

The Upanishads

Translations and Commentary

by

Sri Aurobindo

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The Upanishads

Sri Aurobindo

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Publisher's Note

The present volume comprises Sri Aurobindo's final translations of and commentaries on the Isha and Kena Upanishads, his final translations of the Mundaka and Katha Upanishads, and a commentary on part of the Taittiriya Upanishad. They are preceded by a chapter on the Upanishads from *A Defence of Indian Culture*. These works represent Sri Aurobindo's Upanishadic interpretation in its most mature and finished form. All were written after he settled in Pondicherry in 1910. Translations and commentaries written before that year, or left incomplete by the author, have not been included in this volume. They are available in other publications.

The page numbers refer to Section One of "The Upanishads, Texts, Translations and Commentaries", Second Edition, Pondicherry (1981).

Introduction

The Upanishads are the supreme work of the Indian mind, and that it should be so, that the highest self-expression of its genius, its sublimest poetry, its greatest creation of the thought and word should be not a literary or poetical masterpiece of the ordinary kind, but a large flood of spiritual revelation of this direct and profound character, is a significant fact, evidence of a unique mentality and unusual turn of spirit. The Upanishads are at once profound religious scriptures, — for they are a record of the deepest spiritual experiences, — documents of revelatory and intuitive philosophy of an inexhaustible light, power and largeness and, whether written in verse or cadenced prose, spiritual poems of an absolute, an unfailing inspiration inevitable in phrase, wonderful in rhythm and expression. It is the expression of a mind in which philosophy and religion and poetry are made one, because this religion does not end with a cult nor is limited to a religio-ethical aspiration, but rises to an infinite discovery of God, of Self, of our highest and whole reality of spirit and being and speaks out of an ecstasy of luminous knowledge and an ecstasy of moved and fulfilled experience, this philosophy is not an abstract intellectual speculation about Truth or a structure of the logical intelligence, but Truth seen, felt, lived, held by the inmost mind and soul in the joy of utterance of an assured discovery and possession, and this poetry is the work of the aesthetic mind lifted up beyond its ordinary field to express the wonder and beauty of the rarest spiritual self-vision and the profoundest illumined truth of self and God and universe. Here the intuitive mind and intimate psychological experience of the Vedic seers passes into a supreme culmination in which the Spirit, as is said in a phrase of the Katha Upanishad, discloses its own very body, reveals the very word of its self-expression and discovers to the mind the vibration of rhythms which repeating themselves within in the spiritual hearing seem to build up the soul and set it satisfied and complete on the heights of self-knowledge.

This character of the Upanishads needs to be insisted upon with a strong emphasis, because it is ignored by foreign translators who seek to bring out the intellectual sense without feeling the life of thought vision and the ecstasy of spiritual experience which made the ancient verses

appear then and still make them to those who can enter into the element in which these utterances move, a revelation not to the intellect alone, but to the soul and the whole being, make of them in the old expressive word not intellectual thought and phrase, but sruti, spiritual audience, an inspired Scripture. The philosophical substance of the Upanishads demands at this day no farther stress of appreciation of its value; for even if the amplest acknowledgement by the greatest minds were wanting, the whole history of philosophy would be there to offer its evidence. The Upanishads have been the acknowledged source of numerous profound philosophies and religions that flowed from it in India like her great rivers from their Himalayan cradle fertilising the mind and life of the people and kept its soul alive through the long procession of the centuries, constantly returned to for light, never failing to give fresh illumination, a fountain of inexhaustible life-giving waters. Buddhism with all its developments was only a restatement, although from a new standpoint and with fresh terms of intellectual definition and reasoning, of one side of its experience and it carried it thus changed in form but hardly in substance over all Asia and westward towards Europe. The ideas of the Upanishads can be rediscovered in much of the thought of Pythagoras and Plato and form the profoundest part of Neo-platonism and Gnosticism with all their considerable consequences to the philosophical thinking of the West, and Sufism only repeats them in another religious language. The larger part of German metaphysics is little more in substance than an intellectual development of great realities more spiritually seen in this ancient teaching, and modern thought is rapidly absorbing them with a closer, more living and intense receptiveness which promises a revolution both in philosophical and in religious thinking; here they are filtering in through many indirect influences, there slowly pouring through direct and open channels. There is hardly a main philosophical idea which cannot find an authority or a seed or indication in these antique writings — the speculations, according to a certain view, of thinkers who had no better past or background to their thought than a crude, barbaric, naturalistic and animistic ignorance. And even the larger generalisations of Science are constantly found to apply to the truth of physical Nature formulas already discovered by the Indian sages in their original, their largest meaning in the deeper truth of the spirit.

And yet these works are not philosophical speculations of the intellectual kind, a metaphysical analysis which labours to define notions,

to select ideas and discriminate those that are true, to logicise truth or else to support the mind in its intellectual preferences by dialectical reasoning and is content to put forward an exclusive solution of existence in the light of this or that idea of the reason and see all things from that viewpoint, in that focus and determining perspective. The Upanishads could not have had so undying a vitality, exercised so unfailing an influence, produced such results or seen now their affirmations independently justified in other spheres of inquiry and by quite opposite methods, if they had been of that character. It is because these seers saw Truth rather than merely thought it, clothed it indeed with a strong body of intuitive idea and disclosing image, but a body of ideal transparency through which we look into the illimitable, because they fathomed things in the light of self-existence and saw them with the eye of the Infinite, that their words remain always alive and immortal, of an inexhaustible significance, an inevitable authenticity, a satisfying finality that is at the same time an infinite commencement of truth, to which all our lines of investigation when they go through to their end arrive again and to which humanity constantly returns in its minds and its ages of greatest vision. The Upanishads are Vedanta, a book of knowledge in a higher degree even than the Vedas, but knowledge in the profounder Indian sense of the word, Jnana. Not a mere thinking and considering by the intelligence, the pursuit and grasping of a mental form of truth by the intellectual mind, but a seeing of it with the soul and a total living in it with the power of the inner being, a spiritual seizing by a kind of identification with the object of knowledge is Jnana. And because it is only by an integral knowing of the self that this kind of direct knowledge can be made complete, it was the self that the Vedantic sages sought to know, to live in and to be one with it by identity. And through this endeavour they came easily to see that the self in us is one with the universal self of all things and that this self again is the same as God and Brahman, a transcendent Being or Existence, and they beheld, felt, lived in the inmost truth of all things in the universe and the inmost truth of man's inner and outer existence by the light of this one and unifying vision. The Upanishads are epic hymns of self-knowledge and world-knowledge and God-knowledge. The great formulations of philosophic truth with which they abound are not abstract intellectual generalisations, things that may shine and enlighten the mind, but do not live and move the soul to ascension, but are ardours as well as lights of an intuitive and revelatory illumination, reachings as well as seeings of the one Existence, the

transcendent Godhead, the divine and universal Self and discoveries of his relation with things and creatures in this great cosmic manifestation. Chants of inspired knowledge, they breathe like all hymns a tone of religious aspiration and ecstasy, not of the narrowly intense kind proper to a lesser religious feeling, but raised beyond cult and special forms of devotion to the universal Ananda of the Divine which comes to us by approach to and oneness with the self-existent and universal spirit. And though mainly concerned with an inner vision and not directly with outward human action, all the highest ethics of Buddhism and later Hinduism are still emergences of the very life and significance of the truths to which they give expressive form and force, — and there is something greater than any ethical precept and mental rule of virtue, the supreme ideal of a spiritual action founded on oneness with God and all living beings. Therefore even when the life of the forms of the Vedic cult had passed away, the Upanishads still remained alive and creative and could generate the great devotional religions and motive the persistent Indian idea of the Dharma.

The Upanishads are the creation of a revelatory and intuitive mind and its illumined experience, and all their substance, structure, phrase, imagery, movement are determined by and stamped with this original character. These supreme and all-embracing truths, these visions of oneness and self and a universal divine being are cast into brief and monumental phrases which bring them at once before the soul's eye and make them real and imperative to its aspiration and experience or are couched in poetic sentences full of revealing power and suggestive thought-colour that discover a whole infinite through a finite image. The One is there revealed, but also disclosed the many aspects, and each is given its whole significance by the amplitude of the expression and finds as if in a spontaneous self-discovery its place and its connection by the illumining justness of each word and all the phrase. The largest metaphysical truths and the subtlest subtleties of psychological experience are taken up into the inspired movement and made at once precise to the seeing mind and loaded with unending suggestion to the discovering spirit. There are separate phrases, single couplets, brief passages which contain each in itself the substance of a vast philosophy and yet each is only thrown out as a side, an aspect, a portion of the infinite self-knowledge. All here is a packed and pregnant and yet perfectly lucid and luminous brevity and an immeasurable completeness. A thought of this kind cannot

follow the tardy, careful and diffuse development of the logical intelligence. The passage, the sentence, the couplet, the line, even the half line follows the one that precedes with a certain interval full of an unexpressed thought, an echoing silence between them, a thought which is carried in the total suggestion and implied in the step itself, but which the mind is left to work out for its own profit, and these intervals of pregnant silence are large, the steps of this thought are like the paces of a Titan striding from rock to distant rock across infinite waters. There is a perfect totality, a comprehensive connection of harmonious parts in the structure of each Upanishad; but it is done in the way of a mind that sees masses of truth at a time and stops to bring only the needed word out of a filled silence. The rhythm in verse or cadenced prose corresponds to the sculpture of the thought and the phrase. The metrical forms of the Upanishads are made up of four half lines each clearly cut, the lines mostly complete in themselves and integral in sense, the half lines presenting two thoughts or distinct parts of a thought that are wedded to and complete each other, and the sound movement follows a corresponding principle, each step brief and marked off by the distinctness of its pause, full of echoing cadences that remain long vibrating in the inner hearing: each is as if a wave of the infinite that carries in it the whole voice and rumour of the ocean. It is a kind of poetry — word of vision, rhythm of the spirit, — that has not been written before or after.

The imagery of the Upanishads is in large part developed from the type of imagery of the Veda and though very ordinarily it prefers an unveiled clarity of directly illuminative image, not unoften also it uses the same symbols in a way that is closely akin to the spirit and to the less technical part of the method of the older symbolism. It is to a great extent this element no longer seizable by our way of thinking that has baffled certain Western scholars and made them cry out that these scriptures are a mixture of the sublimest philosophical speculations with the first awkward stammerings of the child mind of humanity. The Upanishads are not a revolutionary departure from the Vedic mind and its temperament and fundamental ideas, but a continuation and development and to a certain extent an enlarging transformation in the sense of bringing out into open expression all that was held covered in the symbolic Vedic speech as a mystery and a secret. It begins by taking up the imagery and the ritual symbols of the Veda and the Brahmanas and turning them in such a way as to bring out an inner and a mystic sense which will serve as a sort of

psychical starting-point for its own more highly evolved and more purely spiritual philosophy. There are a number of passages especially in the prose Upanishads which are entirely of this kind and deal, in a manner recondite, obscure and even unintelligible to the modern understanding, with the psychic sense of ideas then current in the Vedic religious mind, the distinction between the three kinds of Veda, the three worlds and other similar subjects; but, leading as they do in the thought of the Upanishads to deepest spiritual truths, these passages cannot be dismissed as childish aberrations of the intelligence void of sense or of any discoverable bearing on the higher thought in which they culminate. On the contrary we find that they have a deep enough significance once we can get inside their symbolic meaning. That appears in a psycho-physical passing upward into a psycho-spiritual knowledge for which we would now use more intellectual, less concrete and imaged terms, but which is still valid for those who practise Yoga and rediscover the secrets of our psycho-physical and psycho-spiritual being. Typical passages of this kind of peculiar expression of psychic truths are Ajatashatru's explanation of sleep and dream or the passages of the Prasna Upanishad on the vital principle and its motions, or those in which the Vedic idea of the struggle between the Gods and the demons is taken up and given its spiritual significance and the Vedic godheads more openly than in Rik and Saman characterised and invoked in their inner function and spiritual power.

I may cite as an example of this development of Vedic idea and image a passage of the Taittiriya in which Indra plainly appears as the power and godhead of the divine mind:

He who is the Bull of the Vedas of the universal form, he who was born in the sacred rhythms from the Immortal, — may Indra satisfy me through the intelligence. O God, may I become a vessel of the Immortal. May my body be full of vision and my tongue of sweetness, may I hear the much and vast with my ears. For thou art the sheath of Brahman covered over and hidden by the intelligence.

And a kindred passage may also be cited from the Isha in which Surya the Sun-God is invoked as the godhead of knowledge whose supreme form of effulgence is the oneness of the Spirit and his rays dispersed here on the mental level are the shining diffusion of the thought mind and conceal his own infinite supramental truth, the body and self of this Sun, the truth of the spirit and the Eternal:

The face of the Truth is covered with a golden lid: O fostering Sun, that uncover for the law of the truth, for sight. O fosterer, O sole Rishi, O controlling Yama, O Surya, O son of the Father of creatures, marshal and mass thy rays: the Lustre that is thy most blessed form of all, that I see, He who is this, this Purusha, He am I.

The kinship in difference of these passages with the imagery and style of the Veda is evident and the last indeed paraphrases or translates into a later and more open style a Vedic verse of the Atris:

Hidden by your truth is the Truth that is constant for ever where they unyoke the horses of the Sun. There the ten thousands stand together, That is the One: I have seen the supreme Godhead of the embodied gods.

This Vedic and Vedantic imagery is foreign to our present mentality which does not believe in the living truth of the symbol, because the revealing imagination intimidated by the intellect has no longer the courage to accept, identify itself with and boldly embody a psychic and spiritual vision; but it is certainly very far from being a childish or a primitive and barbarous mysticism; this vivid, living, luminously poetic intuitive language is rather the natural expression of a highly evolved spiritual culture.

The intuitive thought of the Upanishads starts from this concrete imagery and these symbols, first to the Vedic Rishis secret seer words wholly expressive to the mind of the seer but veils of their deepest sense to the ordinary intelligence, link them to a less covertly expressive language and pass beyond them to another magnificently open and sublime imagery and diction which at once reveals the spiritual truth in all its splendour. The prose Upanishads show us this process of the early mind of India at its work using the symbol and then passing beyond it to the overt expression of the spiritual significance. A passage of the Prasna Upanishad on the power and significance of the mystic syllable AUM illustrates the earlier stage of the process:

This syllable OM, O Satyakama, it is the supreme and it is the lower Brahman. Therefore the man of knowledge passeth by this house of the Brahman to the one or the other. And if one meditate on the single letter, he getteth by it knowledge and soon he attaineth on the earth. And him the Riks lead to the world of men and there perfected in Tapas and Brahmacharya and faith he experienceth the greatness of the spirit. Now if by the double letter he is accomplished in the mind, then is he led up by

the Yajus to the middle world, to the moon-world of Soma. He in the world of Soma experienceth the majesty of the spirit and returneth again. And he who by the triple letter again, even this syllable OM, shall meditate on the highest Purusha, is perfected in the light that is the Sun. As a snake putteth off its skin, even so is he released from sin and evil and is led by the Samans to the world of Brahman. He from this dense of living souls seeth the higher than the highest Purusha who lieth in this mansion. The three letters are afflicted by death, but now they are used undivided and united to each other, then are the inner and the outer and the middle action of the spirit made whole in their perfect using and the spirit knows and is not shaken. This world by the Riks, the middle world by the Yajus and by the Samans that which the seers make known to us. The man of knowledge passeth to Him by OM, his house, even to the supreme spirit that is calm and ageless and fearless and immortal.

The symbols here are still obscure to our intelligence, but indications are given which show beyond doubt that they are representations of a psychical experience leading to different states of spiritual realisation and we can see that these are three, outward, mental and supramental, and as the result of the last a supreme perfection, a complete and integral action of the whole being in the tranquil eternity of the immortal Spirit. And later in the Mandukya Upanishad the other symbols are cast aside and we are admitted to the unveiled significance. Then there emerges a knowledge to which modern thought is returning through its own very different intellectual, rational and scientific method, the knowledge that behind the operations of our outward physical consciousness are working the operations of another, subliminal, — another and yet the same, — of which our waking mind is a surface action, and above — perhaps, we still say — is a spiritual superconscience in which can be found, it may well be, the highest state and the whole secret of our being. We shall see, when we look closely at the passage of the Prasna Upanishad, that this knowledge is already there, and I think we can very rationally conclude that these and similar utterances of the ancient sages, however perplexing their form to the rational mind, cannot be dismissed as a childish mysticism, but are the imaged expression, natural to the mentality of the time, of what the reason itself by its own processes is now showing us to be true and a very profound truth and real reality of knowledge.

The metrical Upanishads continue this highly charged symbolism but carry it more lightly and in the bulk of their verses pass beyond this kind

of image to the overt expression. The Self, the Spirit, the Godhead in man and creatures and Nature and all this world and in other worlds and beyond all cosmos, the Immortal, the One, the Infinite is hymned without veils in the splendour of his eternal transcendence and his manifold self-revelation. A few passages from the teachings of Yama, lord of the Law and of Death, to Nachiketas, will be enough to illustrate something of their character.

OM is this syllable. This syllable is the Brahman, this syllable is the Supreme. He who knoweth the imperishable OM, whatso he willeth, it is his. This support is the best, this support is the highest; and when a man knoweth it, he is greatened in the world of Brahman. The omniscient is not born, nor dies, nor has he come into being from anywhere, nor is he anyone. He is unborn, he is constant and eternal, he is the Ancient of Days who is not slain in the slaying of the body....

He is seated and journeys far, and lying still he goes to every side. Who other than I should know this ecstatic Godhead? The wise man cometh to know the great Lord and Self established and bodiless in these bodies that pass and has grief no longer. This Self is not to be won by teaching nor by brain-power nor by much learning: he whom the Spirit chooses, by him alone it can be won, and to him this Spirit discloses its own very body. One who has not ceased from ill-doing, one who is not concentrated and calm, one whose mind is not tranquil, shall not get him by the brain's wisdom. He of whom warriors and sages are the food and death is the spice of his banquet, who knoweth where is He?...

The Self-born has cloven his doors outward, therefore man sees outward and not in the inner self: only a wise man here and there turns his eyes inward, desiring immortality, and looks on the Self face to face. The child minds follow after surface desires and fall into the net of death which is spread wide for us; but the wise know of immortality and ask not from things inconstant that which is constant. One knoweth by this Self form and taste and odour and touch and its pleasures and what then is here left over? The wise man cometh to know the great Lord and Self by whom one seeth all that is in the soul that wakes and all that is in the soul that dreams and hath grief no longer. He who knoweth the Self, the eater of sweetness close to the living being, the lord of what was and what will be, shrinks thereafter from nothing that is. He knoweth him who is that which was born of old from Tapas and who was born of old from the waters and hath

entered in and standeth in the secret cavern of being with all these creatures. He knoweth her who is born by the life force, the infinite Mother with all the gods in her, her who hath entered in and standeth in the secret cavern of being with all these creatures. This is the Fire that hath the knowledge and it is hidden in the two tinders as the embryo is borne in pregnant women; this is the Fire that must be adored by men watching sleeplessly and bringing to him the offering. He is that from which the Sun rises and that in which it sets: and in him all the gods are founded and none can pass beyond him. What is here, even that is in other worlds, and what is there, even according to that is all that is here. He goes from death to death who sees here only difference. A Purusha no bigger than a thumb stands in man's central self and is the lord of what was and what shall be, and knowing him thenceforth one shrinks from nothing that is. A Purusha no bigger than a man's thumb and he is like a light without smoke; he is the Lord of what was and what shall be; it is he that is today and it is he that shall be tomorrow.

The Upanishads abound with passages which are at once poetry and spiritual philosophy, of an absolute clarity and beauty, but no translation empty of the suggestions and the grave and subtle and luminous sense echoes of the original words and rhythms can give any idea of their power and perfection. There are others in which the subtlest psychological and philosophical truths are expressed with an entire sufficiency without falling short of a perfect beauty of poetical expression and always so as to live to the mind and soul and not merely be presented to the understanding intelligence. There is in some of the prose Upanishads another element of vivid narrative and tradition which restores for us though only in brief glimpses the picture of that extraordinary stir and movement of spiritual enquiry and passion for the highest knowledge which made the Upanishads possible. The scenes of the old world live before us in a few pages, the sages sitting in their groves ready to test and teach the comer, princes and learned Brahmins and great landed nobles going about in search of knowledge, the king's son in his chariot and the illegitimate son of the servant-girl, seeking any man who might carry in himself the thought of light and the word of revelation, the typical figures and personalities, Janaka and the subtle mind of Ajatashatru, Raikwa of the cart, Yajnavalkya militant for truth, calm and ironic, taking to himself with both hands without attachment worldly possessions and spiritual riches and casting at last all his wealth behind to wander forth as a houseless

ascetic, Krishna son of Devaki who heard a single word of the Rishi Ghora and knew at once the Eternal, the ashramas, the courts of kings who were also spiritual discoverers and thinkers, the great sacrificial assemblies where the sages met and compared their knowledge. And we see how the soul of India was born and how arose this great birth-song in which it soared from its earth into the supreme empyrean of the spirit. The Vedas and the Upanishads are not only the sufficient fountain-head of Indian philosophy and religion, but of all Indian art, poetry and literature. It was the soul, the temperament, the ideal mind formed and expressed in them which later carved out the great philosophies, built the structure of the Dharma, recorded its heroic youth in the Mahabharata and Ramayana, intellectualised indefatigably in the classical times of the ripeness of its manhood, threw out so many original intuitions in science, created so rich a glow of aesthetic and vital and sensuous experience, renewed its spiritual and psychic experience in Tantra and Purana, flung itself into grandeur and beauty of line and colour, hewed and cast its thought and vision in stone and bronze, poured itself into new channels of self-expression in the later tongues and now after eclipse reemerges always the same in difference and ready for a new life and a new creation.

