तथा : as you say, इति : this, तद् : thus, अभ्यद्रवत् : hastened, तस्मात् : towards it, तिरोदधे : disappeared.

(11) Then the Gods said to Indra, "the Chief of Gods, Oh! Maghavan! (worshipful, or the possessor of great wealth and power) find out who the Adorable Spirit is." He agreed and hastened towards the Spirit, but the Spirit disappeared from his view.

स तस्मिन्नेवाकाशे स्त्रियमाजगाम बहुशोभमानामुमां हैमवतीं
तां होवाच किमेतद् यक्षमिति ॥ १२ ॥

Sa tasminnevakase striyamajagama bahusobhamanamu-mam Haimavateem tam hovacha kimetad Yakshamiti.

सः : He, तस्मिन् एव : in the very same, आकाशे : spot (place), स्त्रियं : woman, आजगाम : came to know, बहुशोभमानां : extremely charming, उमां : Uma, हैमवतीं : the Daughter of the Himawan, तां : (to) her, ह उवाच : said (he), किं : which, एतद् : this, यक्षं : Adorable spirit, इति : this.

(12) And in that very spot he beheld a woman, Uma the damsel fair,—the Daughter of the snowy mountain Himawan. He asked her who this Adorable Spirit could be.

CHAPTER IV

Reviewing the story against a background provided by the *Sastric* principles we have already discussed, we shall now come to grasp the Vedantic import indicated and suggested by this seemingly childish story. We found that the five phenomenal Elements represent among themselves the sense-organs and hence we have the *Sastric* injunctions which declare each one of them as a presiding deity of each of the organs.

Viewing thus, we shall find that the Gods, meaning the higher spiritual values of the life (love, tolerance, patience, kindness, charity, piety, sympathy, etc.) having won a victory over the demons, meaning the lower animal values of life (hatred, prejudice, anger, jealousy, selfishness, egoism, vanity, etc.) with the help of the Eternal Self, came to tumble down into a misconception and a deluded conceit. A *Sadhaka*, in his initial stages of *Sadhana*, is apt to grow vainful over his very *Sadhana* and go around declaring about the hours he spends in meditation, the higher qualities he is practising, the experiences that he is having, etc. At such moments, the Supreme Lord appears before the *Sadhaka*, in the form of an Adorable Spirit, a mysteriously strange and captivating doubt about the Nature of the very Reality he is seeking.

Again, the seekers of Truth, in their immaturity, try to meet the Supreme as an object other than themselves. The commission of *Agni* to enquire into the nature of the Vision and his failure to understand the *Yaksha*, is a parable explaining to us a deeper subjective limitation in that, the Truth Absolute cannot be

experienced as an 'object' either by the sense-organs, the eye, the organ of action, and speech. Lord *Agni's* miserable failure at burning even a thin blade of grass in the presence of the Eternal Self, without Its blessings, is an ample statement of a reliable fact that the eye is blind without the 'Eye of the Eye' functioning ; similarly, speech is dumb without the divine 'Speaker of the Speech'.

Shameful retreat alone was the lot of Lord *Vayu*, who arrogantly approached the Eternal Power claiming to himself an independent might enough to sway, if he chose, even the universes. In fact, Lord *Vayu* had to disillusion himself and discover that he could not move even a blade of grass without the sanction and warrant of the Power behind the *Yaksha*. Subjectively viewed, we have found that *Vayu* represents the presiding deity of the *sense of smell* and the *reproductive function* in us. Ripped of its verbal vesture, it reveals in its nakedness, the Truth again, that neither can we 'smell-out' truth nor shall we preserve our species without the divine potency gracing the *reproductive organs*.

In short, the despicable failure of the two mighty gods *Agni* and *Vayu* to investigate, understand and know the exact identity of the *Yaksha*, is but a restatement of the *Upanishadic Truth* dealt with already in the previous chapter, viz., अन्यदेव तद् विदितादथो अविदितादधि (*Anyadeva tad vidadadatho aviditadadhi*), meaning, that it is different from what is known and It is beyond what is *unknown*—It being none other than the *knower* Himself.

Lastly, the Divine instincts in the *Sadhaka*, the Gods, *en masse* approach their Lord, the mighty *Indra*. *Indra* can also be interpreted as 'indriyanam—*raja*', the Lord of the sense-organs, meaning, the mind.

When the higher spiritual seeker in us thirsts to know and to understand the adorable Self, he may, in his delusion, try at first to grasp the Truth through his usual instruments of cognition, the sense-organs and action-organs. Naturally, he fails. But if his thirst for Knowledge be deep and urgent enough, he shall certainly approach the Lord of the *Indriyas*, the Mind, and commission it for this higher purpose of "knowing the Unknowable".

The mind of the Seeker, when it has gained the *Indrasthiti*, slowly and steadily approaches It, in meek surrender and without any trace of selfish arrogance or vanity, anxiously seeking to know. And on the Mind's approach, the very Vision of the Supreme disappears. As the *Sadhaka* tries to grasp the Reality within and approaches the Adorable Glory, his would be the experience of the disappearance of his very quest. Many are the *Sadhakas* in the Vedanta Path, who at this juncture, in haste, return to declare that the *Yaksha* is Non-existent. The *Rationalist Logicians* and the *Nihilists* among the Buddhists, are the examples of a hasty impatient Indra returning disappointed without reaching the goal of his discovery.

The story in the *Sruti* clearly hints at this possible tragedy, and advises us, in the character of Indra and his ultimate success, that we should not be impatient but must wait and continue our pursuit until we get at some *positive knowledge* of Truth. In short, he is a pure Vedantic *Sadhaka*, ear-marked for the final victory, who has come to a perfect *Indrasthiti*.

Not being cowed down at the sudden and unexpected disappearance of the theme of his enquiry, Indra, with a heart beaming with hope and faith and throbbing with a deep desire to understand and

to know, gazes on merely at the very spot from where the Vision has disappeared—expecting nothing, hoping nothing, desiring nothing, wanting nothing. It is at such moments of inner calmness and fully awakened awareness do the *Yogins* come to cognise, the Lady of Knowledge, Mother *Sruti*.

An aspirant, who has gained through his *Sadhana*, such an Indra-like noble will, divine determination, sincere heart, desireless mind and an alert and vigilant Intellect, is the fittest *Adhikari* for Vedanta. And to such a fit student success is sure, if he be as modest, egoless and persevering as the hero in the *Sruti* story.

Religion is not for one, who wants to make some make-shift arrangements to escape the immediate challenges of life. The one who runs into a temple to pray and to beg when he looses his last tinner in a race course-betting-season, is an intruder and a blasphemer of religion. He is worse than one who has the mad idiocy and the feminine courage to commit suicide at such moments of tension.