ISHA UPANISHAD

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*īśā vāsyamidaṁ sarvaṁ yat kiñca jagatyāṁ jagat |
tena tyaktena bhuiñjīthā mā ḡḍhaḥ kasya sviddhanam ||*

1. All this is for habitation¹ by the Lord, whatsoever is individual universe of movement in the universal motion. By that renounced thou shouldst enjoy; lust not after any man's possession.

*kurvanneveha karmāṇi jijīviṣecchataṁ samāḥ |
evaṁ tvayi nānyatheto 'sti na karma lipyate nare ||*

2. Doing verily² works in this world one should wish to live a hundred years. Thus it is in thee and not otherwise than this; action cleaves not to a man.³

[1] There are three possible senses of *vasyam*, "to be clothed", "to be worn as a garment" and "to be inhabited". The first is the ordinarily accepted meaning. Shankara explains it in this significance, that we must lose the sense of this unreal objective universe in the sole perception of the pure Brahman. So explained the first line becomes a contradiction of the whole thought of the Upanishad which teaches the reconciliation, by the perception of essential Unity, of the apparently incompatible opposites. God and the World, Renunciation and Enjoyment, Action and internal Freedom, the One and the Many, Being and its Becomings, the passive divine Impersonality and the active divine Personality, the Knowledge and the Ignorance, the Becoming and the Not-Becoming, Life on earth and beyond and the supreme Immortality. The image is of the world either as a garment or as a dwelling-place for the informing and governing Spirit. The latter significance agrees better with the thought of the Upanishad.

[2] *Kurvanneva*. The stress of the word *eva* gives the force, "doing works indeed, and not refraining from them".

[3] Shankara reads the line, "Thus in thee — it is not otherwise than thus — action cleaves not to a man." He interprets *karmāṇi* in the first line in the sense of Vedic sacrifices which are permitted to the ignorant as a means of escaping from evil actions and their results and attaining to heaven, but the second *karma* in exactly the opposite sense, "evil action". The verse, he tells us, represents a concession to the ignorant; the enlightened soul abandons works and the world and goes to the forest. The whole expression and construction in this rendering become forced and unnatural. The rendering

asūryā nāma te lokā andhena tamasā'vṛtāḥ |
tāmste pretyābhigacchanti ye ke cātmahano janāḥ ||

3. Sunless⁴ are those worlds and enveloped in blind gloom whereto all they in their passing hence resort who are slayers of their souls.

anejadekaṁ manaso javīyo nainaddevā āpnuvan pūrvamarṣat |
taddhāvato 'nyānatyeti tiṣṭhat tasminnapo mātariśvā dadhāti ||

4. One unmoving that is swifter than Mind, That the Gods reach not, for It progresses ever in front. That, standing, passes beyond others as they run. In That the Master of Life⁵ establishes the Waters. ⁶

I give seems to me the simple and straightforward sense of the Upanishad.

[4] We have two readings, *asūryāḥ*. sunless, and *asuryāḥ*, Titanic or undivine. The third verse is, in the thought structure of the Upanishad, the starting-point for the final movement in the last four verses. Its suggestions are there taken up and worked out. The prayer to the Sun refers back in thought to the sunless worlds and their blind gloom, which are recalled in the ninth and twelfth verses. The sun and his rays are intimately connected in other Upanishads also with the worlds of Light and their natural opposite is the dark and sunless, not the Titanic worlds.

[5] *Mātariśvan* seems to mean "he who extends himself in the Mother or the container" whether that be the containing mother element, Ether, or the material energy called Earth in the Veda and spoken of there as the Mother. It is a Vedic epithet of the God Vayu, who, representing the divine principle in the Life-energy, Prana, extends himself in Matter and vivifies its forms. Here it signifies the divine Life-power that presides in all forms of cosmic activity.

[6] *Apas*, as it is accentuated in the version of the White Yajurveda, can mean only "waters". If this accentuation is disregarded, we may take it as the singular *apas*, work, action. Shankara, however, renders it by the plural, works. The difficulty only arises because the true Vedic sense of the word had been forgotten and it came to be taken as referring to the fourth of the five elemental states of Matter, the liquid. Such a reference would be entirely irrelevant to the context. But the Waters, otherwise called the seven streams or the seven fostering Cows, are the Vedic symbol for the seven cosmic principles and their activities, three inferior, the physical, vital and mental, four superior, the divine Truth, the divine Bliss, and divine Will and Consciousness, and the divine Being. On this conception also is founded the ancient idea of the seven worlds in each of which the seven principles are separately active by their various harmonies. This is,

*tadejati tannaijati tad dūre tadvantike |
tadantarasya sarvasya tadu sarvasyāsya bāhyataḥ |*

5. That moves and That moves not; That is far and the same is near; That is within all this and That also is outside all this.

*yastu sarvāṇi bhūtāni ātmanyevānupaśyati |
sarvabhūteṣu cātmānam tato na vijugupsate ||*

6. But he who sees everywhere the Self in all existences and all existences in the Self, shrinks not thereafter from aught.

*yasmin sarvāṇi bhūtāni ātmaivābhūd vijānataḥ |
tatra ko mohaḥ kaḥ śoka ekatvamanupaśyataḥ ||*

7. He in whom it is the Self-Being that has become all existences that are Becomings⁷ for he has the perfect knowledge, how shall he be deluded, whence shall he have grief who sees everywhere oneness?

*sa paryagācchukramakāyamavranamasnāviraṁ
śuddhamapāpavidham |
kavirmanīṣī paribhūḥ svayambhur yāthātathyato 'rthān
vyadadhācchāśvatībhyaḥ samābhyaḥ ||*

8. It is He that has gone abroad — That which is bright, bodiless, without scar of imperfection, without sinews, pure, unpierced by evil. The Seer,

obviously, the right significance of the word in the Upanishad.

[7] The words *sarvāṇi bhūtāni* literally, "all things that have become", is opposed to Atman, self-existent and immutable being. The phrase means ordinarily "all creatures", but its literal sense is evidently insisted on in the expression *bhūtāni abhūt* "became the Becomings". The idea is the acquisition in man of the supreme consciousness by which the one Self in him extends itself to embrace all creatures and realises the eternal act by which that One manifests itself in the multiple forms of the universal motion.

the Thinker,⁸ the One who becomes everywhere, the Self-existent has ordered objects perfectly according to their nature from years sempiternal.

*andham tamaḥ praviśanti ye 'vidyāmupāsate |
tato bhūya iva te tamo ya u vidyāyām ratāḥ ||*

9. Into a blind darkness they enter who follow after the Ignorance, they as if into a greater darkness who devote themselves to the Knowledge alone.

*anyadevāhurvidyayā 'nyadāhuravidyayā |
iti śuśrūma dhīrānām ye nastadvicacakṣire ||*

10. Other, verily,⁹ it is said, is that which comes by the Knowledge, other that which comes by the Ignorance; this is the lore we have received from the wise who revealed That to our understanding.

*vidyāñcāvidyāñca yastadvedobhayaṁ saha |
avidyayā mṛtyuṁ tīrtvā vidyayā 'mṛtamaśnute ||*

11. He who knows That as both in one, the Knowledge and the Ignorance, by the Ignorance crosses beyond death and by the Knowledge enjoys Immortality.

[8] There is a clear distinction in Vedic thought between *kavi*, the seer and *manīṣī*, the thinker. The former indicates the divine supra-intellectual Knowledge which by direct vision and illumination sees the reality, the principles and the forms of things in their true relations, the latter, the labouring mentality, which works from the divided consciousness through the possibilities of things downward to the actual manifestation in form and upward to their reality in the self-existent Brahman.

[9] *Anyadeva* — *eva* here gives to *anyad* the force, "Quite other than the result described in the preceding verse is that to which lead the Knowledge and the Ignorance." We have the explanation of *anyad* in the verse that follows. The ordinary rendering, "Knowledge has one result. Ignorance another", would be an obvious commonplace announced with an exaggerated pompousness, adding nothing to the thought and without any place in the sequence of the ideas.

andham tamaḥ praviśanti ye 'sambhūtimupāsate |
tato bhūya iva te tamo ya u sambhūtyām ratāḥ ||

12. Into a blind darkness they enter who follow after the Non-Birth, they as if into a greater darkness who devote themselves to the Birth alone.

anyadevāhuḥ sambhavādanyadāhurasambhavāt |
iti śuśrūma dhīrāṇām ye nastadvicacakṣire ||

13. Other, verily, it is said, is that which comes by the Birth, other that which comes by the Non-Birth; this is the lore we have received from the wise who revealed That to our understanding.

sambhūtiñca vināśañca yastadvedobhayaṁ saha |
vināśena mṛtyuṁ tīrtvā sambhūtyā 'mṛtamaśnute ||

14. He who knows That as both in one, the Birth and the dissolution of Birth, by the dissolution crosses beyond death and by the Birth enjoys Immortality.

hiraṇmayena pātreṇa satyasyāpihitam mukham |
tat tvam pūṣannapāvṛṇu satyadharmāya dṛṣṭaye ||

15. The face of Truth is covered with a brilliant golden lid; that do thou remove, O Fosterer,¹⁰ for the law of the Truth, for sight.

[10] In the inner sense of the Veda Surya, the Sun-God, represents the divine Illumination of the Kavi which exceeds mind and forms the pure self-luminous Truth of things. His principal power is self-revelatory knowledge, termed in the Veda, "Sight". His realm is described as the Truth, the Law, the Vast. He is the Fosterer or Increaser, for he enlarges and opens man's dark and limited being into a luminous and infinite consciousness. He is the sole Seer, Seer of Oneness and Knower of the Self, and leads him to the highest Sight. He is Yama, Controller or Ordainer for he governs man's action and manifested being by the direct Law of the Truth, *satya-dharma*, and therefore by the right principle of our nature, *yāthā-tathyatah*, a luminous power proceeding from the Father of all existence, he reveals in himself the divine Purusha of whom all beings are the manifestations. His rays are the thoughts that proceed luminously from the Truth, the Vast, but become deflected

*pūṣannekarṣe yama sūrya prājāpatya vyūha raśmīn samūha |
tejo yat te rūpaṁ kalyāṇatamaṁ tatte paśyāmi
yo 'sāvasau puruṣaḥ so 'hamasmi ||*

16. O Fosterer, O sole Seer, O Ordainer, O illumining Sun, O power of the Father of creatures, marshal thy rays, draw together thy light; the Lustre which is thy most blessed form of all, that in Thee I behold. The Purusha there and there, He am I.

*vāyuranilamamṛtamathedam bhasmāntaṁ śarīram |
OM krato smara kṛtaṁ smara krato smara kṛtaṁ smara ||*

17. The Breath of things¹¹ is an immortal Life, but of this body ashes are the end. OM! O Will,¹² remember, that which was done remember! O Will, remember, that which was done, remember.

*agne naya supathā rāye asmān viśvāni deva vayunāni vidvān |
yuyodhyasmajjuhurāṇameno bhūyiṣṭhām te namauktim vidhema ||*

18. O god Agni, knowing all things that are manifested, lead us by the good path to the felicity; remove from us the devious attraction of sin.

and distorted, broken up and disordered in the reflecting and dividing principle. Mind. They form there the golden lid which covers the face of the Truth. The Seer prays to Surya to cast them into right order and relation and then draw them together into the unity of revealed truth. The result of this inner process is the perception of the oneness of all beings in the divine Soul of the Universe.

[11] Vayu, called elsewhere Matarishwan, the Life-Energy in the universe. In the light of Surya he reveals himself as an immortal principle of existence of which birth and death and life in the body are only particular and external processes.

[12] The Vedic term *kratu* means sometimes the action itself, sometimes the effective power behind action represented in mental consciousness by the will. Agni is this power. He is divine force which manifests first in matter as heat and light and material energy and then, taking different forms in the other principles of man's consciousness, leads him by a progressive manifestation upwards to the Truth and the Bliss.

¹³ To thee completest speech of submission we would dispose. ¹⁴

[13] Sin, in the conception of the Veda, from which this verse is taken bodily, is that which excites and hurries the faculties into deviation from the good path. There is a straight road or road of naturally increasing light and truth, *rjuḥ panthāh, rtasya panthāh*, leading over infinite levels and towards infinite vistas, *vitā prṣṭhā*, by which the law of our nature should normally take us towards our fulfilment. Sin compels it instead to travel with stumblings amid uneven and limited tracts and along crooked windings (*duritāni, vrjināni*).

[14] The word *vidhema* is used of the ordering of the sacrifice, the disposal of the offerings to the God and, generally, of the sacrifice or worship itself. The Vedic *namas*, internal and external obeisance, is the symbol of submission to the divine Being in ourselves and in the world. Here the offering is that of completest submission and the self-surrender of all the faculties of the lower egoistic human nature to the divine Will-force, Agni, so that, free from internal opposition, it may lead the soul of man through the truth towards a felicity full of the spiritual riches, *rāye*. That state of beatitude is the intended self-content in the principle of pure Love and Joy, which the Vedic initiates regarded as the source of the divine existence in the universe and the foundation of the divine life in the human being. It is the deformation of this principle by egoism which appears as desire and the lust of possession in the lower worlds.

ANALYSIS

PREFATORY

Plan of the Upanishad

THE Upanishads, being vehicles of illumination and not of instruction, composed for seekers who had already a general familiarity with the ideas of the Vedic and Vedantic seers and even some personal experience of the truths on which they were founded, dispense in their style with expressed transitions of thought and the development of implied or subordinate notions.

Every verse in the Isha Upanishad reposes on a number of ideas implicit in the text but nowhere set forth explicitly; the reasoning also that supports its conclusions is suggested by the words, not expressly conveyed to the intelligence. The reader, or rather the hearer, was supposed to proceed from light to light, confirming his intuitions and verifying by his experience, not submitting the ideas to the judgment of the logical reason.

To the modern mind this method is invalid and inapplicable; it is necessary to present the ideas of the Upanishad in their completeness, underline the suggestions, supply the necessary transitions and bring out the suppressed but always implicit reasoning.

The central idea of the Upanishad, which is a reconciliation and harmony of fundamental opposites, is worked out symmetrically in four successive movements of thought.

FIRST MOVEMENT

In the first, a basis is laid down by the idea of the one and stable Spirit inhabiting and governing a universe of movement and of the forms of movement. (*Verse 1, line 1*)

On this conception the rule of a divine life for man is founded, —

enjoyment of all by renunciation of all through the exclusion of desire.
(*Verse 1, line 2*)

There is then declared the justification of works and of the physical life on the basis of an inalienable freedom of the soul, one with the Lord, amidst all the activity of the multiple movement. (*Verse 2*)

Finally, the result of an ignorant interference with the right manifestation of the One in the multiplicity is declared to be an involution in states of blind obscurity after death. (*Verse 3*)

SECOND MOVEMENT

In the second movement the ideas of the first verse are resumed and amplified.

The one stable Lord and the multiple movement are identified as one Brahman of whom, however, the unity and stability are the higher truth and who contains all as well as inhabits all. (*Verses 4,5*)

The basis and fulfilment of the rule of life are found in the experience of unity by which man identifies himself with the cosmic and transcendental Self and is identified in the Self, but with an entire freedom from grief and illusion, with all its becomings. (*Verses 6,7*)

THIRD MOVEMENT

In the third movement there is a return to the justification of life and works (the subject of *Verse 2*) and an indication of their divine fulfilment.

The degrees of the Lord's self-manifestation in the universe of motion and in the becomings of the one Being are set forth and the inner law of all existences declared to be by His conception and determination. (*Verse 8*)

Vidya and Avidya, Becoming and Non-becoming are reconciled by their mutual utility to the progressive self-realisation which proceeds from the state of mortality to the state of Immortality. (*Verses 9-14*)

FOURTH MOVEMENT

The fourth movement returns to the idea of the worlds and under the figures of Surya and Agni the relations of the Supreme Truth and Immortality (*Verses 15,16*), the activities of this life (*Verse 17*), and the

state after death (*Verse 18*) are symbolically indicated.

FIRST MOVEMENT

THE INHABITING GODHEAD: LIFE AND ACTION

Verses 1 - 3¹⁵

THE BASIS OF COSMIC EXISTENCE

God and the world. Spirit and formative Nature are confronted and their relations fixed.

COSMOS

All world is a movement of the Spirit in itself and is mutable and transient in all its formations and appearances; its only eternity is an eternity of recurrence, its only stability a semblance caused by certain apparent fixities of relation and grouping.

Every separate object in the universe is, in truth, itself the whole universe presenting a certain front or outward appearance of its movement. The microcosm is one with the macrocosm.

Yet in their relation of principle of movement and result of movement they are continent and contained, world in world, movement in movement. The individual therefore partakes of the nature of the universal, refers back to it for its source of activity, is, as we say, subject to its laws and part of cosmic Nature.

[15] 1 All this is for habitation by the Lord, whatsoever is individual universe of movement in the universal motion. By that renounced thou shouldst enjoy; lust not after any man's possession.

2 Doing verily works in this world one should wish to live a hundred years. Thus it is in thee and not otherwise than this; action cleaves not to a man.

3 Sunless are those worlds and enveloped in blind gloom whereto all they in their passing hence resort who are slayers of their souls.

SPIRIT

Spirit is lord of its movement, one, immutable, free, stable and eternal.

The Movement with all its formed objects has been created in order to provide a habitation for the Spirit who, being One, yet dwells multitudinously in the multiplicity of His mansions.

It is the same Lord who dwells in the sum and the part, in the Cosmos as a whole and in each being, force or object in the Cosmos.

Since He is one and indivisible, the Spirit in all is one and their multiplicity is a play of His cosmic consciousness.

Therefore each human being is in his essence one with all others, free, eternal, immutable, lord of Nature.

TRANSITIONAL THOUGHT

AVIDYA

The object of habitation is enjoyment and possession; the object of the Spirit in Cosmos is, therefore, the possession and enjoyment of the universe. Yet, being thus in his essence one, divine and free, man seems to be limited, divided from others, subject to Nature and even its creation and sport, enslaved to death, ignorance and sorrow. His object in manifestation being possession and enjoyment of his world, he is unable to enjoy because of his limitation. This contrary result comes about by Avidya, the Ignorance of oneness: and the knot of the Ignorance is egoism.

EGO

The cause of ego is that while by Its double power of Vidya and Avidya the Spirit dwells at once in the consciousness of multiplicity and relativity and in the consciousness of unity and identity and is therefore not bound by the Ignorance, yet It can, in mind, identify Itself with the object in the movement, absorbingly, to the apparent exclusion of the Knowledge which remains behind, veiled at the back of the mentality. The movement of Mind in Nature is thus able to conceive of the object as the reality and the Inhabitant as limited and determined by the appearances of the object. It conceives of the object, not as the universe in one of its frontal appearances, but as itself a separate existence standing out from the Cosmos and different in being from all the rest of it. It conceives similarly

of the Inhabitant. This is the illusion of ignorance which falsifies all realities. The illusion is called *ahamkāra*, the separative ego-sense which makes each being conceive of itself as an independent personality.

The result of the separation is the inability to enter into harmony and oneness with the universe and a consequent in-ability to possess and enjoy it. But the desire to possess and enjoy is the master impulse of the Ego which knows itself obscurely to be the Lord, although owing to the limitations of its relativity, it is unable to realise its true existence. The result is discord with others and oneself, mental and physical suffering, the sense of weakness and inability, the sense of obscuration, the straining of energy in passion and in desire towards self-fulfilment, the recoil of energy exhausted or disappointed towards death and disintegration.

Desire is the badge of subjection with its attendant discord and suffering. That which is free, one and lord, does not desire, but inalienably contains, possesses and enjoys.

THE RULE OF THE DIVINE LIFE

Enjoyment of the universe and all it contains is the object of world-existence, but renunciation of all in desire is the condition of the free enjoyment of all.

The renunciation demanded is not a moral constraint of self-denial or a physical rejection, but an entire liberation of the spirit from any craving after the forms of things.

The terms of this liberation are freedom from egoism and, consequently, freedom from personal desire. Practically, this renunciation implies that one should not regard anything in the universe as a necessary object of possession, nor as possessed by another and not by oneself, nor as an object of greed in the heart or the senses.

This attitude is founded on the perception of unity. For it has already been said that all souls are one possessing Self, the Lord; and although the Lord inhabits each object as if separately, yet all objects exist in that Self and not outside it.

Therefore by transcending Ego and realising the one Self, we possess the whole universe in the one cosmic consciousness and do not need to possess physically.

Having by oneness with the Lord the possibility of an infinite free delight in all things, we do not need to desire.

Being one with all beings, we possess, in their enjoyment, in ours and in the cosmic Being's, delight of universal self-expression. It is only by this Ananda at once transcendent and universal that man can be free in his soul and yet live in the world with the full active Life of the Lord in His universe of movement.

THE JUSTIFICATION OF WORKS

This freedom does not depend upon inaction, nor is this possession limited to the enjoyment of the inactive Soul that only witnesses without taking part in the movement. On the contrary, the doing of works in this material world and a full acceptance of the term of physical life are part of its completeness. For the active Brahman fulfils Himself in the world by works and man also is in the body for self-fulfilment by action. He cannot do otherwise, for even his inertia acts and produces effects in the cosmic movement. Being in this body or any kind of body, it is idle to think of refraining from action or escaping the physical life. The idea that this in itself can be a means of liberation, is part of the Ignorance which supposes the soul to be a separate entity in the Brahman.

Action is shunned because it is thought to be inconsistent with freedom. The man when he acts, is supposed to be necessarily entangled in the desire behind the action, in subjection to the formal energy that drives the action and in the results of the action. These things are true in appearance, not in reality.

Desire is only a mode of the emotional mind which by ignorance seeks its delight in the object of desire and not in the Brahman who expresses Himself in the object. By destroying that ignorance one can do action without entanglement in desire.

The Energy that drives is itself subject to the Lord, who expresses Himself in it with perfect freedom. By getting behind Nature to the Lord of Nature, merging the individual in the Cosmic Will, one can act with the divine freedom. Our actions are given up to the Lord and our personal responsibility ceases in His liberty.

The chain of Karma only binds the movement of Nature and not the soul which, by knowing itself, ceases even to appear to be bound by the

result of its works.

Therefore the way of freedom is not inaction, but to cease from identifying oneself with the movement and recover instead our true identity in the Self of things who is their Lord.

THE OTHER WORLDS

By departing from the physical life one does not disappear out of the Movement, but only passes into some other general state of consciousness than the material universe.

These states are either obscure or illuminated, some dark or sunless.

By persisting in gross forms of ignorance, by coercing perversely the soul in its self-fulfilment or by a wrong dissolution of its becoming in the Movement, one enters into states of blind darkness, not into the worlds of light and of liberated and blissful being.

SECOND MOVEMENT

1. BRAHMAN: ONENESS OF GOD AND THE WORLD

Verses 4 - 5¹⁶

BRAHMAN — THE UNITY

The Lord and the world, even when they seem to be distinct, are not really different from each other; they are one Brahman.

"ONE UNMOVING"

God is the one stable and eternal Reality. He is One because there is nothing else, since all existence and non-existence are He. He is stable or unmoving, because motion implies change in Space and change in Time, and He, being beyond Time and Space, is immutable. He possesses eternally in Himself all that is, has been or ever can be, and He therefore does not increase or diminish. He is beyond causality and relativity and therefore there is no change of relations in His being.

"SWIFTER THAN MIND"

The world is a cyclic movement (*samsāra*) of the Divine Consciousness in Space and Time. Its law and, in a sense, its object is progression; it exists by movement and would be dissolved by cessation of movement. But the basis of this movement is not material; it is the energy of active consciousness which, by its motion and multiplication in different principles (different in appearance, the same in essence), creates oppositions of unity and multiplicity, divisions of Time and Space,

[16] 4 One unmoving that is swifter than Mind; That the Gods reach not, for It progresses ever in front. That, standing, passes beyond others as they run. In That the Master of Life establishes the Waters.

5 That moves and That moves not; That is far and the same is near; That is within all this and That also is outside all this.

relations and groupings of circumstance and Causality. All these things are real in consciousness, but only symbolic of the Being, somewhat as the imaginations of a creative Mind are true representations of itself, yet not quite real in comparison with itself, or real with a different kind of reality.

But mental consciousness is not the Power that creates the universe. That is something infinitely more puissant, swift and unfettered than the mind. It is the pure omnipotent self-awareness of the Absolute unbound by any law of the relativity. The laws of the relativity, upheld by the gods, are Its temporary creations. Their apparent eternity is only the duration, immeasurable to us, of the world which they govern. They are laws regularising motion and change, not laws binding the Lord of the movement. The gods, therefore, are described as continually running in their course. But the Lord is free and unaffected by His own movement.

"THAT MOVES, THAT MOVES NOT"

The motion of the world works under the government of a perpetual stability. Change represents the constant shifting of apparent relations in an eternal Immutability.

It is these truths that are expressed in the formulae of the one Unmoving that is swifter than Mind, That which moves and moves not, the one Stable which outstrips in the speed of its effective consciousness the others who run.

TRANSITIONAL THOUGHT

THE MANY¹⁷

If the One is pre-eminently real, 'the others⁹', the Many are not unreal. The world is not a figment of the Mind.

Unity is the eternal truth of things, diversity a play of the unity. The

[17] The series of ideas under this heading seem to me to be the indispensable metaphysical basis of the Upanishad. The Isha Upanishad does not teach a pure and exclusive Monism; it declares the One without denying the Many and its method is to see the One in the Many. It asserts the simultaneous validity of Vidya and Avidya and upholds as the object of action and knowledge an immortality consistent with Life and Birth in this world. It regards every object as itself, the universe and every soul as itself, the divine Purusha. The ensemble of these ideas is consistent only with a synthetic or comprehensive as opposed to an illusionist or exclusive Monism.

sense of unity has therefore been termed Knowledge, Vidya, the sense of diversity Ignorance, Avidya. But diversity is not false except when it is divorced from the sense of its true and eternal unity.

Brahman is one, not numerically, but in essence. Numerical oneness would either exclude multiplicity or would be a pluralistic and divisible oneness with the Many as its parts. That is not the unity of Brahman, which can neither be diminished nor increased, nor divided.

The Many in the universe are sometimes called parts of the universal Brahman as the waves are parts of the sea. But, in truth, these waves are each of them that sea, their diversities being those of frontal or superficial appearances caused by the sea's motion. As each object in the universe is really the whole universe in a different frontal appearance, so each individual soul is all Brahman regarding Itself and world from a centre of cosmic consciousness.

For That is identical, not single. It is identical always and everywhere in Time and Space, as well as identical beyond Time and Space. Numerical oneness and multiplicity are equally valid terms of its essential unity.

These two terms, as we see them, are like all others, representations in Chit, in the free and all-creative self-awareness of the Absolute regarding itself variously, infinitely, innumerably and formulating what it regards. Chit is a power not only of knowledge, but of expressive will, not only of receptive vision, but of formative representation; the two are indeed one power. For Chit is an action of Being, not of the Void. What it sees, that becomes. It sees itself beyond Space and Time; that becomes in the conditions of Space and Time.

Creation is not a making of something out of nothing or of one thing out of another, but a self-projection of Brahman into the conditions of Space and time. Creation is not a making, but a becoming in terms and forms of conscious existence.

In the becoming each individual is Brahman variously represented and entering into various relations with Itself in the play of the divine consciousness; in being, each individual is all Brahman.

Brahman as the Absolute or the Universal has the power of standing back from Itself in the relativity. It conceives, by a subordinate movement of consciousness, the individual as other than the universal, the relative as

different from the Absolute. Without this separative movement, the individual would always tend to lose itself in the universal, the relative to disappear into the Absolute. Thus, It supports a corresponding reaction in the individual who regards himself as "other" than the transcendent and universal Brahman and "other" than the rest of the Many. He puts identity behind him and enforces the play of Being in the separate Ego.

The individual may regard himself as eternally different from the One, or as eternally one with It, yet different, or he may go back entirely in his consciousness to the pure Identity.¹⁸ But he can never regard himself as independent of some kind of Unity, for such a view would correspond to no conceivable truth in the universe or beyond it.

These three attitudes correspond to three truths of the Brahman which are simultaneously valid and none of them entirely true without the others as its complements. Their co-existence, difficult of conception to the logical intellect, can be experienced by identity in consciousness with Brahman.

Even in asserting Oneness, we must remember that Brahman is beyond our mental distinctions and is a fact not of Thought that discriminates, but of Being which is absolute, infinite and escapes discrimination. Our consciousness is representative and symbolic; it cannot conceive the thing-in-itself, the Absolute, except by negation, in a sort of void, by emptying it of all that it seems in the universe to contain. But the Absolute is not a void or negation. It is all that is here in Time and beyond Time.

Even oneness is a representation and exists in relation to multiplicity. Vidya and Avidya are equally eternal powers of the supreme Chit. Neither Vidya nor Avidya by itself is the absolute knowledge. (*Verses 9-11*)

Still, of all relations oneness is the secret base, not multiplicity. Oneness constitutes and upholds the multiplicity, multiplicity does not constitute and uphold the oneness.

Therefore we have to conceive of oneness as our self and the essential nature of Being, multiplicity as a representation of Self and a becoming. We have to conceive of the Brahman as One Self of all and then return upon the Many as becomings of the One Being (*bhūtāni...ātmānam*). But both the Self and the be-comings are Brahman; we cannot regard the one

[18] The positions, in inverse order, of the three principal philosophical schools of Vedanta, Monism, Qualified Monism and Dualism.

as Brahman and the others as unreal and not Brahman. Both are real, the one with a constituent and comprehensive, the others with a derivative or dependent reality.

THE RUNNING OF THE GODS

Brahman representing Itself in the universe as the Stable. , by Its immutable existence (Sat), is Purusha, God, Spirit; representing Itself as the Motional, by Its power of active Consciousness (Chit), is Nature, Force or World-Principle (Prakriti, Shakti, Maya).¹⁹ The play of these two principles is the Life of the universe.

The Gods are Brahman representing Itself in cosmic Personalities expressive of the one Godhead who, in their impersonal action, appear as the various play of the principles of Nature.

The "others" are *sarvāṇi bhūtāni* of a later verse, all becomings Brahman representing itself in the separative consciousness of the Many.

Everything in the universe, even the Gods, seems to itself to be moving in the general movement towards a goal outside itself or other than its immediate idea of itself. Brahman is the goal; for it is both the beginning and the end, the cause and the result of all movement.

But the idea of a final goal in the movement of Nature itself is illusory. For Brahman is Absolute and Infinite. The Gods, labouring to reach him, find, at every goal that they realise, Brahman still moving forward in front to a farther realisation. Nothing in the appearances of the universe can be entirely That to the relative consciousness; all is only a symbolic representation of the Unknowable.

All things are already realised in Brahman. The running of the Others in the course of Nature is only a working out (Prakriti), by Causality, in

[19] Prakriti, executive Nature as opposed to Purusha, which is the Soul governing, taking cognisance of and enjoying the works of Prakriti. Shakti, the self-existent, self-cognitive, self-effective Power of the Lord (Ishwara, Deva or Purusha), which expresses itself in the workings of Prakriti. Maya, signifying originally in the Veda comprehensive and creative knowledge. Wisdom that is from of old; afterwards taken in its second and derivative sense, cunning, magic. Illusion. In this second significance it can really be appropriate only to the workings of the lower Nature, *aparā prakṛti* which has put behind it the Divine Wisdom and is absorbed in the experiences of the separative Ego. It is in the more ancient sense that the word Maya is used in the Upanishads, where, indeed, it occurs but rarely.

Time and Space, of something that Brahman already possesses.

Even in Its universal being Brahman exceeds the Movement. Exceeding Time, It contains in Itself past, present and future simultaneously and has not to run to the end of conceivable Time. Exceeding Space, It contains all formations in Itself coincidentally and has not to run to the end of conceivable Space. Exceeding Causality, It contains freely in Itself all eventualities as well as all potentialities without being bound by the apparent chain of causality by which they are linked in the universe. Everything is already realised by It as the Lord before it can be accomplished by the separated Personalities in the movement.

THE PRINCIPLE OF LIFE

MATARISHWAN AND THE WATERS

What then is Its intention in the movement?

The movement is a rhythm, a harmony which That, as the Universal Life, works out by figures of Itself in the terms of conscious Being. It is a formula symbolically expressive of the Unknowable, — so arranged that every level of consciousness really represents something beyond itself, depth of depth, continent of continent. It is a play²⁰ of the divine Consciousness existing for its own satisfaction and adding nothing to That, which is already complete. It is a fact of conscious being, justified by its own existence, with no purpose ulterior to itself. The idea of purpose, of a goal is born of the progressive self-unfolding by the world of its own true nature to the individual Souls inhabiting its forms; for the Being is gradually self-revealed within its own becomings, real Unity emerges out of the Multiplicity and changes entirely the values of the latter to our consciousness.

This self-unfolding is governed by conditions determined by the complexity of consciousness in its cosmic action.

For consciousness is not simple or homogeneous, it is septuple. That is to say, it constitutes itself into seven forms or grades of conscious activity descending from pure Being to physical being. Their interplay creates the worlds, determines all activities, constitutes all becomings.

[20] This is the Vaishnava image of the Lila applied usually to the play of the Personal Deity in the world, but equally applicable to the active impersonal Brahman.

Brahman is always the continent of this play or this working. Brahman self-extended in Space and Time is the universe.

In this extension Brahman represents Itself as formative Nature, the universal Mother of things, who appears to us, first, as Matter, called *prthivī*, the Earth-Principle.

Brahman in Matter or physical being represents Itself as the universal Life-Power, Matarishwan, which moves there as a dynamic energy, *prāṇa*, and presides effectively over all arrangement and formation.

Universal Life establishes, involved in Matter, the septuple consciousness; and the action of *prāṇa*, the dynamic energy, on the Matrix of things evolves out of it its different forms and serves as a basis for all their evolutions.

TRANSITIONAL THOUGHT

THE WATERS

There are, then, seven constituents of Chit active in the universe.

We are habitually aware of three elements in our being, Mind, Life and Body. These constitute for us a divided and mutable existence which is in a condition of unstable harmony and works by a strife of positive and negative forces between the two poles of Birth and Death. For all life is a constant birth or becoming (*sambhava*, *sambhūti* of *Verses 12-14*). All birth entails a constant death or dissolution of that which becomes, in order that it may change into a new becoming. Therefore this state of existence is called *mṛtyu*. Death, and described as a stage which has to be passed through and transcended. (*Verses 11-14*)

For this is not the whole of our being and, therefore, not our pure being. We have, behind, a superconscious existence which has also three constituents, *sat*, *cit-tapas* and *ānanda*.

Sat is essence of our being, pure infinite and undivided, as opposed to this divisible being which finds itself on the constant changeableness of physical substance. Sat is the divine counterpart of physical substance.

Chit-Tapas is pure energy of Consciousness, free in its rest or its action, sovereign in its will, as opposed to the hampered dynamic energies of Prana which, feeding upon physical substances, are dependent on and

limited by their sustenance. ²¹ Tapas is the divine counterpart of this lower nervous or vital energy.

Ananda is Beatitude, the bliss of pure conscious existence and energy, as opposed to the life of the sensations and emotions which are at the mercy of the outward touches of Life and Matter and their positive and negative reactions, joy and grief, pleasure and pain. Ananda is the divine counterpart of the lower emotional and sensational being.

This higher existence, proper to the divine Sachchidananda, is unified, self-existent, not confused by the figures of Birth and Death. It is called, therefore, *amṛtam*. Immortality, and offered to us as the goal to be aimed at and the felicity to be enjoyed when we have transcended the state of death. (*Verses 11, 14, 17,18*)

The higher divine is linked to the lower mortal existence by the causal Idea²² or supramental Knowledge-Will, *vijñāna*. It is the causal Idea which, by supporting and secretly guiding the confused activities of the Mind, Life and Body, ensures and compels the right arrangement of the universe. It is called in the Veda the Truth because it represents by direct vision the truth of things both inclusive and independent of their appearances; the Right or Law because, containing in itself the effective power of Chit, it works out all things according to their nature with a perfect knowledge and prevision; the Vast, because it is of the nature of an infinite cosmic Intelligence comprehensive of all particular activities.

Vijnana, as the Truth, leads the divided consciousness back to the One. It also sees the truth of things in the multiplicity. Vijnana is the divine counterpart of the lower divided intelligence.

These seven powers of Chit are spoken of by the Vedic Rishis as the Waters, they are imaged as currents flowing into or rising out of the general sea of Consciousness in the human being. ²³

They are all co-existent in the universe eternally and inseparably, but

[21] Therefore physical substance is called in the Upanishads *annam*. Food. In its origin, however, the word meant simply being or substance.

[22] Not the abstract mental idea, but the supramental Real-Idea, the Consciousness, Force and Delight of the Being precipitated into a comprehensive and discriminative awareness of all the truths and powers of its own existence, carrying in its self-knowledge the will of self-manifestation, the power of all its potentialities and the power of all its forms. It is power that acts and effectuates, as well as knowledge master of its own action.

capable of being involved and remanifested in each other. They are actually involved in physical Nature and must necessarily evolve out of it. They can be withdrawn into pure infinite Being and can again be manifested out of it.

The infolding and unfolding of the One in the Many and the Many in the One is therefore the law of the eternally recurrent cosmic Cycles.

THE VISION OF THE BRAHMAN

The Upanishad teaches us how to perceive Brahman in the universe and in our self-existence.

We have to perceive Brahman comprehensively as both the Stable and the Moving. We must see It in eternal and immutable Spirit and in all the changing manifestations of universe and relativity.

We have to perceive all things in Space and Time, the far and the near, the immemorial Past, the immediate Present, the infinite Future with all their contents and happenings as the One Brahman.

We have to perceive Brahman as that which exceeds, contains and supports all individual things as well as all universe, transcendently of Time and Space and Causality. We have to perceive It also as that which lives in and possesses the universe and all it contains.

This is the transcendental, universal and individual Brahman, Lord, Continent and Indwelling Spirit, which is the object of all knowledge. Its realisation is the condition of perfection and the way of Immortality.

[23] *Hṛdya samudra*, Ocean of the Heart. Rv. IV. 58. 5.

SECOND MOVEMENT

2. SELF-REALISATION

Verses 6 - 7²⁴

SELF-REALISATION

Brahman is, subjectively, Atman, the Self or immutable existence of all that is in the universe. Everything that changes in us, mind, life body, character, temperament, action, is not our real and unchanging self, but becomings of the Self in the movement, *jagati*.

In Nature, therefore, all things that exist, animate or inanimate, are becomings of the one Self of all. All these different creatures are one indivisible existence. This is the truth each being has to realise.

When this unity has been realised by the individual in every part of his being, he becomes perfect, pure, liberated from ego and the dualities, possessed of the entire divine felicity.

ATMAN

Atman, our true self, is Brahman; it is pure indivisible Being, self-luminous, self-concentrated in consciousness, self-concentrated in force, self-delighted. Its existence is light and bliss. It is timeless, spaceless and free.

THE THREEFOLD PURUSHA²⁵

Atman represents itself to the consciousness of the creature in three

[24] 6 But he who sees everywhere the Self in all existences and all existences in the Self, shrinks not thereafter from aught.

7 He in whom it is the Self-Being that has become all existences that are Becomings, for he has the perfect knowledge, how shall he be deluded, whence shall he have grief who sees everywhere oneness?

[25] Gita XV. 16, 17. See also XIII *passim*.

states, dependent on the relations between *puruṣa* and *prakṛti*, the Soul and Nature. These three states are *akṣara*, unmoving or immutable; *kṣara*, moving or mutable; and *para* or *uttama*. Supreme or Highest.

Kshara Purusha is the Self reflecting the changes and movements of Nature, participating in them, immersed in the consciousness of the movement and seeming in it to be born and die, increase and diminish, progress and change. Atman, as the Kshara, enjoys change and division and duality; controls secretly its own changes but seems to be controlled by them; enjoys the oppositions of pleasure and pain, good and bad, but appears to be their victim; possesses and upholds the action of Nature, by which it seems to be created. For, always and inalienably, the Self is Ishwara, the Lord.

Akshara Purusha is the Self, standing back from the changes and movements of Nature, calm, pure, impartial, indifferent, watching them and not participating, above them as on a summit, not immersed in these Waters. This calm Self is the sky that never moves and changes looking down upon the waters that are never at rest. The Akshara is the hidden freedom of the Kshara.

Para Purusha or Purushottama is the Self containing and enjoying both the stillness and the movement, but conditioned and limited by neither of them. It is the Lord, Brahman, the All, the Indefinable and Unknowable.

It is this supreme Self that has to be realised in both the unmoving and the mutable.

PURUSHA IN PRAKRITI²⁶

Atman, the Self, represents itself differently in the sevenfold movement of Nature according to the dominant principle of the consciousness in the individual being.

In the physical consciousness Atman becomes the material being, *annamaya puruṣa*.

In the vital or nervous consciousness Atman becomes the vital or dynamic being, *prāṇamaya puruṣa*.

In the mental consciousness Atman becomes the mental being, *manomaya puruṣa*.

[26] *Taittiriya Upanishad* II. 1-6.

In the supra-intellectual consciousness, dominated by the Truth or causal Idea (called in Veda *satyam ṛtam br̥hat*, the True, the Right, the Vast), Atman becomes the ideal being or great Soul, *vijñānamaya puruṣa* or *mahat ātman*²⁷

In the consciousness proper to the universal Beatitude, Atman becomes the all-blissful being or all-enjoying and all-productive Soul, *ānandamaya puruṣa*.

In the consciousness proper to the infinite divine self-awareness which is also the infinite all-effective Will (*cit-tapas*), Atman is the all-conscious Soul that is source and lord of the universe, *caitanya puruṣa*.

In the consciousness proper to the state of pure divine existence, Atman is *sat puruṣa*, the pure divine Self.