Indra was not to wait long in that 'state of excruciating God-ward anxiety'. The Lord of our hearts is too kind and merciful to keep His true devotees, even for a moment, too long in their all-out anxiety to realise Him. The wondrous Lady of Himawath, The Goddess of *Brahma Vidya*, born in the very caves of the Himalayan inner silence, appeared at the very spot where the *Yaksha* had disappeared. To a matured spiritual aspirant, *Sruti* shall always go out to console, comfort, lead, guide and to encourage him. It is from the mouth of Sreemati Himawath Kumari that Indra, for the first time, heard that the *Yaksha* was no other than one of the direct manifestations, which *Paramatman* had assumed upon Himself, to bless the

dreaming self by curing the very ulcer of its delusions and the consequent sorrows—the separative ego-sense and its hollow vanities.

Such a theoretical knowledge as heard from the mouth of the very Goddess of Learning is called the *Paroksha-Gnan*; and this, in itself, cannot take the listener to the Supreme Goal of his seeking, namely the Realm of Perfection that lies beyond the stormy horizons of tears and trials. *Moksha* is that State of Perfection where there are no limitations and where the triple pronged tormenter of the morals, the time-space-casualty, never gains an entry.

This state can be 'achieved' only when the disciple, after hearing the declarations of Truth from the Masters, has brought the very Truth within the frontiers of his own intimate subjective experience (*Aparoksha Gnan*). On realising that the Self in us is the All-self pervading everywhere, then alone can we end, once for all our sapless delusions and profitless sorrows.

CONDITIONED-BRAHMAN

Examples, illustrations, comparisons and stories are often used in the *Upanishads* to explain to us the Inexplicable. It is evident then that none of these stories or illustrations can be literally true in their application, nor can the Truth entirely be explained away by any one of them. This being the literary tactics of the Seers of the *Upanishadic Mantras*, every story or illustration employed by them needs a deep enquiry, if the student were to profit fully by them.

In a sense, illustrations are employed in Vedanta to serve as idols in *Bhaktimarga*. No piece of stone in any temple can provide for the devotee his life's goal

of achieving happiness and peace. But without an idol self-improvement is *impossible*. The idol is the means ; self-discovery is the goal. To confuse the means with the goal is the Grand Trunk Road leading to sorrow. The idol serves the spiritual aspirant as a spring-board to heave himself out of *samsar* and plunge into himself. The Super-Conscious State, otherwise called the State of God-Consciousness, is reached when a devotee through self-surrender or through full discrimination dissociates himself from his false ego-dream and comes to establish himself in the true conviction that he is the *Atman*.

This process of *detaching* oneself away from the unreal and *attaching* oneself to the Real is the process of self-perfection. And this technique can be put into practice efficiently, only by one who has trained his mind and intellect to run in a direction willed by himself. If one, who sits up to contemplate upon the glories and beauties of God, allows his mind in his seat of meditation to run off the rails, to ramble into other trackless fields of wayside bushes, his spiritual pilgrimage shall end only in sad disaster. The capacity to keep the mind controlled and to cause it to flow in a chosen direction, called concentration, is gained by the aspirants in their devotion at the Feet of the *Murti* or through their deeds and ponderings over the significances and pregnant suggestions of the illustrations.

When one has thus gained either through *Bhakti* or by *Karma* or by *Gnana* paths, sufficient amount of this sacred wealth of concentration, inner purification, and Lord's Grace, he is fit to enter the last lap of the Journey to the Self. It is at this stage alone, when an aspirant recognises himself to be nothing other than the Self, when the *Bhakta*, gets his separative-ego-sense

completely merged in the consciousness of the presence of the Lord of his heart, that the *Gnani* and the *Bhakta* come to the plane of the Absolute Perfection, otherwise called God or Truth. And yet, the seekers following any path can, by themselves, walk into this last lap of the journey. By long and sincere pursuit, every aspirant comes to gain a kind of attachment to the very path he is pursuing. It needs courage and grit, and often even violence, to haul himself out of the Divine-Life-rut, into the ampler fields of the Life Divine! It is the *Guru's* job to give this *last kick*, as it were, to a heroic seeker in his self-effort.

In this connection, we shall have a very practical example in the maiden attempt of the present-day master parachutist! However daring a performer he may be today, he must have certainly had a *first* day and a *first* jump. In the instruction room, his instructors must have explained to him thoroughly, with chalk and blackboard, the entire science behind the principle of parachute-jump, so as to convince him intellectually of the safety of this air adventure. But, for all the trainee's theoretical knowledge, his first-hand information of his comrades who have jumped, and even his actual witnessing of the scene of his own friends jumping, he shall not feel confident at the moment when fully equipped he is brought to the trap-door of the plane in the air! That is, at the moment of the real plunging through, at the first attempt, at the trap-door, looking down and gauging with his eyes the distance of the fall, he shall not, if he be human, find enough courage to let himself slip out through the open doorway! In all cases the instructor and his fellow comrades must bundle him up and physically push him out into the void! And once he is thus out of the plane, his class

lessons are applied by him, in that "unknown world of new experience", almost instinctively. After a few repeated chances to live personally this *unknown and strange experience*, the trainee becomes a self-confident master-parachutist ready at a moment's notice to plunge out from the noisy Castles of the Air and enjoy with effortless ease, the joy of floating about in grace and poise through Lord's own space !

A *Guru* is the instructor who, out of kindness and consideration, pushes the trainee, the fit aspirant, into the actual Realm of Experiencing ; the act of this kind push is accomplished during the initiation of the student into the sacred meaning of the *Upanishad Mantras*. The *Upanishads*, as you know, contain the philosophical portion of our religion. Theology is a low-roofed world. The moment rational thinking rises its head in a question mark within us, that very moment theology crumbles down into wreck and ruin. It is at such moments that the individual raises his head above and beyond the rafters and ceilings of prejudices and intolerances, orthodoxy and fanaticism, rituals and formalities, into the vast skies of philosophy.

In the *Yaksha* story, Indra represents such a fit student who is being initiated into the Truth by Sri Umadevi Herself. A mere knowledge, that "THAT IS BRAHMAN", cannot take anybody to the Supreme Goal of Peace within himself. In this sense the initiation of Indra into *Brahma Vidya* was in no way complete ; Indra gained only a theoretical knowledge of what Truth is.

सा ब्रह्मेति होवाच ब्रह्मणो वा एतद् विजये महीयध्वमिती ।
ततो हैव विदाञ्चकार ब्रह्मेति ॥ १ ॥

*Sa Brahmeti hovacha Brahmano va etad vijaye maheé-
yadhwamiti. Tato haiva vidanchakara Brahmeti.*

सा : She, ब्रह्म : Brahman, इति : thus, उवाच ह . answered, ब्रह्मणः वा : Brahman's, एतद् : this, विजये : in the victory, महीयध्वं : you gained greatness, इति : thus, ततः : then, ह एव : only, विदाञ्चकार : knew (he), ब्रह्म : Brahman, इति : as.

(1) Preceptor : “*Brahman !*” She exclaimed, “Indeed, through *Brahman's* victory have you gained greatness !” Then alone he understood that the Adorable Spirit (*Yaksha*) was “*Brahman*”.

Even though Indra had thus only an information about the identity of the *Yaksha*, the *Sruti* continues to explain to us the greatness of such knowledge. Nay, the *Upanishad Rishis*, by means of this story, extol *Brahma Vidya* to such an extent, that they say, that even the arrogant and conceited Lord of Fire and Lord of Wind have come to be recognised, with greater reverence and respect, even in the very kingdom of the Gods, because, these Gods of the Elements chanced to come nearest to the Supreme Truth in Its manifestations.

तस्मात् वा एते देवाः अतितरमिवान्यान् देवान् । यदग्नि-
र्वायुरिन्द्रस्ते ह्येनन्नेदिष्टं पस्पृशुस्ते ह्येनत् प्रथमो विदाञ्चकार
ब्रह्मेति ॥ २ ॥

*Tasmat va ete devah atitaramivanyan devan. Yadagnir-
Vayur-Indraste hyenannedistam pasprususte hyenat pratham
vidanchakara Brahmeti.*

तस्मात् वा : Therefore, एते : these, देवाः : Gods, अतितरं : excel, इव : as it were, अन्यान् the other, देवान् : Gods, यत् : which, अग्निः : Agni, वायुः : Wind, इन्द्रः : Indra, ते हि : they alone, एनत् : this, नेदिष्टं : nearing (It), पस्पृशुः : perceived, ते हि : they were, एनत् : this,

प्रथमः : the first (who), विदाञ्चकार : knew, ब्रह्म : Brahman, इति : thus.

(2) Therefore, verily, these Gods (Agni, Vayu and Indra) excel the other Gods ; for they approached the Spirit (the manifestation of the Supreme) the nearest and they were the first to know Him as *Brahman*.

Not satisfied with this, crude though it may seem to us, in this modern world of specialised knowledge, the *Sruti* continues to applaud and extol the Science of Self-Perfection by declaring that Indra had come to enjoy the honours of the King of even Lord Vayu and Lord Agni, because of the rare privilege he had of knowing, for the first time, the identity of *Brahman* directly from the Divine Mother, Uma Herself.

तस्मात् वा इन्द्रोऽतितरमिवान्यान् देवान् । स ह्येनन्नेदिष्टं पस्पर्श सह्येनत् प्रथमो विदाञ्चकार ब्रह्मेति ॥ ३ ॥

Tasmat va indro-atitaramivanyan devaan. Sa hyenan-nedistam pasparsha sahyenat prathamo vidanchakara Brahmeti.

तस्मात् वा : Therefore, इन्द्रः : Indra, अतितरं : excels, इव : as it were, अन्यान् : the rest of the, देवान् : Gods, सः हि : he alone, एनत् : that, नेदिष्टं : nearing (It), पस्पर्श : touched (perceived), सः हि : he alone, एनत् : this, प्रथमः : first, विदाञ्चकार : knew, ब्रह्म : Brahman, इति : thus.

(3) And therefore, indeed, Indra excels other Gods ; for, he approached the Spirit nearest and he was the first to know him as *Brahman*.

Just as Indra came to excel all other Gods, one who is a pursuer of Truth and who has come to *know* the identity of THAT through a study of the *Srutis*, shall come to enjoy an excellence among his fellowmen.

In order to come to *hear* of THAT, the student will have to reach the sacred condition of the *Indra-sthiti* as explained here. He who has a passionate eagerness to understand, a humbleness and selflessness in his seeking and an inexhaustible faith in one's own success, is said to be in the *Indra-condition*. To him Truth shall reveal its Absolute Nature, at the very mention of it, through a Man of knowledge, the Sacred *Guru*.

The sacred moment of the Vision of Truth is not long and enduring in the first few instances of experiencing. They come in "Flashes", so quick and sudden, that a meditator, unless he is extremely sensitive and extraordinarily alert with his sharpened awareness, shall miss these moments of illumination. This idea is emphasised here in the *Sruti* when She uses these two illustrations ; the Subjective and the Cosmic :

तस्यैष आदेशो यदेतद् विद्युतो व्यद्युतदा ३ इतीन्यमीमिषदा
३ इत्यधिदैवतम् ॥ ४ ॥

*Tasyaisha adesso yadetad vidyuto vyadyutada 3 iteennya-
meemishada 3 ityadhidaivatam.*

तस्य : Its, आदेशः : illustration (description), यदेतद् : this is, विद्युतः : lightning, व्यद्युतदा : shining like a lightning, इति : thus, इन्न्यमीमिषदा : It is appeared within the twinkling of the eye, इति : thus (is the), अधिदैवतं : of Cosmic Powers.

(4) This is the description of *Brahman* (description by means of an illustration) ; He shone forth like the splendour of the lightning ; He disappeared within the twinkling of the eye. This is the comparison of the *Brahman* with reference to the *Devas* (His manifestation as Cosmic Powers).

Adesa means an illustration by means of which *Brahman* is explained. Here is an example which beautifully explains not only the *vividness of the experience* but also the *flashy quickness* of the Vision of Truth which the *Sadhak* comes to experience vitally as his own Self. Also, as in lightning, even if the flash be but for a split moment, the light of it is so bright that it spreads all round. Similarly, though the experience be but very momentary in the final living moment of Truth-consciousness—God-consciousness—the God-man's experience of Truth is not within himself *only* but also all round and about him. At the Vision of Truth, nothing else remains as Known or Unknown but THAT! "Non-dual, One Without a Second, Truth alone is, and THAT I AM," is the God experience.

Again the illustration of the winding of the eye shows how *natural* and *effortless* is the final flight to the beyond in meditation. All efforts in meditation is only for the beginner; a swimmer drowns and gulps down water only during the first few days of his learning to float in water! Having mastered the art, a rope dancer is bored to repeat, night after night, his acrobatics and feats of balance, although he must have had his own falls and bruises, thrills and joys, during his attempts at mastering his art. Similarly, a meditator may have a struggle to keep his mind in balance and in peace during his early attempts but ere long, as he gains more and more confidence and balance, he shall with a joyous ease float into himself, and there, in an effortless effort meet face to face with the One, his own-Self.

Not being satisfied with an illustration from the cosmic in her kindness, the *Sruti* gives to her devotees another *Adesa*, from the microcosm.