Man, being one in his true Self with the Lord who inhabits all forms, can live in any of these states of the Self in the world and partake of its experiences. He can be anything he wills from the material to the all-blissful being. Through the Anandamaya he can enter into the Chaitanya and Sat Purusha.

SACHCHIDANANDA

Sachchidananda is the manifestation of the higher Purusha; its nature of infinite being, consciousness, power and bliss is the higher Nature, *parā prakṛti*. Mind, life and body are the lower nature, *aparā prakṛti*.

The state of Sachchidananda is the higher half of universal existence, *parārdha*, the nature of which is Immortality, *amṛtam*. The state of mortal existence in Matter is the lower half, *aparārdha*, the nature of which is death, *mṛtyu*.

Mind and life in the body are in the state of Death because by Ignorance they fail to realise Sachchidananda. Realising perfectly Sachchidananda, they can convert themselves. Mind into the nature of the Truth, *vijñāna*. Life into the nature of *caitanya*, Body into the nature of *sat*, that is, into the pure essence.

When this cannot be done perfectly in the body, the soul realises its true state in other forms of existence or worlds, the "sunlit" worlds and

[27] The *mahat ātman* or Vast Self is frequently referred to in the Upanishads. It is also called *bhūmā*, the Large.

states of felicity, and returns upon material existence to complete its evolution in the body.

A progressively perfect realisation in the body is the aim of human evolution.

It is also possible for the soul to withdraw for an indefinable period into the pure state of Sachchidananda.

The realisation of the Self as Sachchidananda is the aim of human existence.

THE CONDITION OF SELF-REALISATION²⁸

Sachchidananda is always the pure state of Atman; it may either remain self-contained as if apart from the universe or overlook, embrace and possess it as the Lord.

In fact, it does both simultaneously. (*Verse 8*)

The Lord pervades the universe as the Virat Purusha, the Cosmic Soul (*paribhūḥ* of the eighth verse, the One who becomes everywhere); He enters into each object in the movement, to the Knowledge as Brahman supporting individual consciousness and individual form, to the Ignorance as an individualised and limited being. He manifests as the Jivatman or individual self in the living creature.

From the standpoint of our lower state in the kingdom of death and limitation Atman is Sachchidananda, supra-mental, but reflected in the mind. If the mind is pure, bright and still, there is the right reflection; if it is unpurified, troubled and obscured, the reflection is distorted and subjected to the crooked action of the Ignorance.

According to the state of the reflecting mind we may have either purity of self-knowledge or an obscuration and distortion of knowledge in the dualities of truth and error; a pure activity of unegoistic Will or an obscuration and deflection of Will in the dualities of right and wrong action, sin and virtue; a pure state and unmixed play of beatitude or an obscuration and perversion of it in the dualities of right and wrong

[28] I have collected under this and the preceding headings the principal ideas of the Upanishads with regard to the Self, although not expressly mentioned or alluded to in our text, because they are indispensable to an understanding of the complete philosophy of these Scriptures and to the relations of the thought which is developed in the Isha.

enjoyment, pleasure and pain, joy and grief.

It is the mental ego-sense that creates this distortion by division and limitation of the Self. The limitation is brought about through the Kshara Purusha identifying itself with the changeable formations of Nature in the separate body, the individual life and the egoistic mind, to the exclusion of the sense of unity with alleistence and with all existences.

This exclusion is a fixed habit of the understanding due to our past evolution in the movement, not an ineffugable law of human consciousness. Its diminution and final disappearance are the condition of self-realisation.

The beginning of wisdom, perfection and beatitude is the vision of the One.

THE STAGES OF SELF-REALISATION

THE VISION OF THE ALL

The first movement of self-realisation is the sense of unity with other existences in the universe. Its early or crude form is the attempt to understand or sympathise with others, the tendency of a widening love or compassion or fellow-feeling for others, the impulsion of work for the sake of others.

The oneness so realised is a pluralistic unity, the drawing together of similar units resulting in a collectivity or solidarity rather than in real oneness. The Many remain to the consciousness as the real existences; the One is only their result.

Real knowledge begins with the perception of essential oneness, — one Matter, one Life, one Mind, one Soul playing in many forms.

When this Soul of things is seen to be Sachchidananda, then knowledge is perfected. For we see Matter to be only a play of Life, Life a play of Mind energising itself in substance, Mind a play of Truth or causal Idea representing truth of being variously in all possible mental forms. Truth a play of Sachchidananda, Sachchidananda the self-manifestation of a supreme Unknowable, Para-Brahman or Para-Purusha.

We perceive the soul in all bodies to be this one Self or Sachchidananda multiplying itself in individual consciousness. We see also all minds, lives, bodies to be active formations of the same existence

in the extended being of the Self.

This is the vision of all existences in the Self and of the Self in all existences which is the foundation of perfect internal liberty and perfect joy and peace.

For by this vision, in proportion as it increases in intensity and completeness, there disappears from the individual mentality all *jugupsā*, that is to say, all repulsion, shrinking, dislike, fear, hatred and other perversions of feeling which arise from division and personal opposition to other beings or to the objectivities that surround us. Perfect equality²⁹ of soul is established.

THE VISION OF THE SELF IN ITS BECOMINGS

Vision is not sufficient; one must become what inwardly one sees. The whole inner life must be changed so as to represent perfectly in all parts of the being what is understood by the intellect and seen by the inner perception.

In the individual soul extending itself to the All by the vision of unity (*ekatvam anupaśyataḥ*, seeing everywhere oneness) arranging its thoughts, emotions and sensations according to the perfect knowledge of the right relation of things which comes by the realisation of the Truth (*vijānataḥ*, having the perfect knowledge), there must be repeated the divine act of consciousness by which the one Being, eternally self-existent, manifests in itself the multiplicity of the world (*sarvāṇi bhūtāni ātmaiva abhūt*, the Self-Being became all Becomings).

That is to say, the human or egoistic view is that of a world of innumerable separate creatures each self-existent and different from the others, each trying to get its utmost possible profit out of the others and the world, but the divine view, the way in which God sees the world, is Himself, as the sole Being, living in innumerable existences that are Himself, supporting all, helping all impartially, working out to a divine fulfilment and under terms fixed from the beginning, from years sempiternal, a great progressive harmony of Becoming whose last term is

[29] The state described in the Gita as *samatva*. *Jugupsā* is the feeling of repulsion caused by the sense of a want of harmony between one's own limited self-formation and the contacts of the external with a consequent recoil of grief, fear, hatred, discomfort, suffering. It is the opposite of attraction which is the source of desire and attachment. Repulsion and attraction removed, we have *samatva*.

Sachchidananda or Immortality. This is the viewpoint of the Self as Lord inhabiting the whole movement. The individual soul has to change the human or egoistic for the divine, supreme and universal view and live in that realisation.

It is necessary, therefore, to have the knowledge of the transcendent Self, the sole unity, in the equation *so'ham*, I am He, and in that knowledge to extend one's conscious existence so as to embrace the whole Multiplicity.

This is the double or synthetic ideal of the Isha Upanishad; to embrace simultaneously Vidya and Avidya, the One and the Many; to exist in the world, but change the terms of the Death into the terms of the Immortality; to have the freedom and peace of the Non-Birth simultaneously with the activity of the Birth. (*Verses 9-14*).

All parts of the lower being must consent to this realisation; to perceive with the intellect is not enough. The heart must consent in a universal love and delight, the sense-mind in a sensation of God and self everywhere, the life in the comprehension of all aims and energies in the world as part of its own being.

THE ACTIVE BEATITUDE

This realisation is the perfect and complete Beatitude, embracing action, but delivered from sorrow and self-delusion.

There is no possibility of self-delusion (*moha*); for the soul, having attained to the perception of the Unknowable behind all existence, is no longer attached to the Becoming and no longer attributes an absolute value to any particularity in the universe, as if that were an object in itself and desirable in itself. All is enjoyable and has a value as the manifestation of the Self and for the sake of the Self which is manifested in it, but none for its own.³⁰ Desire and illusion are removed; illusion is replaced by knowledge, desire by the active beatitude of universal possession.

There is no possibility of sorrow; for all is seen as Sachchidananda and therefore in the terms of the infinite conscious existence, the infinite will, the infinite felicity. Even pain and grief are seen to be perverse terms of Ananda, and that Ananda which they veil here and for which they prepare the lower existence (for all suffering in the evolution is a preparation of

[30] *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad*.

strength and bliss) is already seized, known and enjoyed by the soul thus liberated and perfected. For it possesses the eternal Reality of which they are the appearances.

Thus it is possible, by the realisation of the unity of God and the world (*īś* and *jagat*) in the complete knowledge of the Brahman, to renounce desire and illusion through the ascent to the pure Self and the Non-Becoming and yet to enjoy by means of all things in the manifestation God in the universe through a free and illuminated self-identification with Sachchidananda in all existences.

CONCLUSION

We have, therefore, in the second movement the explanation of the first verse of the Upanishad. The first line, asserting that all souls are the one Lord inhabiting every object in the universe and that every object is universe in universe, movement in the general movement, has been explained in the terms of complete oneness by the Brahman, transcendental and universal even in the individual. One in the Many, Many in the One, Stable and Motional, exceeding and reconciling all opposites. The second line, fixing as the rule of divine life universal renunciation of desire as the condition of universal enjoyment in the spirit, has been explained by the state of self-realisation, the realisation of the free and transcendent Self as one's own true being, of that Self as Sachchidananda and of the universe seen as the Becoming of Sachchidananda and possessed in the terms of the right Knowledge and no longer in the terms of the Ignorance which is the cause of all attraction and repulsion, self-delusion and sorrow.

THIRD MOVEMENT

1. THE LORD

Verse 8³¹

"HE"

In its third movement the Upanishad takes up the justification of works already stated in general terms in its second verse and finds it more precisely upon the conception of Brahman or the Self as the Lord, — *īś, īśvara, para puruṣa, saḥ* (He) — who is the cause of personality and governs by His law of works the rhythm of the Movement and the process of the worlds that He conceives and realises throughout eternal Time in His own self-existence.

It is an error to conceive that the Upanishads teach the true existence only of an impersonal and actionless Brahman, an impersonal God without power or qualities. They declare rather an Unknowable that manifests itself to us in a double aspect of Personality and Impersonality. When they wish to speak of this Unknowable in the most comprehensive and general way, they use the neuter and call it *tat*. That; but this neuter does not exclude the aspect of universal and transcendent Personality acting and governing the world (cf. *Kena Upanishad* III). Still, when they intend to make prominent the latter idea they more often prefer to use the masculine *saḥ*. He, or else they employ the term Deva, God or the Divine, or Puruṣa, the conscious Soul, of whom Prakriti or Maya is the executive Puissance, the Shakti.

The Isha Upanishad, having declared the Brahman as the sole reality manifesting itself in many aspects and forms, having presented this Brahman subjectively as the Self, the one Being of whom all existences are Becomings, and as that which we have to realise in ourselves and in all things and beyond all things, now proceeds to assert the same Brahman

[31] 8 It is He that has gone abroad — That which is bright, bodiless, without scar of imperfection, without sinews, pure, unpierced by evil. The Seer, the Thinker, the One who becomes everywhere, the Self-existent has ordered objects perfectly according to their nature from years sempiternal.

more objectively as the Lord, the Purusha who both contains and inhabits the universe.

It is He that went abroad. This Brahman, this Self is identical with the Lord, the Ish, with whose name the Upanishad opens, the Inhabitant of all forms: and, as we shall find, identical with the universal Purusha of the 16th verse, — "The Purusha there and there. He am I." It is He who has become all things and beings, — a conscious Being, the sole Existent and Self-existent, who is Master and Enjoyer of all He becomes. And the Upanishad proceeds to formulate the nature and manner, the general law of that becoming of God which we call the world. For on this conception depends the Vedic idea of the two poles of death and immortality, the reason for the existence of Avidya, the Ignorance, and the justification of works in the world.

TRANSITIONAL THOUGHT

THE DIVINE PERSONALITY

The Vedantic idea of God, "He", Deva or Ishwara, must not be confused with the ordinary notions attached to the conception of a Personal God. Personality is generally conceived as identical with individuality and the vulgar idea of a Personal God is a magnified individual like man in His nature but yet different, greater, more vast and all-overpowering. Vedanta admits the human manifestation of Brahman in man and to man, but does not admit that this is the real nature of the Ishwara.

God is Sachchidananda. He manifests Himself as infinite existence of which the essentiality is consciousness, of which again the essentiality is bliss, is self-delight. Delight cognising variety of itself, seeking its own variety, as it were, becomes the universe. But these are abstract terms; abstract ideas in themselves cannot produce concrete realities. They are impersonal states; impersonal states cannot in themselves produce personal activities.

This becomes still clearer if we consider the manifestation of Sachchidananda. In that manifestation Delight translates itself into Love; Consciousness translates itself into double terms, conceptive Knowledge, executive Force; Existence translates itself into Being, that is to say, into Person and Substance. But Love is incomplete without a Lover and an

object of Love, Knowledge without a Knower and an object of Knowledge, Force without a Worker and a Work, Substance without a Person cognising and constituting it.

This is because the original terms also are not really impersonal abstractions. In delight of Brahman there is an Enjoyer of delight in consciousness of Brahman a Conscient, in existence of Brahman an Existent; but the object of Brahman's delight and consciousness and the term and stuff of Its existence are Itself. In the divine Being Knowledge, the Knower and the Known and, therefore, necessarily also Delight, the Enjoyer and the Enjoyed are one.

This Self-Awareness and Self-Delight of Brahman has two modes of its Force of consciousness, its Prakriti or Maya, intensive in self-absorption, diffusive in self-extension. The intensive mode is proper to the pure and silent Brahman; the diffusive to the active Brahman. It is the diffusion of the Self-existent in the term and stuff of His own existence that we call the world, the becoming or the perpetual movement (*bhuvanam, jagat*). It is Brahman that becomes; what He becomes is also the Brahman. The object of Love is the self of the Lover; the work is the self-figuration of the Worker; Universe is body and action of the Lord.

When, therefore, we consider the abstract and impersonal aspect of the infinite existence, we say, "That"; when we consider the Existent self-aware and self-blissful, we say, "He". Neither conception is entirely complete. Brahman itself is the Unknowable beyond all conceptions of Personality and Impersonality. We may call it "That" to show that we exile from our affirmation all term and definition. We may equally call it "He", provided we speak with the same intention of rigorous exclusion. *Tat* and *sah* are always the same. One that escapes definition.

In the universe there is a constant relation of Oneness and Multiplicity. This expresses itself as the universal Personality and the many Persons, and both between the One and the Many and among the Many themselves there is the possibility of an infinite variety of relations. These relations are determined by the play of the divine existence, the Lord, entering into His manifested habitations. They exist at first as conscious relations between individual souls; they are then taken up by them and used as a means of entering into conscious relation with the One. It is this entering into various relations with the One which is the object and function of Religion. All religions are justified by this essential necessity; all express

one Truth in various ways and move by various paths to one goal.

The Divine Personality reveals Himself in various forms and names to the individual soul. These forms and names are in a sense created in the human consciousness; in another they are eternal symbols revealed by the Divine who thus concretises Himself in mind-form to the multiple consciousness and aids it in its return to its own Unity.³²

HE THAT WENT ABROAD

It is He that has extended Himself in the relative consciousness whose totality of finite and changeable circumstances dependent on an equal immutable and eternal Infinity is what we call the Universe. *Sa paryagāt*. In this extension we have, therefore, two aspects, one of pure infinite relationless immutability, another of a totality of objects in Time and Space working out their relations through causality. Both are different and mutually complementary expressions of the same unknowable "He".

To express the infinite Immutability the Upanishad uses a series of neuter adjectives, "Bright, bodiless, without scar, without sinews, pure, unpierced by evil." To express the same Absolute as cause, continent and governing Inhabitant of the totality of objects and of each object in the totality (*jagatyām jagat*) it uses four masculine epithets, "The Seer, the Thinker, the One who becomes everywhere, the Self-existent" or "the Self-Becoming".

The Immutable is the still and secret foundation of the play and the movement, extended equally, impartially in all things, *samam brahma*,³³ lending its support to all without choice or active participation. Secure and free in His eternal immutability the Lord projects Himself into the play and the movement, becoming there in His self-existence all that the Seer in Him visualises and the Thinker in Him conceives. *Kavir manīṣī paribhūḥ svayambhūḥ*.

THE PURE IMMUTABLE

[32] It would be an error to suppose that these conceptions are in their essence later developments of philosophical Hinduism. The conception of the many forms and names of the One is as old as the Rig-veda.

[33] "The equal Brahman". — Gīta.

The pure immutability of the Lord is "bright". It is luminosity of pure concentrated Self-awareness, not broken by re-refractions, not breaking out into colour and form. It is the pure self-knowledge of the Purusha, the conscious Soul, with his Power, his executive Force contained and inactive.

It is "bodiless", — without form, indivisible and without appearance of division. It is one equal Purusha in all things, not divided by the divisions of Space and Time, — a pure self-conscious Absolute.

It is without scar, that is, without defect, break or imperfection. It is untouched and unaffected by the mutabilities. It supports their clash of relations, their play of more and less, of increase and diminution, of irruption and interpenetration. For Itself is without action, *acalah sanātanah*,³⁴ "motionless, sempiternal."

It is without sinews. The reason for Its being without scar is that It does not put out Power, does not dispense Force in multiple channels, does not lose it here, increase it there, replenish its loss or seek by love or by violence its complementary or its food. It is without nerves of force; It does not pour itself out in the energies of the Pranic dynamism, of Life, of Matarishwan.

It is pure, unpierced by evil. What we call sin or evil, is merely excess and defect, wrong placement, inharmonious action and reaction. By its equality, by its inaction even while it supports all action, the conscious Soul retains its eternal freedom and eternal purity. For it is unmodified; It watches as the Sakshi, the witness, the modifications effected by Prakriti, but does not partake of them, does not get clogged with them, receives not their impression. *Na lipyate*.

THE SOUL INALIENABLY FREE

What is the relation of the active Brahman and of the human soul to this pure Inactive? They too are That, Action does not change the nature of the Self, but only the nature of the diverse forms, The Self is always *pure*, blissful perfect, whether inactive or participating in action.

The Self is all things and exceeds them. It exceeds always that in which the mind is engrossed, that which it takes in a particular time and space as a figure of itself. The boundless whole is always perfect. The

[34] Gita II. 24.

totality of things is a complete harmony without wound or flaw. The viewpoint of the part taken for a whole, in other words the Ignorance, is the broken reflection which creates the consciousness of limitation, incompleteness and discord. We shall see that this Ignorance has a use in the play of the Brahman; but in itself it appears at first to be only a parent of evil.

Ignorance is a veil that separates the mind, body and life from their source and reality, Sachchidananda. Thus obscured the mind feels itself pierced by the evil that Ignorance creates. But the Active Brahman is always Sachchidananda using for its self-becoming the forms of mind, body and life. All their experiences are therefore seen by It in the terms of Sachchidananda. It is not pierced by the evil. For It also is the One and sees everywhere Oneness. It is not mastered by the Ignorance that It uses as a minor term of its conception.

The human soul is one with the Lord; it also is in its completeness Sachchidananda using Ignorance as the minor term of its being. But it has projected its conceptions into this minor term and established there in limited mind its centre of vision, its viewpoint. It assumes to itself the incompleteness and the resultant sense of want, discord, desire, suffering. The Real Man behind is not affected by all this confusion; but the apparent or exterior Man is affected. To recover its freedom it must recover its completeness; it must identify itself with the divine Inhabitant within, its true and complete self. It can then, like the Lord, conduct the action of Prakriti without undergoing the false impression of identification with the results of its action. It is this idea on which the Upanishad bases the assertion, "Action cleaveth not to a man."

To this end it must recover the silent Brahman within. The Lord possesses always His double term and conducts the action of the universe, extended in it, but not attached to or limited by His works. The human soul, entangled in mind, is obscured in vision by the rushing stream of Prakriti's works and fancies itself to be a part of that stream and swept in its currents and in its eddies. It has to go back in its self-existence to the silent Purusha even while participating in its self-becoming in the movement of Prakriti. It becomes then, not only like the silent Purusha, the witness and upholder, but also the Lord and the free enjoyer of Prakriti and her works. An absolute calm and passivity, purity and equality within, a sovereign and inexhaustible activity without is the nature of Brahman as

we see it manifested in the universe.

There is therefore no farther objection to works. On the contrary, works are justified by the participation or self-identification of the soul with the Lord in His double aspect of passivity and activity. Tranquillity for the Soul, activity for the energy, is the balance of the divine rhythm in man.

THE LAW OF THINGS

The totality of objects (*arthān*) is the becoming of the Lord in the extension of His own being. Its principle is double. There is consciousness; there is Being. Consciousness dwells in energy (*tapas*) upon its self-being to produce Idea of itself (*viĵcana*) and form and action inevitably corresponding to the Idea. This is the original Indian conception of creation, self-production or projection into form (*sr̥ṣṭi*, *prasava*). Being uses its self-awareness to evolve infinite forms of itself governed by the expansion of the innate Idea in the form. This is the original Indian conception of evolution, prominent in certain philosophies such as the Sankhya (*pariṇāma*, *vikāra*, *vivarta*). It is the same phenomenon diversely stated.