अथाध्यात्मं यदेतद् गच्छतीव च मनोऽनेन चैतदुपस्मरत्यभीक्ष्णं
सङ्कल्पः ॥ ५ ॥

*Athadhyatmam, yadetad gachhateeva cha mano-anena
chaitadupasmaratyabheekshnam sankalpaha.*

अथ : now then, अध्यात्मं : (an illustration) from the microcosm, यत् एतद् : this which, गच्छति इव : goes as it were, च : and, मनः : the mind, अनेन च : by this, एतद् : this, उपस्मरति : one thinks, अभीक्ष्णं : often and on, संकल्पः : (speedy) willing of the mind.

(5) Now as regards this description from the point of view of His manifestation as *Atman* within the body—
“as one thinks of *Brahman* by the mind and as speedily as the mind wills”.

Another illustration to explain the effortless and quick success with which a true aspirant can come to realise the truth is given in this *mantra*. The terms used in the *mantra* ‘*gachhateeva*’ (as though going out), and ‘*abheekshnam*’ (again and again) in their essence embrace the Theory of Perception according to Vedanta, which we had already discussed in our earlier discussions. The mind alive with *Chaitanya* as it were flows out through the *Indriyas* to the objects and there takes the form of the objects, when the possessor of the mind comes to the knowledge what the objects are.

Again, it is a subjective psychological experience that human mind is never at rest nor ever silent. Till the mind is doped with *Tamas* in its deep-sleep-state, the mind is a meaningless hall of revelry and drunken noise where desire prompted thought-demons dance their Eternal Death Dances. Silence within is joy Infinite and Bliss Absolute ; and the *Yogin* alone knows

what it is ! To an ordinary mortal, in his weaknesses, his ' within ' is a stormy centre of dreadful commotions and horrible storms ; waves after waves of different thoughts rise up, lash on each other and die into the very nothingness from which they rose, and in which they existed !

Supposing a thought wave has just risen : it rises, holds itself intact for a split moment and then perishes. Just as the sea is never without waves, the mind can never exist without thoughts. The moment a thought wave has subsided, instantaneously another rises, which again perishes only to breed many more in its place !

However infinitesimal it may be, there certainly must be a period of time which is an interval between two successive thought waves. In this interval the previous thought wave has set and the new one has not yet risen ; that is the moment when mind is empty of thoughts. And you all know from our previous discussions that mind is but a flow of thoughts and that mind is not there when thoughts are absent. Also we have found that it is the conclusion of the *Srutis* that when mind is not there, the *Yogin* shall come to experience Truth.

It becomes now evident how pregnant in significance and import is this innocent looking term in the *mantra* namely ' *abheekshnam* '. And such a subtle factor inside us is taken to serve as an illustration for the *Sruti* to explain the flashy moments of appearance and disappearance of Truth. It must be obvious to every one of you how inimitably true and perfect a comparison this is to indicate the sudden and lightning moment of experience of Truth that one shall gain in one's early meditation.

तद्ध तद्वनं नाम तद्वनमित्युपासितव्यं स य एतदेवं वेदाभि हैनं
सर्वाणि भूतानि संवाञ्छन्ति ॥ ६ ॥

*Taddha tadwanam nama tadwanamityupasitavyam sa ya
etadevam vedabhi hainam sarvani bhootani samvanchanti.*

तत् ह : This is (well known as), तद्वनं : Tadvanam,
नाम : in the name of, तद्वनं : (the One who is to be
meditated upon) Tadvana, इति : thus as, उपासितव्यं : is
to be worshipped, स : he, य : who, एतद् : this, एवं :
in this way, वेदाभि : knows, इ एनं : him, सर्वाणि : all,
भूतानि : living beings, संवाञ्छन्ति : love him: extremely.

(6) *Brahman* is well known as *Tadvanam*, the One
who is to be worshipped as the *Atman* of all living beings.
So it is to be meditated upon as *Tadvana*. All love him
who knows It thus.

The *Upanishadic* Teacher is here giving a method
of *Upasana* (method of meditation) for the use of the
lesser students who cannot directly profit by the philo-
sophic declaration of the *Upanishad* so far given.

Nowadays we have very little of the *Upasana-
methods* practised in the religious and in the spiritual
fields. But in the Vedic period we find that all *Sadhakas*
were well versed in the methods of *Upasana* and a
conscious and deliberate attempt was made by the
Upasaka to keep his mind exclusively running in the
contemplation of a given idea and its application to the
Cosmic. When a meditator thus meditates upon a
given idea to the total exclusion of all other ideas he
comes to enjoy the fruit of his *Upasana*. To a seeker
striving to realise the Truth declarations in Vedanta,
the sacred fruit of *Upasana* is the invaluable spiritual
treasure that he comes to earn in the form of his own
powers of concentration and inner expansion.

At present very few Hindus practice *Upasana*. Instead of the earlier technique of peaceful and intellectual meditation, nowadays we have a modernised application of the same technique in *Bhakti*, a path wherein love-agitations and emotions storm within and bring the mind to a still-state of meditation. *Bhakti* is the path given to us by the genius Vyasa through his *Puranas*. Till the days of the *Puranas*, the life of the *Aryans* was a constant effort at self-perfection through unbroken introvert enquiries, conducted in an atmosphere of external peace and internal intellection.

Just as meditation, devotion also prepares and purifies a *Sadhaka* with equal efficiency and makes him fit for the higher contemplation of God as the Absolute Truth. The lesser evolved aspirants need this initial training before they can start the practice of deeper meditation upon the Nameless and the Formless. Here *Sruti*, out of Her mercy and Love, is prescribing, for her lower standard students, a method of meditation to be practised as a preliminary training. *Sruti* says that those who practice Vedanta should meditate upon the Supreme Reality as *Tadvana*, meaning One deserving to be worshipped as the All-pervading Spirit.

To a very careful student of this *Sruti*, the present *mantra* may read as a contradiction of itself, since, in the earlier part of the *Kenopanishad* we have read an uncompromising and positive condemnation of worshipping the deities. But on going deep into the significances we can easily understand that what the *Sruti* condemned in the earlier part is not Idol worship as such, but the sad practice of the *Sadhakas* in misunderstanding the means with the end. Worship and *Upasana* are not in themselves an end ; they are means for purifying and

perfecting the student's inner instruments such as his mind and intellect ; and when once this has been accomplished, the student is to make use of the prepared instruments for the higher purposes of deeper and more intense meditation. But ordinarily, men who lack discrimination and renunciation reach the Spiritual path and in order to trade in their sensuous joys they barter away the golden chances which *Upasana* provides them for achieving the highest. “*Naidam Yadidamupasate*” (Not this upon which you do your *Upasana*) is only a warning to those who perform the *upasana* with no other idea than the finite joys or rewards of higher world or of some paltry gains in this very life.