In the idea of some thinkers the world is a purely subjective evolution (*vivarta*), not real as objective facts; in the idea of others it is an objective fact, a real modification (*pariṇāma*), but one which makes no difference to the essence of Being. Both notions claim to derive from the Upanishads as their authority, and their opposition comes in fact by the separation of what in the ancient Vedānta was viewed as one, — as we see in this passage.

Brahman is His own subject and His own object, whether in His pure self-existence or in His varied self-becoming. He is the object of His own self-awareness; He is the Knower of His own self-being. The two aspects are inseparable, even though they seem to disappear into each other and emerge again from each other. All appearance of pure subjectivity holds itself as an object implicit in its very subjectivity; all appearance of pure objectivity holds itself as subject implicit in its very objectivity.

All objective existence is the Self-existent, the Self-becoming, *svayambhū*, becoming by the force of the Idea within it. The Idea is, self-contained, the Fact that it becomes. For *svayambhū* sees or comprehends

Himself in the essence of the Fact as *kavi* thinks Himself out in the evolution of its possibilities as *manīṣī*, becomes form of Himself in the movement in Space and Time as *paribhū*. These three are one operation appearing as successive in the relative, temporal and spatial Consciousness.

It follows that every object holds in itself the law of its own being eternally, *śāśvatībhyaḥ samābhyaḥ*, from years sempiternal, in perpetual Time. All relations in the totality of objects are thus determined by their Inhabitant, the Self-existent, the Self-becoming, and stand contained in the nature of things by the omnipresence of the One, the Lord, by His self-vision which is their inherent subjective Truth, by His self-becoming which, against a background of boundless possibilities, is the Law of their inevitable evolution in the objective Fact.

Therefore all things are arranged by Him perfectly, *yāthā-tathyataḥ* as they should be in their nature. There is an imperative harmony in the All, which governs the apparent discords of individualisation. That discord would be real and operate in eternal chaos, if there were only a mass of individual forms and forces, if each form and force did not contain in itself and were not in its reality the self-existent All, the Lord.

THE PROCESS OF THINGS

The Lord appears to us in the relative notion of the process of things first as Kavi, the Wise, the Seer. The Kavi sees the Truth in itself the truth in its becoming, in its essence, possibilities, actuality. He contains all that in the Idea, the Vijnana, called the Truth and Law, *satyam ṛtam*. He contains it comprehensively, not piecemeal; the Truth and Law of things is the *brhat*, the Large. Viewed by itself, the realm of Vijnana would seem a realm of predetermination, of concentration, of compelling seed-state. But it is a determination not in previous Time, but in perpetual Time; a Fate compelled by the Soul, not compelling it, compelling rather the action and result, present in the expansion of the movement as well as in the concentration of the Idea. Therefore the truth of the Soul is freedom and mastery, not subjection and bondage. Purusha commands Prakriti, Prakriti does not compel Purusha. *Na karma lipyate nare*.

The Manishi takes his stand in the possibilities. He has behind him the freedom of the Infinite and brings it in as a background for the determination of the finite. Therefore every action in the world seems to

emerge from a balancing and clashing of various possibilities. None of these, however, are effective in the determination except by their secret consonance with the Law of that which has to become. The Kavi is in the Manishi and upholds him in his working. But viewed by itself the realm of the Manishi would seem to be a state of plasticity, of free-will, of the interaction of forces, but of a free-will in thought which is met by a fate in things.

For the action of the Manishi is meant to eventuate in the becoming of the Paribhu. The Paribhu, called also Virat, extends Himself in the realm of eventualities. He fulfils what is contained in the Truth, what works out in the possibilities reflected by the mind, what appears to us as the fact objectively realised. The realm of Virat would seem, if taken separately, to be that of a Law and Predetermination which compels all things that evolve in that realm, — the iron chain of Karma, the rule of mechanical necessity, the despotism of an inexplicable Law.

But the becoming of Virat is always the becoming of the self-existent Lord, — *paribhūḥ svayambhūḥ*. Therefore to realise the truth of that becoming we have to go back and re-embrace all that stands behind: — we have to return to the full truth of the free and infinite Sachchidananda.

This is the truth of things as seen from above and from the Unity. It is the divine standpoint; but we have to take account of the human standpoint which starts from below, proceeds from the Ignorance, and perceives these principles successively, not comprehensively, as separate states of consciousness. Humanity is that which returns in experience to Sachchidananda, and it must begin from below, in Avidya, with the mind embodied in matter, the Thinker imprisoned and emerging from the objective Fact. This imprisoned Thinker is Man, the "Manu".

He has to start from death and division and arrive at unity and immortality. He has to realise the universal in the individual and the Absolute in the relative. He is Brahman growing self-conscious in the objective multiplicity. He is the ego in the cosmos vindicating himself as the All and the Transcendent.

THIRD MOVEMENT

2. KNOWLEDGE AND IGNORANCE

Verses 9 - 11³⁵

VIDYA AND AVIDYA

All manifestation proceeds by the two terms, Vidya and Avidya, the consciousness of Unity and the consciousness of Multiplicity. They are the two aspects of the Maya, the formative self-conception of the Eternal.

Unity is the eternal and fundamental fact, without which all multiplicity would be unreal and an impossible illusion. The consciousness of Unity is therefore called Vidya, the Knowledge.

Multiplicity is the play or varied self-expansion of the One, shifting in its terms, divisible in its view of itself, by force of which the One occupies many centres of consciousness, inhabits many formations of energy in the universal Movement. Multiplicity is implicit or explicit in unity. Without it the Unity would be either a void of non-existence or a powerless, sterile limitation to the state of indiscriminate self-absorption or of blank repose.

But the consciousness of multiplicity separated from the true knowledge in the many of their own essential oneness, — the viewpoint of the separate ego identifying itself with the divided form and the limited action, — is a state of error and delusion. In man this is the form taken by the consciousness of multiplicity. Therefore it is given the name of Avidya, the Ignorance.

Brahman, the Lord, is one and all-blissful, but free from limitation by

[35] 9 Into a blind darkness they enter who follow after the Ignorance, they as if into a greater darkness who devote themselves to the Knowledge alone.

10 Other, verily, it is said, is that which comes by the Knowledge, other that which comes by the Ignorance; this is the lore we have received from the wise who revealed That to our understanding.

11 He who knows That as both in one, the Knowledge and the Ignorance, by the Ignorance crosses beyond death and by the Knowledge enjoys Immortality.

His unity; all-powerful. He is able to conceive Himself from multiple centres in multiple forms from which and upon which flow multiple currents of energy, seen by us as actions or play of forces. When He is thus multiple. , He is not bound by His multiplicity, but amid all variations dwells eternally in His own oneness. He is Lord of Vidya and Avidya. They are the two sides of His self-conception (Maya), the twin powers of His Energy (Chit-Shakti).

Brahman, exceeding as well as dwelling in the play of His Maya, is *īś*, lord of it and free. Man, dwelling in the play, is *anis*, not lord, not free, subject to Avidya. But this subjection is itself a play of the Ignorance, unreal in essential fact (*paramārtha*), real only in practical relation (*vyavahāra*), in the working out of the actions of the divine Energy, the Chit-Shakti. To get back to the essential fact of his freedom he must recover the sense of Oneness, the consciousness of Brahman, of the Lord, realise his oneness in Brahman and with the Lord. Recovering his freedom, realising his oneness with all existences as becomings of the One Being who is always himself (*so'ham asmi*, He am I), he is able to carry out divine actions in the world, no longer subject to the Ignorance, because free in the Knowledge.

The perfection of man, therefore, is the full manifestation of the Divine in the individual through the supreme accord between Vidya and Avidya. Multiplicity must become conscious of its oneness, Oneness embrace its multiplicity.

THE EXTREME PATHS

The purpose of the Lord in the world cannot be fulfilled by following Vidya alone or Avidya alone.

Those who are devoted entirely to the principle of multiplicity and division and take their orientation away from oneness enter into a blind darkness of Ignorance. For this tendency is one of increasing contraction and limitation, disaggregation of the gains of knowledge and greater and greater subjection to the mechanical necessities of Prakriti and finally to her separative and self-destructive forces. To turn away from the progression towards Oneness is to turn away from existence and from light.

Those who are devoted entirely to the principle of indiscriminate Unity

and seek to put away from them the integrality of the Brahman, also put away from them knowledge and completeness and enter as if into a greater darkness. They enter into some special state and accept it for the whole, mistaking exclusion in consciousness for transcendence in consciousness. They ignore by choice of knowledge, as the others are ignorant by compulsion of error. Knowing all to transcend all is the right path of Vidya.

Although a higher state than the other, this supreme Night is termed a greater darkness, because the lower is one of chaos from which reconstitution is always possible, the higher is a conception of Void or Asat, an attachment to non-existence of Self from which it is more difficult to return to fulfilment of Self.

THE GAINS IN EITHER PATH

Pursued with a less entire attachment the paths of Vidya and Avidya have each their legitimate gains for the human soul, but neither of these are the full and perfect thing undertaken by the individual in the manifestation.

By Vidya one may attain to the state of the silent Brahman or the Akshara Purusha regarding the universe without actively participating in it or to His self-absorbed state of Chit in Sat from which the universe proceeds and towards which it returns. Both these states are conditions of serenity, plenitude, freedom from the confusions and sufferings of the world.

But the highest goal of man is neither fulfilment in the movement as a separate individual nor in the Silence separated from the movement, but in the Uttama Purusha, the Lord, He who went abroad and upholds in Himself both the Kshara and the Akshara as modes of His being. The self of man, the Jivatman, is here in order to realise in the individual and for the universe that one highest Self of all. The ego created by Avidya is a necessary mechanism for affirming individuality in the universal as a starting-point for this supreme achievement.

By Avidya one may attain to a sort of fullness of power, joy, world-knowledge, largeness of being, which is that of the Titans or of the Gods, of Indra, of Prajapati. This is gained in the path of self-enlargement by an ample acceptance of the multiplicity in all its possibilities and a constant

enrichment of the individual by all the materials that the universe can pour into him. But this also is not the goal of man; for though it brings transcendence of the ordinary human limits, it does not bring the divine transcendence of the universe in the Lord of the universe. One transcends confusion of Ignorance, but not limitation of Know-ledge, — transcends death of the body, but not limitation of being, — transcends subjection to sorrow, but not subjection to joy, — transcends the lower Prakriti, but not the higher. To gain the real freedom and the perfect Immortality one would have to descend again to all that had been rejected and make the right use of death, sorrow and ignorance.

The real knowledge is that which perceives Brahman in His integrality and does not follow eagerly after one consciousness rather than another, is no more attached to Vidya than to Avidya. This was the knowledge of the ancient sages who were *dhīra*, steadfast in the gaze of their thought, not drawn away from the completeness of knowledge by one light or by another and whose perception of Brahman was consequently entire and comprehensive and their teaching founded on that perception equally entire and comprehensive (*vicacakṣire*). It is the knowledge handed down from these Ancients that is being set forth in the Upanishad.

THE COMPLETE PATH

Brahman embraces in His manifestation both Vidya and Avidya and if they are both present in the manifestation, it is because they are both necessary to its existence and its accomplishment. Avidya subsists because Vidya supports and embraces it; Vidya depends upon Avidya for the preparation and the advance of the soul towards the great Unity. Neither could exist without the other; for if either were abolished, they would both pass away into something which would be neither the one nor the other, something inconceivable and ineffable beyond all manifestation.

In the worst Ignorance there is some point of the knowledge which constitutes that form of Ignorance and some support of Unity which prevents it in its most extreme division, limitation, obscurity from ceasing to exist by dissolving into nothingness. The destiny of the Ignorance is not that it should be dissolved out of existence, but that its elements should be enlightened, united, that which they strive to express delivered, fulfilled and in the fulfilment transmuted and transfigured.

In the uttermost unity of which knowledge is capable the contents of

the Multiplicity are inherent and implicit and can any moment be released into activity. The office of Vidya is not to destroy Avidya as a thing that ought never to have been manifested but to draw it continually towards itself, supporting it the while and helping it to deliver itself progressively from that character of Ignorance, of the oblivion of its essential Oneness, which gives it its name.

Avidya fulfilled by turning more and more to Vidya enables the individual and the universal to become what the Lord is in Himself, conscious of His manifestation, conscious of His non-manifestation, free in birth, free in non-birth.

Man represents the point at which the multiplicity in the universe becomes consciously capable of this turning and fulfilment. His own natural fulfilment comes by following the complete path of Avidya surrendering itself to Vidya, the Multiplicity to the Unity, the Ego to the One in all and beyond all, and of Vidya accepting Avidya into itself, the Unity fulfilling the Multiplicity, the One manifesting Himself unveiled in the individual and in the universe.

MORTALITY AND IMMORTALITY

MORTALITY

By Avidya fulfilled man passes beyond death, by Vidya accepting Avidya into itself he enjoys immortality.

By death is meant the state of mortality which is a subjection to the process of constant birth and dying as a limited ego bound to the dualities of joy and sorrow, good and evil, truth and error, love and hatred, pleasure and suffering.

This state comes by limitation and self-division from the One who is all and in all and beyond all and by attachment of the idea of self to a single formation in Time and Space of body, life and mind, by which the Self excludes from its view all that it verily is with the exception of a mass of experiences flowing out from and in upon a particular centre and limited by the capacities of a particular mental, vital and bodily frame. This mass of experiences it organises around the ego-centre in the mind and linking them together in Time by a double action of memory, passive in state, active in work, says continually, "This is I,"

The result is that the soul attributes to itself a certain portion only of

the play of Prakriti or Chit-Shakti and consequently a certain limited capacity of force of consciousness which has to bear all the impact of what the soul does not regard as itself but as a rush of alien forces; against them it defends its separate formation of individuality from dissolution into Nature or mastery by Nature. It seeks to assert in the individual form and by its means its innate character of Ish or Lord and so to possess and enjoy its world.

But by the very definition of the ego its capacity is limited. It accepts as itself a form made of the movement of Nature which cannot endure in the general flux of things. It has to form it by the process of the movement and this is birth, it dissolves it by the process of the movement and this is death.

It can master by the understanding only so much of its experiences as assimilate with its own viewpoint and in a way which must always be imperfect and subject to error because it is not the view of all or the viewpoint of the All. Its knowledge is partly error and all the rest it ignores.

It can only accept and harmonise itself with a certain number of its experiences, precisely because these are the only ones it can understand sufficiently to assimilate. This is its joy; the rest is sorrow or indifference.

It is only capable of harmonising with the force in its body, nerves and mind a certain number of impacts of alien forces. In these it takes pleasure. The rest it receives with insensibility or pain.

Death therefore is the constant denial by the All of the ego's false self-limitation in the individual frame of mind, life and body.

Error is the constant denial by the All of the ego's false sufficiency in a limited knowledge.

Suffering of mind and body is the constant denial by the All of the ego's attempt to confine the universal Ananda to a false and self-regarding formation of limited and exclusive enjoyments.

It is only by accepting the oneness of the All that the individual can escape from this constant and necessary denial and attain beyond. Then All-being, All-force, All-consciousness, All-truth, All-delight take possession of the individual soul. It changes mortality for immortality.

MORTALITY AND AVIDYA

But the way of attaining to immortality is not by the self-dissolution of the individual formation into the flux of Prakriti, neither is it by prematurely dissolving it into the All-soul which Prakriti expresses. Man moves towards something which fulfils the universe by transcending it. He has to prepare his individual soul for the transcendence and for the fulfilment.

If Avidya is the cause of mortality, it is also the path out of mortality. The limitation has been created precisely in order that the individual may affirm himself against the flux of Prakriti in order eventually to transcend, possess and transform it.

The first necessity is therefore for man continually to enlarge himself in being, knowledge, joy, power in the limits of the ego so that he may arrive at the conception of something which progressively manifests itself in him in these terms and becomes more and more powerful to deal with the oppositions of Prakriti and to change, individually, more and more the terms of ignorance, suffering and weakness into the terms of knowledge, joy and power and even death into a means of wider life.

This self-enlargement has then to awaken to the perception of something exceeding itself, exceeding the personal manifestation. Man has so to enlarge his conception of self as to see all in himself and himself in all (*Verse 6*). He has to see that this "I" which contains all and is contained in all, is the One, is universal and not his personal ego. To That he has to subject his ego, That he has to reproduce in his nature and become, That is what he has to possess and enjoy with an equal soul in all its forms and movements.

He has to see that this universal One is something entirely transcendent, the sole Being, and that the universe and all its forms, actions, egos are only becomings of that Being (*Verse 7*). World is a becoming which seeks always to express in motion of Time and Space, by progression in mind, life and body what is beyond all becoming, beyond Time and Space, beyond mind, life and body.

Thus Avidya becomes one with Vidya. By Avidya man passes beyond that death, suffering, ignorance, weakness which were the first terms he had to deal with, the first assertions of the One in the birth affirming Himself amid the limitations and divisions of the Multiplicity. By Vidya he enjoys even in the birth the Immortality.

IMMORTALITY

Immortality does not mean survival of the self or the ego after dissolution of the body. The Self always survives the dissolution of the body, because it always pre-existed before the birth of the body. The self is unborn and undying. The survival of the ego is only the first condition by which the individual soul is able to continue and link together its experiences in Avidya so as to pursue with an increasing self-possession and mastery that process of self-enlargement which culminates in Vidya.

By immortality is meant the consciousness which is beyond birth and death, beyond the chain of cause and effect, beyond all bondage and limitation, free, blissful, self-existent in conscious-being, the consciousness of the Lord, of the supreme Purusha, of Sachchidananda.

IMMORTALITY AND BIRTH

On this realisation man can base his free activity in the universe.

But having so far attained, what further utility has the soul for birth or for works? None for itself, everything for God and the universe.

Immortality beyond the universe is not the object of manifestation in the universe, for that the Self always possessed. Man exists in order that through him the Self may enjoy Immortality in the birth as well as in the non-becoming.

Nor is individual salvation the end; for that would only be the sublime of the ego, not its self-realisation through the Lord in all.

Having realised his own immortality, the individual has yet to fulfil God's work in the universe. He has to help the life, he mind and the body in all beings to express progressively Immortality and not mortality.

This he may do by the becoming in the material body which we ordinarily call birth, or from some status in another world or even, it is possible, from beyond world. But birth in the body is the most close, divine and effective form of help which the liberated can give to those who are themselves still bound to the progression of birth in the lowest world of the Ignorance.

THIRD MOVEMENT

3. BIRTH AND NON-BIRTH

Verses 12 - 14³⁶

THE BIRTH AND THE NON-BIRTH

The Self outside Nature does not become; it is immutable as well as eternal. The Self in Nature becomes, it changes its states and forms. This entry into various states and forms in the succession of Time is Birth in Nature.

Because of these two positions of the Self, in Nature and out of Nature, moving in the movement and seated above the movement, active in the development and eating the fruits of the tree of Life or inactive and simply regarding, there are two possible states of conscious existence directly opposed to each other of which the human soul is capable, the state of Birth, the state of Non-Birth.

Man starts from the troubled state of Birth, he arrives at that tranquil poise of conscious existence liberated from the movement which is the Non-Birth. The knot of the Birth is the ego-sense; the dissolution of the ego-sense brings us to the Non-Birth. Therefore the Non-Birth is also called the Dissolution (*vināśa*).

Birth and Non-Birth are not essentially physical conditions, but soul-states. A man may break the knot of the ego-sense and yet remain in the physical body; but if he concentrates himself solely in the state of dissolution of ego, then he is not born again in the body. He is liberated from birth as soon as the present impulse of Nature which continues the

[36] 12 Into a blind darkness they enter who follow after the Non-Birth, they as if into a greater darkness who devote themselves to the Birth alone.

13 Other, verily, it is said, is that which comes by the Birth, other that which comes by the Non-Birth; this is the lore we have received from the wise who revealed That to our understanding.

14 He who knows That as both in one, the Birth and the dissolution of Birth, by the dissolution crosses beyond death and by the Birth enjoys Immortality.

action of the mind and body has been exhausted. On the other hand if he attaches himself to the Birth, the ego-principle in him seeks continually to clothe itself in fresh mental and physical forms.

THE EVIL OF THE EXTREMES

Neither attachment to Non-Birth nor attachment to Birth is the perfect way. For all attachment is an act of ignorance and a violence committed upon the Truth. Its end also is ignorance, a state of blind darkness.

Exclusive attachment to Non-Birth leads to a dissolution into indiscriminate Nature or into the Nihil, into the Void, and both of these are states of blind darkness. For the Nihil is an attempt not to transcend the state of existence in birth, but to annul it, not to pass from a limited into an illimitable existence, but from existence into its opposite. The opposite of existence can only be the Night of negative consciousness, a state of ignorance and not of release.

On the other hand, attachment to Birth in the body means a constant self-limitation and an interminable round of egoistic births in the tower forms of egoism without issue or release. This is, from a certain point of view, a worse darkness than the other; for it is ignorant even of the impulse of release. It is not an error in the grasping after truth, but a perpetual contentment with the state of blindness. It cannot lead even eventually to any greater good, because it does not dream of any higher condition.

THE GOOD OF THE EXTREMES

On the other hand each of these tendencies, pursued with a certain relateness to the other, has its own fruit and its own good. Non-Birth pursued as the goal of Birth and a higher, fuller and truer existence may lead to withdrawal into the silent Brahman or into the pure liberty of the Non-Being. Birth, pursued as a means of progress and self-enlargement, leads to a greater and fuller life which may, in its turn, become a vestibule to the final achievement.

THE PERFECT WAY

But neither of these results is perfect in itself nor the true goal of

humanity. Each of them brings its intended portion into the perfect good of the human soul only when it is completed by the other.

Brahman is both Vidya and Avidya, both Birth and Non-Birth. The realisation of the Self as the unborn and the poise of the soul beyond the dualities of birth and death in the infinite and transcendent existence are the conditions of a free and divine life in the Becoming. The one is necessary to the other. It is by participation in the pure unity of the Immobile (Akshara) Brahman that the soul is released from its absorption in the stream of the movement. So released it identifies itself with the Lord to whom becoming and non-becoming are only modes of His existence and is able to enjoy immortality in the manifestation without being caught in the wheel of Nature's delusions. The necessity of birth ceases, its personal object having been fulfilled; the freedom of becoming remains. For the Divine enjoys equally and simultaneously the freedom of His eternity and the freedom of His becoming.

It may even be Said that to have had the conscious experience of a dissolution of the very idea of Being into the supreme Non-Being is necessary for the fullest and freest possession of Being itself. This would be from the synthetic standpoint the justification of the great effort of Buddhism to exceed the conception of all positive being even in its widest or purest essentiality.

Thus by dissolution of ego and of the attachment to birth the soul crosses beyond death; it is liberated from all limitation in the dualities. Having attained this liberation it accepts becoming as a process of Nature subject to the soul and not binding upon it and by this free and divine becoming enjoys Immortality.

THE JUSTIFICATION OF LIFE

Thus, the third movement of the Upanishad is a justification of life and works, which were enjoined upon the seeker of the Truth in its second verse. Works are the essence of Life. Life is a manifestation of the Brahman; in Brahman the Life Principle arranges a harmony of the seven principles of conscious being by which that manifestation works out its involution and evolution. In Brahman Matarishwan disposes the waters, the sevenfold movement of the divine Existence.

That divine Existence is the Lord who has gone abroad in the

movement and unrolled the universe in His three modes as All-Seer of the Truth of things. Thinker-out of their possibilities, Realiser of their actualities. He has determined all things sovereignly in their own nature, development and goal from years sempiternal.

That determination works out through His double power of Vidya and Avidya, consciousness of essential unity and consciousness of phenomenal multiplicity.

The Multiplicity carried to its extreme limit returns upon itself in the conscious individual who is the Lord inhabiting the forms of the movement and enjoying first the play of the Ignorance. Afterwards by development in the Ignorance the soul returns to the capacity of Knowledge and enjoys by the Knowledge Immortality.

This Immortality is gained by the dissolution of the limited ego and its chain of births into the consciousness of the unborn and undying, the Eternal, the Lord, the ever-free. But it is enjoyed by a free and divine becoming in the universe and not outside the universe; for there it is always possessed, but here in the material body it is to be worked out and enjoyed by the divine Inhabitant under circumstances that are in appearance the most opposite to its terms, in the life of the individual and in the multiple life of the universe.

Life has to be transcended in order that it may be freely accepted; the works of the universe have to be over-passed in order that they may be divinely fulfilled.

The soul even in apparent bondage is really free and only plays at being bound; but it has to go back to the consciousness of freedom and possess and enjoy universally not this or that but the Divine and the All.

FOURTH MOVEMENT

1. THE WORLDS — SURYA

Verses 15 - 16³⁷

THE WORLDS AFTER DEATH

In the third verse the Upanishad has spoken of sunless worlds enveloped in blind gloom. In its third movement it also speaks twice of the soul entering into a blind gloom, but here it is a state of consciousness that seems to be indicated and not a world. Nevertheless, the two statements differ little in effect; for in the Vedantic conception a world is only a condition of conscious being organised in the terms of the seven constituent principles of manifested existence. According to the state of consciousness which we reach here in the body, will be our state of consciousness and the surroundings organised by it when the mental being passes out of the body. For the individual soul out of the body must either disappear into the general constituents of its existence, merge itself into Brahman or persist in an organisation of consciousness other than the terrestrial and in relations with the universe other than those which are appropriate to life in the body. This state of consciousness and the relations belonging to it are the other worlds, the worlds after death.

THE THREE STATES

The Upanishad admits three states of the soul in relation to the manifested universe, — terrestrial life by birth in the body, the survival of the individual soul after death in other states and the immortal existence which being beyond birth and death, beyond manifestation can yet enter into forms as the Inhabitant and embrace Nature as its lord. The two

[37] 15 The face of Truth is covered with a brilliant golden lid; that do thou remove, O Fosterer, for the law of the Truth, for sight.

16 O Fosterer, O sole Seer, O Ordainer, O illumining Sun, O power of the Father of creatures, marshal thy rays, draw together thy light; the Lustre which is thy most blessed form of all, that in Thee I behold. The Purusha there and there. He am I.

former conditions appertain to the Becoming; Immortality stands in the Self, in the Non-Birth, and enjoys the Becoming.

The Upanishad, although it does not speak expressly of rebirth in an earthly body, yet implies that belief in its thought and language, — especially in the 17th verse. On the basis of this belief in rebirth man may aim at three distinct objects beyond death, — a better or more fortunate life or lives upon earth, eternal enjoyment of bliss in an ultra-terrestrial world of light and joy or a transcendence exclusive of all universal existence, merged in the Supreme as in one's true self, but having no relation with the actual or possible contents of its infinite consciousness.

REBIRTH

The attainment of a better life or lives upon earth is not the consummation offered to the soul by the thought of the Upanishad. But it is an important intermediate object so long as the soul is in a state of growth and self-enlargement and has not attained to liberation. The obligation of birth and death is a sign that the mental being has not yet unified itself with its true supramental self and spirit, but is dwelling "in Avidya and enclosed within it".³⁸ To attain that union the life of man upon earth is its appointed means. After liberation the soul is free, but may still participate in the entire movement and return to birth no longer for its own sake but for the sake of others and according to the will in it of its divine Self, the Lord of its movement.

HEAVEN AND HELL

The enjoyment of beatitude in a heaven beyond is also not the supreme consummation. But Vedantic thought did not envisage rebirth as an immediate entry after death into a new body; the mental being in man is not so rigidly bound to the vital and physical, — on the contrary, the latter are ordinarily dissolved together after death, and there must therefore be, before the soul is attracted back towards terrestrial existence, an interval in which it assimilates its terrestrial experiences in order to be able to constitute a new vital and physical being upon earth. During this interval it must dwell in states or worlds beyond and these may be favourable or unfavourable to its future development. They are favourable in proportion

[38] *Avidyāyām antare vartamānāḥ*. — *Katha Upanishad* I. 2.5; *Mundaka* I. 2. 8.

as the light of the Supreme Truth of which Surya is a symbol enters into them, but states of intermediate ignorance or darkness are harmful to the soul in its progress. Those enter into them, as has been affirmed in the third verse, who do hurt to themselves by shutting themselves to the light or distorting the natural course of their development. The Vedantic heavens are states of light and the soul's expansion; darkness, self-obscuration and self-distortion are the nature of the Hells which it has to shun.

In relation to the soul's individual development, therefore, the life in worlds beyond, like the life upon earth, is a means and not an object in itself. After liberation the soul may possess these worlds as it possesses the material birth, accepting in them a means towards the divine manifestation in which they form a condition of its fullness, each being one of the parts in a series of organised states of conscious being which is linked with and supports all the rest.

TRANSCENDENCE

Transcendence is the goal of the development, but it does not exclude the possession of that which is transcended. The soul need not and should not push transcendence so far as to aim at its own extinction. Nirvana is extinction of the ego-limitations, but not of all possibility of manifestation, since it can be possessed even in the body.

The desire of the exclusive liberation is the last desire that the soul in its expanding knowledge has to abandon; the delusion that it is bound by birth is the last delusion that it has to destroy.

SURYA AND AGNI

On the basis of this conception of the worlds and the relation of these different soul-states to each other the Upanishad proceeds to indicate the two lines of knowledge and action which lead to the supreme vision and the divine felicity. This is done under the form of an invocation to Surya and Agni, the Vedic godheads, representative one of the supreme Truth and its illuminations, the other of the divine Will raising, purifying and perfecting human action.

THE ORDER OF THE WORLDS

To understand entirely the place and function of Surya we must enter a little more profoundly into the Vedic conception of the seven worlds and the principles of consciousness they represent.

All conscious being is one and indivisible in itself, but in manifestation it becomes a complex rhythm, a scale of harmonies, a hierarchy of states or movements. For what we call a state is only the organisation of a complex movement. This hierarchy is composed by a descending or involutive and an ascending or evolutive movement of which Spirit and Matter are the highest and lowest terms.

Spirit is Sat or pure existence, pure in self-awareness (Chit), pure in self-delight (Ananda). Therefore Spirit can be regarded as a triune basis of all conscious being. There are three terms, but they are really one. For all pure existence is in its essence pure self-consciousness and all pure self-consciousness is in its essence pure self-delight. At the same time our consciousness is capable of separating these three by the Idea and the Word and even of creating for itself in its divided or limited movements the sense of their apparent opposites.

An integral intuition into the nature of conscious being shows us that it is indeed one in essence but also that it is capable of an infinite potential complexity and multiplicity in self-experience. The working of this potential complexity and multiplicity in the One is what we call from our point of view manifestation or creation or world or becoming — (*bhuvana, bhāva*). Without it no world-existence is possible.

The agent of this becoming is always the self-consciousness of the Being. The power by which the self-consciousness brings out of itself its potential complexities is termed Tapas, Force or Energy, and, being self-conscious, is obviously of the nature of Will. But not Will as we understand it, something exterior to its object, other than its works, labouring on material outside itself, but Will inherent in the Being, inherent in the becoming, one with the movement of existence, — self-conscious Will that becomes what it sees and knows in itself. Will that is expressed as Force of its own work and formulates itself in the result of its work. By this Will, Tapas or Chit-Shakti, the worlds are created.

THE HIGHER WORLDS

All organisation of self-conscious being which takes as its basis the unity of pure existence belongs to the world of the highest creation, *parārdha* — the worlds of the Spirit.

We can conceive three principal formations.

When *tapas* or energy of self-conscience dwells upon *sat* or pure existence as its basis, the result is *satyaloka* or world of true existence. The soul in *satyaloka* is one with all its manifestations by oneness of essence and therefore one in self-conscience and in energy of self-conscience and one also in bliss.

When *tapas* dwells upon active power of *cit* as its basis, the result is *tapoloka* or world of energy of self-conscience. The soul in *tapoloka* is one with all manifestations in this Energy and therefore enjoys oneness also in the totality of their bliss and possesses equally their unity of essence.

When *tapas* dwells upon active Delight of being as its basis, the result is *janaloka*, world of creative Delight. The soul in *janaloka* is one in delight of being with all manifestation and through that bliss one also in conscious energy and in essence of being.

All these are states of consciousness in which unity and multiplicity have not yet been separated from each other. All is in all, each in all and all in each, inherently, by the very nature of conscious being and without effort of conception or travail of perception. There is no night, no obscurity. Neither is there, properly speaking, any dominant action of illuminating Surya. For the whole of consciousness there is self-luminous and needs no light other than itself. The distinct existence of Surya is lost in the oneness of the Lord or Purusha; that luminous oneness is Surya's most blessed form of all.

THE LOWER CREATION

In the lower creation also there are three principles. Matter, Life, and Mind. *Sat* or pure existence appears there as extended substance or Matter; Will or Force appears as Life which is in its nature creative or manifesting Force and that Force is in its nature a self-conscious will involved and obscure in the forms of its creation. It is liberated from the involution and obscurity by delight of being struggling to become conscious of itself in desire and sensation; the result is the emergence of Mind. So at least it

appears to us in the ascending or evolutive movement.

Wherever there is Matter, Life and Mind are present involved or evolving. So also. Life and Mind have some kind of material form as the condition of their activities. These three appear not as triune, owing to their domination by the dividing principle of Avidya, but as triple.

In the organisation of consciousness to which we belong, Tapas dwells upon Matter as its basis. Our consciousness is determined by the divisibility of extended substance in its apparent forms. This is Bhurloka, the material world, the world of formal becoming.

But we may conceive of a world in which dynamic Life-force with sensation emergent in it is the basis and determines without the gross obstacle of Matter the forms that it shall take. This organisation of consciousness has for its field Bhuvarka, the world of free vital becoming in form.

We may conceive also of an organised state of consciousness in which Mind liberates itself from subjection to material sensation and becoming dominant determines its own forms instead of being itself determined by the forms in which it finds itself as a result of life-evolution. This formation is Swaroka or world of free, pure and luminous mentality.

In these lower worlds consciousness is normally broken up and divided. The light of Surya, the Truth, is imprisoned in the night of the subconscious or appears only reflected in limited centres or with its rays received by those centres and utilised according to their individual nature.

THE INTERMEDIATE WORLD

Between these two creations, linking them together, is the world or organisation of consciousness of which the infinite Truth of things is the foundation. There dominant individualisation no longer usurps the all-pervading soul and the foundation of consciousness is its own vast totality arranging in itself individualised movements which never lose the consciousness of their integrality and total oneness with all others. Multiplicity no longer prevails and divides, but even in the complexity of its movements always refers back to essential unity and its own integral totality. This world is therefore called Maharoka or world of large consciousness.

The principle of Maharoka is Vijnana, the Idea. But this Vijnana is

intuitional or rather gnostic Idea,³⁹ not intellectual conception. The difference is that intellectual conception not only tends towards form, but determines itself in the form of the idea and once determined distinguishes itself sharply from other conceptions. But pure intuitional or gnostic Idea sees itself in the Being as well as in the Becoming. It is one with the existence which throws out the form as a symbol of itself and it therefore carries with it always the knowledge of the Truth behind the form. It is in its nature self-consciousness of the being and power of the One, aware always of its totality, starting therefore from the totality of all existence and perceiving directly its contents. Its nature is *dr̥ṣṭi*, seeing, not conceiving. It is the vision at once of the essence and the image. It is this intuition or gnosis which is the Vedic Truth, the self-vision and all-vision of Surya.

THE LAW OF THE TRUTH

The face of this Truth is covered as with a brilliant shield, as with a golden lid; covered, that is to say, from the view of our human consciousness. For we are mental beings and our highest ordinary mental sight is composed of the concepts and percepts of the mind, which are indeed a means of knowledge, rays of the Truth, but not in their nature truth of existence, only truth of form. By them we arrange our knowledge of the appearances of things and try to infer the truth behind. The true knowledge is truth of existence, *satyam*, not mere truth of form or appearance.

We can only arrive at the true Truth, if Surya works in us to remove this brilliant formation of concepts and percepts and replaces them by the self-vision and all-vision.

For this it is necessary that the law and action of the Truth should be manifested in us. We must learn to see things as they are, see ourselves as we are. Our present action is one in which self-knowledge and will are divided. We start with a fundamental falsehood, that we have a separate existence from others and we try to know the relations of separate beings in their separateness and act on the knowledge so formed for an individual

[39] Intuition (revelation, inspiration, intuitive perception, intuitive discrimination) is Vijnana working in mind under the conditions and in the forms of mind. Gnosis or true supermind is a power above mind working in its own law, out of the direct identity of the supreme Self, his absolute self-conscious Truth knowing herself by her own power of absolute Light without any need of seeking, even the most luminous seeking.

utility. The law of the Truth would work in us if we saw the totality of our existence containing all others its forms created by the action of the totality, its powers working in and by the action of the totality. Our internal and external action would then well naturally and directly out of our self-existence, out of the very truth of things and not in obedience to an intermediate principle which is in its nature a falsifying reflection.

THE FULFILMENT OF SURYA IN MAN

Nevertheless even in our ordinary action there is the beginning or at least the seed of the Truth which must liberate us. Behind every act and perception there is an intuition, a truth which, if it is continually falsified in the form, yet preserves itself in the essence and works to lead us by increasing light and largeness to truth in the manifestation. Behind all this travail of differentiation and division there is an insistent unifying tendency which is also continually falsified in the separate result, but yet leads persistently towards our eventual integrality in knowledge, in being and in will.

Surya is Pushan, fosterer or increaser. His work must be to effect this enlargement of the divided self-perception and action of will into the integral will and knowledge. He is sole seer and replacing other forms of knowledge by his unifying vision enables us to arrive finally at oneness. That intuitive vision of the totality, of one in All and All in one, becomes the ordainer of the right law of action in us, the law of the Truth. For Surya is Yama, the Ordainer or Controller who assures the law, the Dharma. Thus we arrive at the fullness of action of the Illuminer in us, accomplish the entirety of the Truth-Consciousness. We are then able to see that all that is contained in the being of Surya, in the Vijnana which builds up the worlds is becoming of existence in the one existence and one Lord of all becoming, the Purusha, Sachchidananda. All becoming is born in the Being who himself exceeds all becomings and is their Lord, Prajapati.

By the revelation of the vision of Surya the true knowledge is formed. In this formation the Upanishad indicates two successive actions. First, there is an arrangement or marshalling of the rays of Surya, that is to say, the truths concealed behind our concepts and percepts are brought out by separate intuitions of the image and the essence of the image and arranged in their true relations to each other. So we arrive at totalities of intuitive knowledge and can finally go beyond to unity. This is the drawing

together of the light of Surya. This double movement is necessitated by the constitution of our minds which cannot, like the original Truth-Consciousness, start at once from the totality and perceive its contents from within. The mind can hardly conceive unity except as an abstraction, a sum or a void. Therefore it has to be gradually led from its own manner to that which exceeds it. It has to carry out its own characteristic action of arrangement, but with the help and by the operation of the higher faculty, no longer arbitrarily, but following the very action of the Truth of existence itself. Afterwards, by thus gradually correcting the manner of its own characteristic action it can succeed in reversing that characteristic action itself and learn to proceed from the whole to the contents instead of proceeding from "parts"⁴⁰ mistaken for entities to an apparent whole which is still a "part" and still mistaken for an entity.

THE ONE EXISTENT

Thus by the action of Surya we arrive at that light of the supreme super-conscient in which even the intuitive knowledge of the truth of things based upon the total vision passes into the self-luminous self-vision of the one existent, one in all infinite complexities of a self-experience which never loses its unity or its self-luminousness. This is Surya's godliest form of all. For it is the supreme Light, the supreme Will, the supreme Delight of existence.

This is the Lord, the Purusha, the self-conscient Being. When we have this vision, there is the integral self-knowledge, the perfect seeing, expressed in the great cry of the Upanishad, *so'ham*. The Purusha there and there, He am I. The Lord manifests Himself in the movements and inhabits many forms, but it is One who inhabits all. This self-conscient being, this real "I" whom the mental being individualised in the form is aware of as his true self — it is He. It is the All; and it is that which transcends the All.

[40] There are really no parts, existence being indivisible.

FOURTH MOVEMENT

2. ACTION AND THE DIVINE WILL

Verses 17-18⁴¹

THE SIDE OF ACTION

Through Surya then, through the growth of the illumination in the mind which enables it eventually to pass beyond itself, we have the first principle of progress from mortality to immortality. It is by the Sun as a door or gate⁴² that the individual, the limited consciousness attains to the full consciousness and life in the one, supreme and all-embracing Soul.

Both consciousness and life are included in the formula of Immortality; Knowledge is incomplete without action. Chit fulfils itself by Tapas, Consciousness by energy. And as Surya represents the divine Light, so Agni to the ancient Rishis represented divine Force, Power or Will-in-Consciousness. The prayer to Agni completes the prayer to Surya.

THE INDIVIDUAL WILL

As in knowledge, so in action, unity is the true foundation. The individual, accepting division as his law, isolating himself in his own egoistic limits, is necessarily mortal, obscure and ignorant in his workings. He follows in his aims and in his methods a knowledge that is personal, governed by desire, habits of thought, obscure subconscious impulses or, at best, a broken partial and shifting light. He lives by rays and not in the full blaze of the Sun. His knowledge is narrow in its objectivity, narrow in

[41] 17 The Breath of things is an immortal life, but of this body ashes are the end — OM! O Will, remember, that which was done remember! O Will, remember, that which was done remember.

18 O god Agni, knowing all things that are manifested, lead us by the good path to the felicity; remove from us the devious attraction of sin. To thee completes speech of submission we address.

[42] *Sūryadvāreṇa* — *Mundaka Upanishad* I. 2. 11.

its subjectivity, in neither one with the integral knowledge and the total working and total will in the universe. His action, therefore, is crooked, many-branching, hesitating and fluctuating in its impulsion and direction; it beats about among falsehoods to find the Truth, tosses or scraps fragments together to piece out the whole, stumbles among errors and sins to find the right. Being neither one-visioned nor whole-visioned, having neither the totality of the universal Will nor the concentrated oneness of the transcendent, the individual will cannot walk straight on the right or good path towards the Truth and the Immortality. Governed by desire, exposed to the shock of the forces around it with which its egoism and ignorance forbid it to put itself in harmony, it is subject to the twin children of the Ignorance, suffering and falsehood. Not having the divine Truth and Right it cannot have the divine Felicity.