“As you think, so you become,” is an eternal principle and all religions in the world work upon this broad principle in Nature. Here *Sruti* also gives us a clue. He who meditates upon the Lord as a benevolent power pervading everywhere and vitalising every being, such an *upasaka* becomes the very thing he meditates upon, and, thus, comes to enjoy the love and adoration of his entire generation.

SELF-PERFECTION TECHNIQUE

उपनिषदं भो ब्रूहीत्युक्ता त उपनिषद् ब्रूहिं वाव त उपनिषद-
मब्रूमेति ॥ ७ ॥

*Upanishadam bho broohityukta ta Upanishad broohmeem-
vava ta Upanishadamabhroometi.*

उपनिषदं : (the saving knowledge of) Upanishad,
भो : Sir, ब्रूहि : tell (me) (teach me), इति : thus, उक्ता :
has been said, ते : to you, उपनिषद् ब्राह्मी : the saving
knowledge of Brahman, ते : to you, उपनिषदं : that
knowledge, अब्रूम : we have imparted, इति : thus.

(7) Disciple : Sir, teach me the Saving Knowledge.
 Preceptor : The Saving Knowledge has been imparted to you. Verily, we have imparted the Saving Knowledge of *Brahman* to you.

This is not a question from one who has not understood the *Upanishad* given out by his *Guru*. In its technique it may be said that this is a literary method employed in those times to indicate that the *sastras* have been completely dealt with and that nothing remains to be added. Also, it shows how the student is anxious to hear more and more from the *Guru* regarding any other point that the teacher might, probably, have reserved, to be added as a warning or complimentary item of information, sacred and unavoidable, for the real and complete understanding of the *Upanishads*.

Again, this question shows that the student meant to ask about the necessary *Yoga* technique or about the inner purifications without which, he had heard, a correct apprehension of the *Upanishad* statements was not possible and much less could he have a full inward personal experience of the deep-seated Truth and Godliness in him. This interpretation is supported by the following passage of the *Upanishad* which explains the *Tapas* and the practices necessary for the right and full understanding of the *Upanishad Mantras*.

तस्यै तपो दमः कर्मेति प्रतिष्ठा वेदाः सर्वाङ्गानि सत्य-
 मायतनम् ॥ ८ ॥

*Tasyai tapo damah karmeti pratishtha vedah sarvangani
 satyamayanam.*

तस्यै : of it, तपः : austerity, दमः restraint, कर्म :
 (dedicated) work, इति : thus, प्रतिष्ठा : (are the) foun-

dations, वेदाः : the Vedas, सर्वाङ्गानि : are the limbs (of It), सत्यं : Truth is, आयतनम् : (Its) abode.

(8) Austerity, restraint and dedicated work—these are the foundations of It, the Saving Knowledge of the *Upanishads*. The Vedas are its limbs and Truth is its abode.

The teacher had already, in the previous *Mantra*, said that he had declared the entire *Upanishad*. One has to really wonder why, even after a declaration so open as that with which She had concluded, should the *Sruti* now add more and more *Mantras*? This is no literary fault in an *Upanishad* drafted and couched in a conversational style. The disciple had asked, if you remember, “Sir, teach me the Saving Knowledge”. These words in the mouth of the disciple can have two implications : (1) It directly implies a demand for a clear declaration from the Teacher that the *Upanishad* had actually ended and (2) it indirectly implies also that the student wants some more information regarding the *technique* of Self-Perfection. Although the teacher had amply explained the indentity of the Director of the sense-organs, mind and intellect, the great Master had not detailed the method by which the deluded can come to realise this Supreme Knowledge.

This query of how one can *realise* the Perfection pointed out by the Scripture is the typical spirit exclusive for the Hindu Philosophy. No other race in the world has developed a culture of thought so complete and perfect as the *Aryan* grandsires who are the Seers of the most comprehensive, the most rational, the most tolerant Religion of True Love, as expounded in Vedanta.

To the thinkers of the *Aryan* Stock, Philosophy is

not a mere *view of life* ; to the practical men of life and action, it was a mere dreamy Utopia and a womanish game of meddling at emotional and intellectual embroidery. Even today, to the West, Philosophy is only a *view of life* ; and as such, they have no fundamental values to preach. Generation after generation, the thinkers of the West had to change their idealistic *view of life* according to the spirit of the age and the systems that came to govern it.

To our forefathers, Philosophy was not only a mere *view of life* but it was at once a *way of life*. The very name with which in Sanskrit we understand Philosophy, is DARSANA, a word which has come from a root meaning To KNOW. That is, however, subtle the Truth may be, to the practical men of life, the Seers, a mere dream ideal was no fulfilment of their honest cravings. Whenever they, through intellect, had to come to determine the glories of an ideal, they at once took it up and applied it in practical life as a principle to live. So too, even they contemplated upon Truth and came by the principle of God. They were not satisfied by merely getting at a Symbol or an Idol to worship, to bow to and to kneel at ! *Realisation* is the very watch-word of *Aryan Sanatana Dharma*. Poetry writing or word-coining prose-poetry or dexterous word-play were all to them too childish a game to play. Their culture was the culture of Life and not a tradition of dreams.

Thus, there is a wealth of significances implied, though unsaid, in the words of the disciple who was a perfect representative of the *Upanishadic Age*. Naturally, the Teacher, understanding this noble *Aryan* thirst, not only to know the Ideal but to *Realise*, to live and to become the Ideal himself most sympathetically explains

the very corner stones of our ancient *Sanatana Dharma* in this *Mantra*.

The Absolute Truth, in the modern vocabulary, the 'God-principle' says the *Upanishad*, rests, as it were, upon austerity, self-restraint and dedicated selfless "work". That these are unavoidable values to be lived by one before that subject can be conditioned sufficiently for a perfect tuning up with the subtlest of the subtle, the Truth, is a fact that can be known even by a man of average intelligence. No religion in the world sanctions or encourages anything other than these divine values. If today we are living certain wrong ideals contrary to these sacred principles of austerity, self-restraint and selfless *Seva*, they indeed are the very serpents that poison the sources of our modern life. Individual, communal, national, and international sorrows and tragedies of the day can all be directly traced to this senile spirit of the Age, from which these noble qualities, sustainers of true life, have been thoughtlessly eschewed with a suicidal deliberateness, almost amounting to madness !

An aspirant, unless he has the courage to refuse himself the courtings of his mind, cannot progress in the spiritual path. Religion is not meant for a feminine character who has not got the courage and the spirit of freedom to stand away from the mad wooings of the toy king, the mind, in the inner world of his dreams. He alone can stride forward to schedule, on the noble path of Truth, who has a capacity to say a strong 'No' to the childish demands of the mind, ever to run about and play in the scorching heat of temptations, amidst the sandy dirt-heap of its sensuous objects ! Hence, the insistence by the *Sruti* for practising austerity. *Sruti* goes to the extent of giving austerity (*Tapas*) the status

of being the very foundation for the temple of Truth.