AGNI, THE DIVINE WILL

But as there is in and behind all the falsehoods of our material mind and reason a Light that prepares by this twilight the full dawn of the Truth in man, so there is in and behind all our errors, sins and stumblings a secret Will, tending towards Love and Harmony, which knows where it is going and prepares and combines our crooked branchings towards the straight path which will be the final result of their toil and seeking. The emergence of this Will and that Light is the condition of immortality.

This Will is Agni. Agni is in the Rig-veda, from which the closing verse of the Upanishad is taken, the flame of the Divine Will or Force of Consciousness working in the worlds. He is described as the immortal in mortals, the leader of the journey, the divine Horse that bears us on the road, the "son of crookedness" who himself knows and is the straightness and the Truth. Concealed and hard to seize in the workings of this world because they are all falsified by desire and egoism, he uses them to transcend them and emerges as the universal in Man or universal Power, Agni Vaishwanara, who contains in himself all the gods and all the worlds, upholds all the universal workings and finally fulfils the godhead, the immortality. He is the worker of the divine Work. It is these symbols which govern the sense of the two final verses of the Upanishad.

THE IMMORTAL LIFE-PRINCIPLE

Life is the condition from which the Will and the Light emerge. It is said in the Veda that Vayu or Matarishwan, the Life-principle, is he who brings down Agni from Surya in the high and far-off supreme world. Life calls down the divine Will from the Truth-Consciousness into the realm of mind and body to prepare here, in Life, its own manifestation. Agni, enjoying and devouring the things of Life, generates the Maruts, nervous forces of Life that become forces of thought; they, upheld by Agni, prepare the action of Indra, the luminous Mind, who is for our life-powers their Rishi or finder of the Truth and Right. Indra slays Vritra, the Coverer, dispels the darkness, causes Surya to rise upon our being and go abroad over its whole field with the rays of the Truth. Surya is the Creator or manifestor, Savitri, who manifests in this mortal world the world or state of immortality, dispels the evil dream of egoism, sin and suffering and transforms Life into the immortality, the good, the beatitude. The Vedic gods are a parable of human life emerging, mounting, lifting itself towards the Godhead.

Life, body, action, will, these are our first materials. Matter supplies us with the body; but it is only a temporary knot of the movement, a dwelling-place of the Purusha in which he presides over the activities generated out of the Life-principle. Once it is thrown aside by the Life-principle it is dissolved; ashes are its end. Therefore the body is not ourselves, but only an outer tool and instrument. For Matter is the principle of obscurity and division, of birth and death, of formation and dissolution. It is the assertion of death. Immortal man must not identify himself with the body.

The Life-principle in us survives. It is the immortal Breath⁴³ or, as the phrase really means, the subtle force of existence which is superior to the principle of birth and death. At first sight it may appear that birth and death are attributes of the Life, but it is not really so: birth and death are processes of Matter, of the body. The Life-principle is not formed and dissolved in the formulation and dissolution of the body; if that were so, there could be no continuity of the individual existence and all would go back at death into the formless. Life forms body, it is not formed by it. It is the thread upon which the continuity of our successive bodily lives is arranged, precisely because it is itself immortal. It associates itself with the perishable body and carries forward the mental being, the Purusha in the

[43] *Anilam amṛtam.*

mind, upon his journey.

WILL AND MEMORY

This journey consists in a series of activities continued from life to life in this world with intervals of life in other states. The Life-principle maintains them; it supplies their material in the formative energy which takes shape in them. But their presiding god is not the Life-principle; it is the Will. Will is *Kratu*, the effective power behind the act. It is of the nature of consciousness; it is energy of consciousness, and although present in all forms, conscious, subconscious or superconscious, vital, physical or mental, yet comes into its kingdom only when it emerges in Mind. It uses the mental faculty of memory to link together and direct consciously the activities towards the goal of the individual.

In man the use of consciousness by the mental will is imperfect, because memory is limited. Our action is both dispersed and circumscribed because mentally we live from hour to hour in the current of Time, holding only to that which attracts or seems immediately useful to our egoistic mind. We live in what we are doing, we do not control what has been done, but are rather controlled by our past works which we have forgotten. This is because we dwell in the action and its fruits instead of living in the soul and viewing the stream of action from behind it. The Lord, the true Will, stands back from the actions and therefore is their lord and not bound by them.

The Upanishad solemnly invokes the Will to remember the thing that has been done, so as to contain and be conscious of the becoming, so as to become a power of knowledge and self-possession and not only a power of impulsion and self-formulation. It will thus more and more approximate itself to the true Will and preside over the co-ordination of the successive lives with a conscious control. Instead of being carried from life to life in a crooked path, as by winds, it will be able to proceed more and more straight in an ordered series, linking life to life with an increasing force of knowledge and direction until it becomes the fully conscious Will moving with illumination on the straight path towards the immortal felicity. The mental will, *kratu*, becomes what it at present only represents, the divine Will, Agni.

WILL AND KNOWLEDGE

The essentiality of the divine Will is that in it Consciousness and Energy, Knowledge and Force are one. It knows all manifestations, all things that take birth in the worlds. It is Jatavedas, that which has right knowledge of all births. It knows them in the law of their being, in their relation to other births, in their aim and method, in their process and goal, in their unity with all and their difference from all. It is this divine Will that conducts the universe; it is one with all the things that it combines and its being, its knowledge, its action are inseparable from each other. What it is, it knows; what it knows, that it does and becomes.

But as soon as egoistic consciousness emerges and interferes, there is a disturbance, a division, a false action. Will becomes an impulsion ignorant of its secret motive and aim, knowledge becomes a dubious and partial ray not in possession of the will, the act and the result, but only striving to possess and inform them. This is because we are not in possession of our self,⁴⁴ our true being, but only of the ego. What we are, we know not; what we know, we cannot effect. For knowledge is real and action in harmony with true knowledge only when they proceed naturally out of the conscious, illumined and self-possessing soul, in which being, knowledge and action are one movement.

SURRENDER TO THE DIVINE WILL

This is the change that happens when, the mental will approximating more and more to the divine, Agni burns out in us. It is that increasing knowledge and force which carries us finally into the straight or good path out of the crookedness. It is the divine will, one with the divine knowledge, which leads us towards felicity, towards the state of Immortality. All that belongs to the deviations of the ego, all that obscures and drives or draws us into this or that false path with its false lures and stumblings are put away from us by it. These things fall away from the divinised Will and cease to find lodging in our consciousness.

Therefore the sign of right action is the increasing and finally the complete submission of the individual to the divine Will which the illumination of Surya reveals in him. Although manifested in his consciousness, this Will is not individual. It is the will of the Purusha who

[44] *ātmavān*.

is in all things and transcends them. It is the will of the Lord.

Knowledge of the Lord as the One in the fully self-conscious being, submission to the Lord as the universal and transcendent in the fully self-conscious action, are the two keys of the divine gates, the gates of Immortality.

And the nature of the two united is an illuminated Devotion which accepts, aspires to and fulfils God in the human existence.

CONCLUSION

Thus the fourth movement indicates psychologically the double process of that attainment of Immortality which is the subject of the third movement, the state of bliss and truth within and the worlds of Light after death culminating in the identity of the self-luminous One. At the same time it particularises under the cover of Vedic symbols the process of that self-knowledge and identification with the Self and all its becomings which is the subject of the second movement and of that liberated action in the assertion of which the first culminates. It is thus a fitting close and consummation to the Upanishad.

Conclusion and Summary

THE Isha Upanishad is one of the more ancient of the Vedantic writings in style, substance and versification, subsequent certainly to the Chhandogya, Brihadaranyaka and perhaps to the Taittiriya and Aitareya, but certainly the most antique of the extant metrical Upanishads. Upanishadic thought falls naturally into two great periods; in one, the earlier, it still kept close to its Vedic roots, reflected the old psychological system of the Vedic Rishis and preserved what may be called their spiritual pragmatism; in the other and later, in which the form and thought became more modern and independent of early symbols and origins, some of the principal elements of Vedic thought and psychology begin to be omitted or to lose their previous connotation and the foundations of the later ascetic and anti-pragmatic Vedanta begin to appear. The Isha belongs to the earlier or Vedic group. It is already face to face with the problem of reconciling human life and activity with the Monistic standpoint and its large solution of the difficulty is one of the most interesting passages of Vedantic literature. It is the sole Upanishad which offered almost insuperable difficulties to the extreme illusionism and anti-pragmatism of Shankaracharya and it was even, for this reason, excised from the list of authoritative Upanishads by one of his greatest followers.

THE PRINCIPLE OF THE UPANISHAD

The principle it follows throughout is the uncompromising reconciliation of uncompromising extremes. Later thought took one series of terms, — the World, Enjoyment, Action, the Many, Birth, the Ignorance, — and gave them a more and more secondary position, exalting the opposite series. God, Renunciation, Quietism, the One, Cessation of Birth, the Knowledge until this trend of thought culminated in Illusionism and the idea of existence in the world as a snare and a meaningless burden imposed inexplicably on the soul by itself, which must be cast aside as soon as possible. It ended in a violent cutting of the knot of the great enigma. This Upanishad tries instead to get hold of the extreme ends of the knots, disengage and place them alongside of each

other in a release that will be at the same time a right placing and relation. It will not qualify or subordinate unduly any of the extremes, although it recognises a dependence of one on the other. Renunciation is to go to the extreme, but also enjoyment is to be equally integral; Action has to be complete and ungrudging, but also freedom of the soul from its works must be absolute; Unity utter and absolute is the goal, but this absoluteness has to be brought to its highest term by including in it the whole infinite multiplicity of things.

So great is this scruple in the Upanishad that having so expressed itself in the formula "By the Ignorance having crossed over death by the knowledge one enjoys Immortality" that Life in the world might be interpreted as only a preliminary to an existence beyond, it at once rights the balance by reversing the order in the parallel formula "By dissolution having crossed over death by birth one enjoys Immortality", and thus makes life itself the field of the immortal existence which is the goal and aspiration of all life. In this conclusion it agrees with the early Vedic thought which believed all the worlds and existence and non-existence and death and life and immortality to be here in the embodied human being, there evolvent, there realisable and to be possessed and enjoyed, not dependent either for acquisition or enjoyment on the renunciation of life and bodily existence. This thought has never entirely passed out of Indian philosophy, but has become secondary and a side admission not strong enough to qualify seriously the increasing assertion of the extinction of mundane existence as the condition of our freedom and our sole wise and worthy aim.

THE OPPOSITES

The pairs of opposites successively taken up by the Upanishad and resolved are, in the order of their succession:

1. The Conscious Lord and phenomenal Nature.
2. Renunciation and Enjoyment.
3. Action in Nature and Freedom in the Soul.
4. The One stable Brahman and the multiple Movement.
5. Being and Becoming.
6. The Active Lord and the indifferent Akshara Brahman.

7. Vidya and Avidya.
8. Birth and Non-Birth.
9. Works and Knowledge.

These discords are thus successively resolved:

GOD AND NATURE

1. Phenomenal Nature is a movement of the conscious Lord. The object of the movement is to create forms of His consciousness in motion in which He as the one soul in many bodies can take up his habitation and enjoy the multiplicity and the movement with all their relations.⁴⁵

ENJOYMENT AND RENUNCIATION

2. Real integral enjoyment of all this movement and multiplicity in its truth and in its infinity depends upon an absolute renunciation; but the renunciation intended is an absolute renunciation of the principle of desire founded on the principle of egoism and not a renunciation of world-existence.⁴⁶ This solution depends on the idea that desire is only an egoistic and vital deformation of the divine Ananda or delight of being from which the world is born; by extirpation of ego and desire Ananda again becomes the conscious principle of existence. This substitution is the essence of the change from life in death to life in immortality. The enjoyment of the infinite delight of existence free from ego, founded on oneness of all in the Lord, is what is meant by the enjoyment of Immortality.

ACTION AND FREEDOM

3. Actions are not inconsistent with the soul's freedom. Man is not bound by works, but only seems to be bound. He has to recover the

[45] This is also the view of the Gita and generally accepted.

[46] This, again, is the central standpoint of the Gita, which, however, admits also the renunciation of world-existence. The general trend of Vedantic thought would accept the renunciation of desire and egoism as the essential but would hold that renunciation of egoism means the renunciation of all world-existence, for it sees desire and not Ananda as the cause of world-existence.

consciousness of his inalienable freedom by recovering the consciousness of unity in the Lord, unity in himself, unity with all existence.⁴⁷ This done, life and works can and should be accepted in their fullness; for the manifestation of the Lord in life and works is the law of our being and the object of our world-existence.

THE QUIESCENCE AND THE MOVEMENT

4. What then of the Quiescence of the Supreme Being and how is persistence in the Movement compatible with that Quiescence which is generally recognised as an essential condition of the supreme Bliss?

The Quiescence and the Movement are equally one Brahman and the distinction drawn between them is only a phenomenon of our consciousness. So it is with the idea of space and time, the far and the near, the subjective and the objective, internal and external, myself and others, one and many. Brahman, the real existence, is all these things to our consciousness, but in itself ineffably superior to all such practical distinctions. The Movement is a phenomenon of the Quiescence, the Quiescence itself may be conceived as a Movement too rapid for the gods, that is to say, for our various functions of consciousness to follow in its real nature. But it is no formal, material, spatial, temporal movement, only a movement in consciousness. Knowledge sees it all as one. Ignorance divides and creates oppositions where there is no opposition but simply relations of one consciousness in itself. The ego in the body says, "I am within, all else is outside; and in what is outside, this is near to me in Time and Space, that is far." All this is true in present relation; but in essence it is all one indivisible movement of Brahman which is not material movement but a way of seeing things in the one consciousness.

BEING AND BECOMING

5. Everything depends on what we see, how we look at existence in our soul's view of things. Being and Becoming, One and Many are both true and are both the same thing: Being is one. Becomings are many; but this simply means that all Becomings are one Being who places Himself variously in the phenomenal movement of His consciousness. We have to

[47] This truth would, again, be generally admitted, but not the conclusion that is drawn from it.

see the One Being, but we have not to cease to see the many Becomings, for they exist and are included in Brahman's view of Himself. Only, we must see with knowledge and not with ignorance. We have to realise our true self as the one unchangeable, indivisible Brahman. We have to see all becomings as developments of the movement in our true self and this self as one inhabiting all bodies and not our body only. We have to be consciously, in our relations with this world, what we really are, — this one self becoming everything that we observe. All the movement, all energies, all forms, all happenings we must see as those of our one and real self in many existences, as the play of the Will and Knowledge and Delight of the Lord in His world-existence.

We shall then be delivered from egoism and desire and the sense of separate existence and therefore from all grief and delusion and shrinking; for all grief is born of the shrinking of the ego from the contacts of existence, its sense of fear, weakness, want, dislike, etc.; and this is born from the delusion of separate existence, the sense of being my separate ego exposed to all these contacts of so much that is not myself. Get rid of this, see oneness everywhere, be the One manifesting Himself in all creatures; ego will disappear; desire born of the sense of not being this, not having that, will disappear; the free inalienable delight of the One in His own existence will take the place of desire and its satisfactions and dissatisfactions.⁴⁸ Immortality will be yours, death born of division will be overcome.

THE ACTIVE AND INACTIVE BRAHMAN

6. The Inactive and the Active Brahman are simply two aspects of the one Self, the one Brahman, who is the Lord. It is He who has gone abroad in the movement. He maintains Himself free from all modifications in His inactive existence. The inaction is the basis of the action and exists in the action; it is His freedom from all He does and becomes and in all He does and becomes. These are the positive and negative poles of one indivisible consciousness. We embrace both in one quiescence and one movement, inseparable from each other, dependent on each other. The quiescence exists relatively to the movement, the movement to the quiescence. He is beyond both. This is a different point of view from that of the identity of

[48] In the ordinary view all this would be admitted, but the practical possibility of maintaining this state of consciousness and birth in the world together would be doubted.

the Movement and Quiescence which are one in reality; it expresses rather their relation in our consciousness once they are admitted as a practical necessity of that consciousness. It is obvious that we also by becoming one with the Lord would share in this biune conscious existence.⁴⁹

VIDYA AND AVIDYA

7. The knowledge of the One and the knowledge of the Many are a result of the movement of the one consciousness, which sees all things as One in their truth-Idea but differentiates them in their mentality and formal becoming. If the mind (*manīṣī*) absorbs itself in God as the formal becoming (*paribhū*) and separates itself from God in the true Idea (*kavi*), then it loses Vidya, the knowledge of the One, and has only the knowledge of the Many which becomes no longer knowledge at all but ignorance, Avidya. This is the cause of the separate ego-sense.

Avidya is accepted by the Lord in the Mind (*manīṣī*) in order to develop individual relations to their utmost in all the possibilities of division and its consequences and then through these individual relations to come back individually to the knowledge of the One in all. That knowledge has remained all along unabrogated in the consciousness of the true seer or Kavi. This seer in ourselves stands back from the mental thinker; the latter, thus separated, has to conquer death and division by a developing experience as the individual Inhabitant and finally to recover by the reunited knowledge of the One and the Many the state of Immortality. This is our proper course and not either to devote ourselves exclusively to the life of Avidya or to reject it entirely for motionless absorption in the One.

BIRTH AND NON-BIRTH

8. The reason for this double movement of the Thinker is that we are intended to realise immortality in the Birth. The self is uniform and undying and in itself always possesses immortality. It does not need to descend into Avidya and Birth to get that immortality of Non-Birth; for it possesses it always. It descends in order to realise and possess it as the individual Brahman in the play of world-existence. It accepts Birth and

[49] In the ordinary view the Jiva cannot exist in both at the same time; his dissolution is into the Quiescence and not into unity with the Lord in the action and inaction.

Death, assumes the ego and then dissolving the ego by the recovery of unity realises itself as the Lord, the One, and Birth as only a becoming of the Lord in mental and formal being; this becoming is now governed by the true sight of the Seer and, once this is done, becoming is no longer inconsistent with Being, birth becomes a means and not an obstacle to the enjoyment of immortality by the lord of this formal habitation.⁵⁰ This is our proper course and not to remain for ever in the chain of birth and death, nor to flee from birth into a pure non-becoming. The bondage does not consist in the physical act of becoming, but in the persistence of the ignorant sense of the separate ego. The Mind creates the chain and not the body.

WORKS AND KNOWLEDGE

9. The opposition between works and knowledge exists as long as works and knowledge are only of the egoistic mental character. Mental knowledge is not true knowledge; true knowledge is that which is based on the true sight, the sight of the Seer, of Surya, of the Kavi. Mental thought is not knowledge, it is a golden lid placed over the face of the Truth, the Sight, the divine Ideation, the Truth-Consciousness. When that is removed, sight replaces mental thought, the all-embracing truth-ideation *mahas, veda, dr̥ṣṭi*, replaces the fragmentary mental activity. True Buddhi (*vijñāna*) emerges from the dissipated action of the Buddhi which is all that is possible on the basis of the sense-mind, the Manas. Vijnana leads us to pure knowledge (*jñāna*), pure consciousness (*cit*). There we realise our entire identity with the Lord in all at the very roots of our being.

But in Chit, Will and Seeing are one. Therefore in Vijnana or truth-ideation also which comes luminously out of Chit, Will and Sight are combined and no longer as in the mind separated from each other. Therefore, when we have the sight and live in the Truth-Consciousness, our will becomes the spontaneous law of the truth in us and, knowing all its acts and their sense and objective, leads straight to the human goal, which was always the enjoyment of the Ananda, the Lord's delight in self-being, the state of Immortality. In our acts also we become one with all

[50] This is the stumbling-block to the ordinary philosophies which are impregnated with the idea of the illusoriness of the world, even when they do not go the whole way with the Mayavada. Birth, they would say, is a play of ignorance, it cannot subsist along with entire knowledge.

beings and our life grows into a representation of oneness, truth and divine joy and no longer proceeds on the crooked path of egoism full of division, error and stumbling. In a word, we attain to the object of our existence which is to manifest in itself whether on earth in a terrestrial body and against the resistance of Matter or in the worlds beyond or enter beyond all world the glory of the divine Life and the divine Being.

THE KENA UPANISHAD

THE KENA UPANISHAD

FIRST PART

*keneṣitam patati preṣitam manah |
kena prāṇah prathamah praiti yuktaḥ |
keneṣitām vācamimām vadanti |
cakṣuḥ śrotram ka u devo yunakti ||*

1. By whom missioned falls the mind shot to its mark? By whom yoked moves the first life-breath forward on its paths? By whom impelled is this word that men speak? What god set eye and ear to their workings?

*śrotrasya śrotram manaso mano yat |
vāco ha vācam sa u prāṇasya prāṇah |
cakṣuṣaścakṣuratimucya dhīrāḥ |
pretyāsmāllokādamṛtā bhavanti ||*

2. That which is hearing of our hearing, mind of our mind, speech of our speech, that too is life of our life-breath and sight of our sight. The wise are released beyond and they pass from this world and become immortal.

*na tatra cakṣurgacchati na vāggacchati no mano
na vidmo na vījānīmo yathaitadanuśiṣyāt |
anyadeva tadviditādatho aviditādadhi |
iti śuśrūma pūrveṣām ye nastadvyācacakṣire ||*

3. There sight travels not, nor speech, nor the mind. We know It not nor can distinguish how one should teach of It: for It is other than the known; It is there above the unknown. It is so we have heard from men of old who declared That to our understanding.