If austerity, means a physical denial of the *Indriyas* coming into contact with their objects, with low animal appetites and delusory hopes of getting thereby some passing joy, DAMA (Restraint) means controlling and choking, at its very source, the annihilating flood of the desire-lava. Both being but forms of self-control, *austerity is physical* while *restraint* is psychological. In short, without a certain amount of Self-Control, Self-Perfection is impossible; it is as futile as the blindman yearning to have at least one look of his only son !

When the physical and the psychological personality in an aspirant is thus purified, ennobled and divinised, then *Sruti* demands of him selfless dedicated work. "If what you say be true," all of you may wonder "what exactly is then the meaning of the *Sruti Vakya*, that 'Karma' is one of the corner stones of the Absolute Truth ?"

In *Brahma Vidya*, *Karma* means the sacrificial rites or the total spiritual *sadhanas*. Worship, prayer, *satsanga*, *jap*, *dhyan* and such other daily practices of a devotee all come within the term *Karma*. And here the *Sruti* advises all the sincere pursuers of Truth that they should not indulge in worship and prayer with a view to gaining an immediate relief from sorrow or a future treasure of wealth.

When devotion is practised in a spirit of selfless 'Gopi-love', the Divine shall manifest to play in and around us and steal and eat away the cream of impressions we have churned out from the milk of our Real Nature !

When one has practised with sincerity, faith and honesty of purpose, both the outer austerity and the inner restraint, he is fit for *Karma* ; he alone is fit for

Karma, a true *Brahmin* is he. And, when such a fit *Karma Yogin* applies himself, with true devotion and perseverance, to any one of the four Main Paths of *Sadhana* advised and encouraged by the inimitable Religion, Hinduism, he shall develop himself into a fit student for the *early* meditation classes. And through practise and patient and long meditations, he shall come to recognise, realise, and live the Truth that he is.

This *mantra*, though almost the last one, is at once the only *mantra* dedicated in the entire *Upanishad* to prescribe the technique by which the Philosophic contents of the *Upanishads* may be practised as a *way of life*. Hence, every word of it is so pregnant with suggestions and overfilled with significances, that at each intellectual thrust at it, it pours forth its precious contents of directions.

Thus, the *mantra* says that the Vedas are all Its limbs. In the Absolute Truth, limbs cannot be, since, thereby the Absolute would become conditioned by the name and the form. Thus, *Sruti* means—all the six supplementary Vedas are a necessary support for a student who is seeking to realise within himself the Self that is the theme of the *Upanishads*. In the modern vocabulary *we may say* that Self-Perfection is difficult and would be a miracle if it were to come at the end of diligent and sincere life-long practices, if the realised saint were to be illiterate, uncultured and uneducated. In short, what we, as seekers of Truth, must understand from this *mantra* is that no education is a waste, no bit of knowledge redundant, no experience superfluous but that they all can be intelligently made to serve our purpose in our pilgrimage to Truth.

And lastly, volumes can be written about the inexpressible expression "SATYA-MAYATANAM", mean-

ing that *Truth's abode is Truth*. Without a Harishchandra-like vow of truthfulness, no *Sadhaka* can enter the *sanctum sanctorum* of the Truth. If a *Brahmin*, meaning a *Sadhaka*, fails in his alignment with his motives, thoughts and actions, that is, if his motives are false to his thoughts, and his thoughts again belie his actions—such *Brahmins* are, viewed from the heights of *Upanishadic* perfections, mere *chandalas* and they shall not enter the Temple of Truth.

Upanishads insist that Truth, the *Absolute*, resides in Truth. Unless there is purity in *vyavahar* no achievement in the field of the *Paramarth* can be hoped for. A *Sadhaka* must be like Ceaser's wife, above all suspicions in his ethical, moral and spiritual life.

यो वा एतामेवं वेदापहत्य पाप्मानमनन्ते स्वर्गे लोके ज्येये
प्रतितिष्ठति प्रतितिष्ठति ॥ ९ ॥

ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः ।

*Yo va yetamevam vedapahatya papmanamanante swarge
loke jyeye pratitishati pratitishati.*

Om Shantih ! Shantih !! Shantihi !!!

यः वा : Verily he who, एतां : this, एवं : thus, वेद : knows, अपहत्य : destroying, पाप्मानं : sin, अनन्ते : limitless (boundless), स्वर्गे : heavenly, लोके : realm (Bliss), ज्येये : in the Highest Blissful, प्रतितिष्ठति : (he) is established, इति : thus, प्रतितिष्ठति : is established (certainly), इति : thus.

ॐ : OM, शान्ति : Peace, शान्तिः : Peace, शान्तिः : Peace.

(9) Verily he who knows It thus, destroys sin and is established in *Brahman*, the Boundless, the Highest and the Blissfull—Yes, he is established in It.

The concluding *mantra* of *Kenopanishad* contains a vehement assertion, from its Seer, that he who has *Known* the theme so far discussed, shall have reached the Supreme State of Perfection. It is the Vedantic principle endorsed by similar repeated assertions in the various *Upanishads* that "*To know Brahman is to become Brahman*". It is in the ignorance of our Real Nature that we have come to live the agonising days of our choking limitations and despicable impotencies. We have come to tears and sobs because we have 'thought' to have lost ourselves. This being merely a delusion we have only to re-understand that the imagined loss is false, and we shall at once regain our Real Nature, the Bliss Absolute. Knowledge alone is the cure for the ailment of Ignorance. The discovery of the rope from the serpent is the most potent charm to life from the poison of its 'bite' in darkness !!

A woman once 'thought' she lost her necklace and started searching over the house and the neighbouring courtyard. The more she sought the more desperate she became and more poignant her sorrow. It is then, when she was prostrate with despair that her lord entered the room. She poured out her story of woe ; but the husband all of a sudden blinked at her and asked her, "what is there on your own neck ?" The woman, because she had complete faith in her lord, believing him to be honest, slowly lifted her searching fingers to her neck, and Lo ! the moment the tip of her fingers touched one of the beads of the necklace, she gained the *knowledge* that the necklace was with her and *with this knowledge she regained her lost condition of bliss and joy.*

The necklace was never made new ; it was always there. The misunderstanding that *it was not with her*

had caused all the sorrows to the woman. On rediscovering that the necklace *was never lost* all her agitations subsided and she regained the condition of *shanti* in which she was before the tragic moment when the misunderstanding rose in her mind. On the removal of her misunderstanding, which is the same as saying "on recognising herself to be the same woman complete with her necklace", she becomes the woman she was before the moment of her misunderstanding. She *becomes* the woman she was before her misunderstanding, the moment her misunderstanding has ended in her understanding.

God though we are, the Soul in us has come to dream of a misunderstanding that It is a *Jeeva*, and believing Itself to be a *Jeeva*. It comes to suffer the agitations and sorrows of having lost Its God-hood ! The *pati* of the *Jeeva*, a *Sadguru*, enters the life of the *Jeeva*, and when he points out to the *Jeeva* that the God-hood is not lost but is ever there, resplendent in Its own pristine glory, the *Jeeva* at first believes the master's words, in his devotion and faith to the teacher, and then later on seeks for himself and discovers the God-hood that ever lies within himself as Himself. With the Knowledge of the Self he *becomes* the Self.

It is this principle of Self-Knowledge, which is the very fundamental basis of Vedanta, that is being hinted at in the concluding stanza of *Kenopanishad*, and no one who has understood it would dare to disagree with the view that this stanza is one of the noblest ones in the entire *Upanishadic* literature. With a correct understanding of what we have been so far discussing, if a reader were to go back into the very body of the *mantra*, he can for himself discover the beauties and the

secret charms of this *mantra*, in itself a Divine Damsel of Truth.

Let Him protect us both ; Let us come to experience Him together ; Let us exert together ; May our studies be fruitful ; May we not quarrel.

Om Shantih ! Shantih !! Shantihi !!!

KENOPANISHAD

CHAPTER I

ॐ सहनाववतु । सह नौ भुनक्तु । सह वीर्यं करवावहै ।
तेजस्विनावधीतमस्तु मा विद्विषावहै ।

ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः ।

ॐ आप्यायन्तु ममाङ्गानि वाक् प्राणश्चक्षुः श्रोत्रमथो बलमिन्द्रि-
याणि च सर्वाणि सर्वे ब्रह्मोपनिषदं माहं ब्रह्म निराकुर्या मा मा ब्रह्म
निराकरोदनिराकरणमऽस्त्वनिराकरणमेऽस्तुतदात्मनि निरते य उपनिषत्सु
धर्मास्ते मयि सन्तु ते मयि सन्तु ॥

ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः ।

ॐ केनेषितं पतति प्रेषितं मनः केन प्राणः प्रथमः प्रैति युक्तः ।
केनेषितां वाचमिमां वदन्ति चक्षुः श्रोत्रं क उ देवो युनक्ति ॥ १ ॥

श्रोत्रस्य श्रोत्रं मनसो मनो यद् वाचो ह वाचं स उ प्राणस्य
प्राणचक्षुषश्चक्षुरतिमुच्य धीराः प्रेत्यास्मान्लोकादमृता भवन्ति ॥ २ ॥

न तत्र चक्षुर्गच्छति न वाग् गच्छति नो मनो न विद्यो न
विजानीमो यथैतदनुशिष्यात् । अन्यदेव तद् विदितादथो अविदितादधि ।
इति शुश्रुम पूर्वेषां येनस्तद्व्याचचक्षिरे ॥ ३ ॥

यद्वाचानभ्युदितं येन वागभ्युद्यते । तदेव ब्रह्मत्वं विद्धि नेदं
यदिदमुपास्ते ॥ ४ ॥

यन्मनसा न मनुते येनाहुर्मनो मतम् । तदेव ब्रह्मत्वं विद्धि नेदं
यदिदमुपास्ते ॥ ५ ॥

यत् चक्षुषा न पश्यति येन चक्षूंषि पश्यति । तदेव ब्रह्मत्वं विद्धि
नेदं यदिदमुपास्ते ॥ ६ ॥

यत् श्रोत्रेण न शृणोति येन श्रोत्रमिदं श्रुतम् । तदेव ब्रह्मत्वं विद्धि नेदं यदिदमुपासते ॥ ७ ॥

यत्प्राणेन न प्राणिति येन प्राणः प्रणीयते । तदेव ब्रह्मत्वं विद्धि नेदं यदिदमुपासते ॥ ८ ॥

CHAPTER II

यदि मन्यसे सुवेदेति दध्नमेवापि नूनं त्वं वेत्थ ब्रह्मणो रूपं यदस्य त्वं यदस्य देवेष्वथ नु मीमांस्यमेव ते मन्ये विदितम् ॥ १ ॥

नाहं मन्ये सुवेदेति नो न वेदेति वेद च । यो नस्तद् वेद तद् वेद नो न वेदेति वेद च ॥ २ ॥

यस्यामतं तस्य मतं मतं यस्य न वेद सः । अविज्ञातं विजानतां विज्ञातमाविजानताम् ॥ ३ ॥

प्रतिबोधविदितं मतममृतत्वं हि विन्दते । आत्मना विन्दते वीर्यं विद्यया विन्दतेऽमृतम् ॥ ४ ॥

इहचेदवेदीदथ सत्यमस्ति न चेदिहावेदीन्महती विनष्टिः । भूतेषु भूतेषु विचित्य धीराः प्रेत्यास्माल्लोकादमृता भवन्ति ॥ ५ ॥

CHAPTER III

ब्रह्म ह देवेभ्योविजिग्ये, तस्य ह ब्रह्मणो विजये देवा अमहीयन्त । त ऐक्षन्तास्माकमेवायं विजयोऽस्माकमेवायं महिमेति ॥ १ ॥

तद्वैष्ठां विजज्ञौ, तेभ्यो ह प्रादुर्बभूव तन्नव्यजानत किमिदं यक्षमिति ॥ २ ॥

तेऽग्निमब्रुवन् जातवेद, एतद् विजानीहि किमेतद् यक्षमिति तथेति ॥ ३ ॥

तदभ्यद्रवत् तमभ्यवदत् कोऽसीत्यग्निर्वा अहमस्मीत्यब्रवीज्जातवेदा वा अहमस्मीति ॥ ४ ॥

तस्मिंस्त्वयि किं वीर्यमित्यपीदं सर्वं दहेयं यदिदं पृथिव्या-
मिति ॥ ५ ॥

तस्मै तृणं निदध्वेतद् दहेति, तदुपप्रेयाय सर्वजवेन, तन्नशशाक-
दग्धं, स तत एव निववृते नैतदशकं विज्ञातुं यदेतद् यक्षमिति ॥ ६ ॥

अथ वायुमब्रुवन् वायवेतद् विजानीहि किमेतद् यक्षमिति,
तथेति ॥ ७ ॥

तदभ्यद्रवत्, तमभ्यवदत् कोऽसीति, वायुर्वा अहमस्मीत्यब्रवीन्मात-
रिश्वा वा अहमस्मीति ॥ ८ ॥

तस्मिंस्त्वयि किं वीर्यमित्यपीदं सर्वमाददीय यदिदं पृथिव्या-
मिति ॥ ९ ॥

तस्मै तृणं निदध्वेतदादत्स्वेति, तदुपप्रेयाय सर्वजवेन, तन्न-
शशाकादातुं स तत एव निववृते नैतदशकं विज्ञातुं यदेतद् यक्ष-
मिति ॥ १० ॥

अथेन्द्रमब्रुवन् मघवन्नेतद् विजानीहि, किमेतद् यक्षमिति तथेति,
तदभ्यद्रवत् तस्मात् तिरोदधे ॥ ११ ॥

स तस्मिन्नेवाकाशे स्त्रियमाजगाम बहुशोभमानामुमां हैमवतीं तां
होवाच किमेतद् यक्षमिति ॥ १२ ॥

CHAPTER IV

सा ब्रह्मेति होवाच ब्रह्मणो वा एतद् विजये महोयध्वमिति ।
ततो हैव विदाञ्चकार ब्रह्मेति ॥ १ ॥

तस्मात् वा एते देवाः अतितरमिवान्यान् देवान् । यदग्नि-
र्वायुरिन्द्रस्ते ह्येनन्नेदिष्टं पस्पृशुस्ते ह्येनत् प्रथमो विदाञ्चकार
ब्रह्मेति ॥ २ ॥

तस्मात् वा इन्द्रोऽतितरमिवान्यान् । देवान् स ह्येनन्ने दिष्टं
पस्पर्श सह्येनत् प्रथमो विदाञ्चकार ब्रह्मेति ॥ ३ ॥

तस्यैष आदेशो यदेतद् विद्युतो व्यद्युतदा ३ इतीन्यमीमिषदा
३ इत्यधिदैवतम् ॥ ४ ॥

अथाध्यात्मं यदेतद् गच्छतीव च मनोऽनेन चैतदुपस्मरत्यभीक्षणं
सङ्कल्पः ॥ ५ ॥

तद्ध तद्वनं नाम तद्वनमित्युपासितव्यं स य एतदेवं वेदाभि हेनं
सर्वाणि भूतानि संवाञ्छन्ति ॥ ६ ॥

उपनिषदं भो ब्रूहीत्युक्ता त उपनिषद् ब्राह्मीं वाव त उपनिषद-
मब्रूमेति ॥ ७ ॥

तस्यै तपो दमः कर्मेति प्रतिष्ठा वेदाः सर्वाङ्गानि सत्य-
मायतनम् ॥ ८ ॥

यो वा एतामेवं वेदापहत्य पाप्मानमनन्ते स्वर्गे लोके ज्येये
प्रतितिष्ठति प्रतितिष्ठति ॥ ९ ॥

ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः ।

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9. Kaivalyopanishad
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32. Meditation and Life

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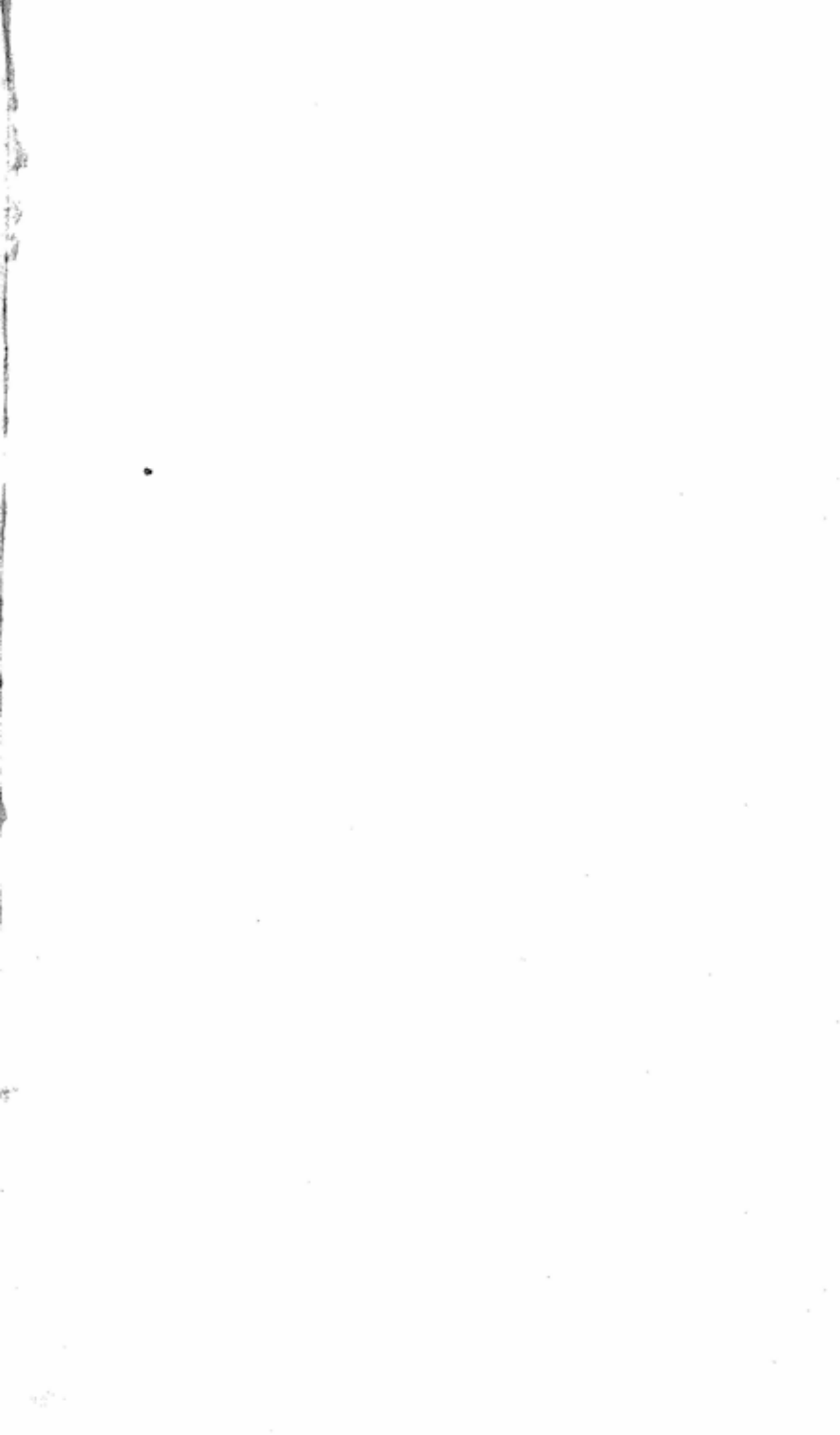
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