*yadvācānabhyuditam yena vāgabhyudyate |
tadeva brahma tvam viddhi nedaṁ yadidamupāsate ||*

4. That which is unexpressed by the word, that by which the word is expressed, know That to be the Brahman and this which men follow after here.

*yanmanasā na manute yenāhurmano matam |
tadeva brahma tvam viddhi nedaṁ yadidamupāsate ||*

5. That which thinks not by the mind,⁵¹ that by which the mind is thought, know That to be the Brahman and not this which men follow after here.

*yaccakṣuṣā na paśyati yena cakṣūṁṣi paśyati |
tadeva brahma tvam viddhi nedaṁ yadidamupāsate ||*

6. That which sees not with the eye,⁵² that by which one sees the eye's seeings, know That to be the Brahman and not this which men follow after here.

*yacchrotreṇa na śṛṇoti yena śrotramidam śrutam |
tadeva brahma tvam viddhi nedaṁ yadidamupāsate ||*

7. That which hears not with the ear,⁵³ that by which the ear's hearing is heard, know That to be the Brahman and not this which men follow after here.

yatprāṇena na prāṇiti yena prāṇaḥ praṇīyate |

[51] Or, that which one thinks not with the mind,

[52] Or, that which one sees not with the eye,

[53] Or, that which one hears not with the ear,

tadeva brahma tvam viddhi nedam yadidamupāsate ॥

8. That which breathes not with the breath,⁵⁴ that by which the life-breath is led forward in its paths, know That to be the Brahman and not this which men follow after here.

SECOND PART

*yadi manyase suvedeti dabhramevāpi nūnam tvam vettha brahmaṇo rūpam |
yadasya tvam yadasya deveṣvatha nu mīmāṃsyameva te manye viditam ॥*

1. If thou thinkest that thou knowest It well, little indeed dost thou know the form of the Brahman. That of It which is thou, that of It which is in the gods, this thou hast to think out. I think It known.

*nāham manye suvedeti no na vedeti veda ca |
yo nastadveda tadveda no na vedeti veda ca ॥*

2. I think not that I know It well and yet I know that It is not unknown to me. He of us who knows It, knows That; he knows that It is not unknown to him.

*yasyāmatam tasya matam matam yasya na veda saḥ |
avijñātam vijñānatām vijñātamavijñānatām ॥*

3. He by whom It is not thought out, has the thought of It; he by whom It is thought out, knows It not. It is unknown to the discernment of those who discern of It, by those who seek not to discern of It, It is discerned.

[54] Or, that which one breathes not (i.e. smells not) with the breath,

*pratibodhaviditāṃ matamamṛtatvaṃ hi vindate |
ātmanā vindate vīryaṃ vidyayā vindate 'mṛtam ||*

4. When It is known by perception that reflects It, then one has the thought of It, for one finds immortality; by the self one finds the force to attain and by the knowledge one finds immortality.

*iha cedavedīdatha satyamasti |
na cedihāvedīnmahatī vinaṣṭiḥ |
bhūteṣu bhūteṣu vicitya dhīrāḥ |
pretyāsmāllokādamṛtā bhavanti ||*

5. If here one comes to that knowledge, then one truly is; if here one comes not to the knowledge, then great is the perdition. The wise distinguish That in all kinds of becomings and they pass forward from this world and become immortal.

THIRD PART

*brahma ha devebhyo vijigye tasya ha brahmaṇo vijaye devā
amahīyanta |
ta aikṣantāsmākamevāyaṃ vijayo 'smākamevāyaṃ mahimeti ||*

1. The Eternal conquered for the gods and in the victory of the Eternal the gods grew to greatness. This was what they saw: "Ours the victory, ours the greatness."

*taddhaiṣāṃ vijajñau tebhyo ha prādurbabhūva tanna vyajānata
kimidaṃ yakṣamiti ||*

2. The Eternal knew their thought and appeared before them; and they knew not what was this mighty Daemon.

te'gnimabruvan jātaveda etadvijānīhi kimetadyakṣamiti tatheti ॥

3. They said to Agni, "O thou that knowest all things born, learn of this thing, what may be this mighty Daemon," and he said, "So be it."

*tadabhyadravattamabhyavadatko 'sītyagnirvā
ahamasmītyabravījjātavedā vā ahamasmīti ॥*

4. He rushed toward the Eternal and It said to him, "Who art thou? " "I am Agni," he said, "I am he that knows all things born."

*tasmīnstvayi kim vīryamityapīdaṁ sarvaṁ daheyam yadidaṁ
pṛthivyāmiti ॥*

5. "Since such thou art, what is the force in thee?" "Even all this I could burn, all that is upon the earth."

*tasmai tṛṇaṁ nidadhāvetaddaheti tadupapreyāya sarvajavena tanna
śasāka dagdhuṁ sa tata eva nivavṛte naitadaśakaṁ vijñātum
yadetadyakṣamiti ॥*

6. The Eternal set before him a blade of grass: "This burn," and he made towards it with all his speed, but he could not burn it. There he ceased, and turned back; "I could not know of It, what might be this mighty Daemon."

atha vāyumabruvan vāyavetadvijānīhi kimetadyakṣamiti tatheti ॥

7. Then they said to Vayu, "O Vayu, this discern, what is this mighty Daemon." He said, "So be it."

*tadabhyadravattamabhyavadatko 'sīti vāyurvā
ahamasmītyabravīnmātariśvā vā ahamasmīti ॥*

8. He rushed upon That; It said to him, "Who art thou? " "I am Vayu," he said, "and I am he that expands in the Mother of things."

*tasmimstvayi kiṃ vīryamityapīdaṃ sarvamādāḍīya yadidaṃ
pṛthivyāmiti ||*

9. "Since such thou art, what is the force in thee? " "Even all this I can take for myself all this that is upon the earth."

*tasmai tṛṇaṃ nidadhāvetadādatsveti tadupapreyāya sarvajavena tanna
śaśākādātum sa tata eva nivavṛte naitadaśakaṃ vijñātum
yadetadyakṣamiti ||*

10. That set before him a blade of grass, "This take." He went towards it with all his speed and he could not take it. Even there he ceased, even thence he returned: "I could not discern of That, what is this mighty Daemon."

*athendramabruvanmaghavannetadvijānīhi kimetadyakṣamiti tatheti
tadabhyadravat tasmāttirodadhe ||*

11. Then they said to Indra, "Master of plenitudes, get thou the knowledge, what is this mighty Daemon." He said, "So be it." He rushed upon That. That vanished from before him.

*sa tasminnevākāśe striyamājagāma bahuśobhamānāmumām
haimavatīm tām hovāca kimetadyakṣamiti ||*

12. He in the same ether came upon the Woman, even upon Her who shines out in many forms, Uma daughter of the snowy summits. To her he said, "What was this mighty Daemon?"

FOURTH PART

*sā brahmeti hovāca brahmaṇo vā etadvijaye mahīyadhvamiti tato
haiva vidāñcakāra brahmeti ॥*

1. She said to him, "It is the Eternal. Of the Eternal is this victory in which ye shall grow to greatness." Then alone he came to know that this was the Brahman.

*tasmādvā ete devā atitarāmivānyāndevānyadagnirvāyurindraste
hyenannediṣṭham pasparśuste hyenatprathamo vidāñcakāra brahmeti ॥*

2. Therefore are these gods as it were beyond all the other gods, even Agni and Vayu and Indra, because they came nearest to the touch of That....⁵⁵

*tasmād vā indro 'titarāmivānyāndevānsa hyenannediṣṭham pasparśa sa
hyenatprathamo vidāñcakāra brahmeti ॥*

3. Therefore is Indra as it were beyond all the other gods because he came nearest to the touch of That, because he first knew that it was the Brahman.

*tasyaiṣa ādeśo yadetadvidyuto vyadyutadā itīnnyamīmiṣadā
ityadhidaivatam ॥*

4. Now this is the indication of That, — as is this flash of the lightning upon us or as is this falling of the eyelid, so in that which is of the gods.

athādhyātmaṃ yadetad gacchatīva ca mano 'nena

[55] By some mistake of early memorisers or later copyists the rest of the verse has become hopelessly corrupted. It runs, "They he first came to know that it was the Brahman", which is neither fact nor sense nor grammar. The close of the third verse has crept into and replaced the original close of the second.

caitadupasmaratyabhīkṣṇam saṅkalpaḥ ॥

5. Then in that which is of the Self, — as the motion of this mind seems to attain to That and by it afterwards the will in the thought continually remembers It.

*taddha tadvanam nāma tadvanamityupāsītavyam sa ya etadevam
vedābhi hainam sarvāni bhūtāni samvāñchanti* ॥

6. The name of That is "That Delight"; as That Delight one should follow after It. He who so knows That, towards him verily all existences yearn.

*upaniṣadam bho brūhītyuktā ta upaniṣad brāhmīm vāva ta
upaniṣadamabrūmeti* ॥

7. Thou hast said "Speak to me Upanishad";⁵⁶ spoken to thee is Upanishad. Of the Eternal verily is the Upanishad that we have spoken.

*tasyai tapo damaḥ karmeti pratiṣṭhā vedāḥ sarvāṅgāni
satyamāyatanam* ॥

8. Of this knowledge austerity and self-conquest and works are the foundation, the Vedas are all its limbs, truth is its dwelling place.

*yo vā etāmevam vedāpahatya pāpmānāmanante sarge loke jyeye
pratiṣṭhāti pratiṣṭhāti* ॥

9. He who knows this knowledge, smites evil away from him and in that vaster world and infinite heaven finds his foundation, yea, he finds his foundation.

[56] Upanishad means inner knowledge, that which enters into the final Truth and settles in it.

Commentary

The Subject of the Upanishad

The twelve great Upanishads are written round one body of ancient knowledge; but they approach it from different sides. Into the great kingdom of the Brahmagvidya each enters by its own gates, follows its own path or detour, aims at its own point of arrival. The Isha Upanishad and the Kena are both concerned with the same grand problem, the winning of the state of Immortality, the relations of the divine, all-ruling, all-possessing Brahman to the world and to the human consciousness, the means of passing out of our present state of divided self, ignorance and suffering into the unity, the truth, the divine beatitude. As the Isha closes with the aspiration towards the supreme felicity, so the Kena closes with the definition of Brahman as the Delight and the injunction to worship and seek after That as the Delight. Nevertheless there is a variation in the starting-point, even in the standpoint, a certain sensible divergence in the attitude.

For the precise subject of the two Upanishads is not identical. The Isha is concerned with the whole problem of the world and life and works and human destiny in their relation to the supreme truth of the Brahman. It embraces in its brief eighteen verses most of the fundamental problems of Life and scans them swiftly with the idea of the supreme Self and its becomings, the supreme Lord and His workings as the key that shall unlock all gates. The oneness of all existences is its dominating note.

The Kena Upanishad approaches a more restricted problem, starts with a more precise and narrow inquiry. It concerns itself only with the relation of mind-consciousness to Brahman-consciousness and does not stray outside the strict boundaries of its subject. The material world and the physical life are taken for granted, they are hardly mentioned. But the material world and the physical life exist for us only by virtue of our internal self and our internal life. According as our mental instruments represent to us the external world, according as our vital force in obedience to the mind deals with its impacts and objects, so will be our outward life and existence. The world is for us, not fundamentally but practically at any rate, what our mind and senses declare it to be; life is what our mentality or at least our half-mentalised vital being determines

that it shall become. The question is asked by the Upanishad, what then are these mental instruments? what is this mental life which uses the external? Are they the last witnesses, the supreme and final power? Are mind and life and body all or is this human existence only a veil of something greater, mightier, more remote and profound than itself?

The Upanishad replies that there is such a greater existence behind, which is to the mind and its instruments, to the life-force and its workings what they are to the material world. Matter does not know Mind, Mind knows Matter; it is only when the creature embodied in Matter develops mind, becomes the mental being that he can know his mental self and know by that self Matter also in its reality to Mind. So also Mind does not know That which is behind it, That knows Mind; and it is only when the being involved in Mind can deliver out of its appearances his true Self that he can become That, know it as himself and by it know also Mind in its reality to that which is more real than Mind. How to rise beyond the mind and its instruments, enter into himself, attain to the Brahman becomes then the supreme aim for the mental being, the all-important problem of his existence.

For given that there is a more real existence than the mental existence, a greater life than the physical life, it follows that the lower life with its forms and enjoyments which are all that men here ordinarily worship and pursue, can no longer be an object of desire for the awakened spirit. He must aspire beyond; he must free himself from this world of death and mere phenomena to become himself in his true state of immortality beyond them. Then alone he really exists when here in this mortal life itself he can free himself from the mortal consciousness and know and be the Immortal and Eternal. Otherwise he feels that he has lost himself, has fallen from his true salvation.

But this Brahman-consciousness is not represented by the Upanishad as something quite alien to the mental and physical world, aloof from it and in no way active upon it or concerned with its activities. On the contrary, it is the Lord and ruler of all the world; the energies of the gods in the mortal consciousness are its energies; when they conquer and grow great, it is because Brahman has fought and won. This world therefore is an inferior action, a superficial representation of something infinitely greater, more perfect, more real than itself.

What is that something? It is the All-Bliss which is infinite being and

immortal force. It is that pure and utter bliss and not the desires and enjoyments of this world which men ought to worship and to seek. How to seek it is the one question that matters; to follow after it with all one's being is the only truth and the only wisdom.

The Question. *What Godhead?*

Mind is the principal agent of the lower or phenomenal consciousness; vital force or the life-breath, speech and the five senses of knowledge are the instruments of the mind. Prana, the life-force in the nervous system, is indeed the one main instrument of our mental consciousness; for it is that by which the mind receives the contacts of the physical world through the organs of knowledge, sight, hearing, smell, touch and taste, and reacts upon its object by speech and the other four organs of action; all these senses are dependent upon the nervous life-force for their functioning. The Upanishad therefore begins by a query as to the final source or control of the activities of the Mind, Life-Force, Speech, Senses.

The question is, *kena*, by whom or what? In the ancient conception of the universe our material existence is formed from the five elemental states of Matter, the ethereal, aerial, fiery, liquid and solid; everything that has to do with our material existence is called the elemental, *adhibhūta*. In this material there move non-material powers manifesting through the Mind-Force and Life-Force that work upon Matter, and these are called Gods or Devas; everything that has to do with the working of the non-material in us is called *adhidaiva*, that which pertains to the Gods. But above the non-material powers, containing them, greater than they is the Self or Spirit, *ātman*, and everything that has to do with this highest existence in us is called the spiritual, *adhyātma*. For the purpose of the Upanishads the *adhidaiva* is the subtle in us; it is that which is represented by Mind and Life as opposed to gross Matter; for in Mind and Life we have the characteristic action of the Gods.

The Upanishad is not concerned with the elemental, the *adhibhūta*; it is concerned with the relation between the subtle existence and the spiritual, the *adhidaiva* and *adhyātma*. But the Mind, the Life, the speech, the senses are governed by cosmic powers, by Gods, by Indra, Vayu, Agni. Are these subtle cosmic powers the beginning of existence, the true movers of mind and life, or is there some superior unifying force, one in itself behind them all?

By whom or what is the mind missioned and sent on its errand so that

it falls on its object like an arrow shot by a skilful archer at its predetermined mark, like a messenger, an envoy sent by his master to a fixed place for a fixed object? What is it within us or without us that sends forth the mind on its errand? What guides it to its object?

Then there is the life-force, the Prana, that works in our vital being and nervous system. The Upanishad speaks of it as the first or supreme Breath; elsewhere in the sacred writings it is spoken of as the chief Breath or the Breath of the mouth, *mukhya*, *āsanya*; it is that which carries in it the Word, the creative expression. In the body of man there are said to be five workings of the life-force called the five Pranas. One specially termed Prana moves in the upper part of the body and is preeminently the breath of life, because it brings the universal life-force into the physical system and gives it there to be distributed. A second in the lower part of the trunk, termed Apana, is the breath of death; for it gives away the vital force out of the body. A third, the Samana, regulates the interchange of these two forces at their meeting-place, equalises them and is the most important agent in maintaining the equilibrium of the vital forces and their functions. A fourth, the Vyana, pervasive, distributes the vital energies throughout the body. A fifth, the Udana, moves upward from the body to the crown of the head and is a regular channel of communication between the physical life and the greater life of the spirit. None of these are the first or supreme Breath, although the Prana most nearly represents it; the Breath to which so much importance is given in the Upanishads, is the pure life-force itself, — first, because all the others are secondary to it, born from it and only exist as its special functions. It is imaged in the Veda as the Horse; its various energies are the forces that draw the chariots of the Gods. The Vedic image is recalled by the choice of the terms employed in the Upanishad, *yukta*, yoked, *praiti*, goes forward, as a horse driven by the charioteer advances in its path.

Who then has yoked this life-force to the many workings of existence or by what power superior to itself does it move forward in its paths? For it is not primal, self-existent or its own agent. We are conscious of a power behind which guides, drives, controls, uses it.

The force of the vital breath enables us to bring up and speed outward from the body this speech that we use to express, to throw out into a world of action and new-creation the willings and thought-formations of the mind. It is propelled by Vayu, the life-breath; it is formed by Agni, the

secret will-force and fiery shaping energy in the mind and body. But these are the agents. Who or what is the secret Power that is behind them, the master of the word that men speak, its real former and the origin of that which expresses itself?

The ear hears the sound, the eye sees the form; but hearing and vision are particular operations of the life-force in us used by the mind in order to put itself into communication with the world in which the mental being dwells and to interpret it in the forms of sense. The life-force shapes them, the mind uses them, but something other than the life-force and the mind enables them to shape and to use their objects and their instruments. What God sets eye and ear to their workings? Not Surya, the God of light, not Ether and his regions; for these are only conditions of vision and hearing.

The Gods combine, each bringing his contribution, the operations of the physical world that we observe as of the mental world that is our means of observation; but the whole universal action is one, not a sum of fortuitous atoms; it is one, arranged in its parts, combined in its multiple functionings by virtue of a single conscient existence which can never be constructed or put together (*akṛta*) but is for ever anterior to all these workings. The Gods work only by this Power anterior to themselves, live only by its life, think only by its thought, act only for its purposes. We look into ourselves and all things and become aware of it there, an “I”, an “Is”, a Self, which is other, firmer, vaster than any separate or individual being.

But since it is not anything that the mind can make its object or the senses throw into form for the mind, what then is it — or who? What absolute Spirit? What one, supreme and eternal Godhead? *Ko devah*.

The Supramental Godhead

The eternal question has been put which turns man's eyes away from the visible and the outward to that which is utterly within, away from the little known that he has become to the vast unknown he is behind these surfaces and must yet grow into and be, because that is his Reality and out of all masquerade of phenomenon and becoming the Real Being must eventually deliver itself. The human soul once seized by this compelling direction can no longer be satisfied with looking forth at mortalities and seemings through those doors of the mind and sense which the Self-existent has made to open outward upon a world of forms; it is driven to gaze inward into a new world of realities.

Here in the world that man knows, he possesses something which, however imperfect and insecure, he yet values. For he aims at and to some extent he procures enlarged being, increasing knowledge, more and more joy and satisfaction and these things are so precious to him that for what he can get of them he is ready to pay the price of continual suffering from the shock of their opposites. If then he has to abandon what he here pursues and clasps, there must be a far more powerful attraction drawing him to the Beyond, a secret offer of something so great as to be a full reward for all possible renunciation that can be demanded of him here. This is offered, — not an enlarged becoming, but infinite being; not always relative piecings of knowledge mistaken in their hour for the whole of knowledge, but the possession of our essential consciousness and the flood of its luminous realities; not partial satisfactions, but *the* delight. In a word, Immortality.

The language of the Upanishad makes it strikingly clear that it is no metaphysical abstraction, no void Silence, no indeterminate Absolute which is offered to the soul that aspires, but rather the absolute of all that is possessed by it here in the relative world of its sojourning. All here in the mental is a growing light, consciousness and life; all there in the supramental is an infinite life, light and consciousness. That which is here shadowed, is there found; the incomplete here is there the fulfilled. The Beyond is not an annulation, but a transfiguration of all that we are here in our world of forms; it is sovran Mind of this mind, secret Life of this

life, the absolute Sense which supports and justifies our limited senses.

We renounce ourselves in order to find ourselves; for in the mental life there is only a seeking, but never an ultimate finding till mind is overpassed. Therefore there is behind all our mentality a perfection of ourselves which appears to us as an antinomy and contrast to what we are. For here we are a constant becoming; there we possess our eternal being. Here we conceive of ourselves as a changeful consciousness developed and always developing by a hampered effort in the drive of Time; there we are an immutable consciousness of which Time is not the master but the instrument as well as the field of all that it creates and watches. Here we live in an organisation of mortal consciousness which takes the form of a transient world; there we are liberated into the harmonies of an infinite self-seeing which knows all world in the light of the eternal and immortal. The Beyond is our reality; that is our plenitude; that is the absolute satisfaction of our self-existence. It is immortality and it is "That Delight".

Here in our imprisoned mentality the ego strives to be master and possessor of its inner field and its outer environment, yet cannot hold anything to enjoy it, because it is not possible really to possess what is not-self to us. But there in the freedom of the eternal our self-existence possesses without strife by the sufficient fact that all things are itself. Here is the apparent man, there the real man, the Purusha: here are gods, there is the Divine: here is the attempt to exist, Life flowering out of an all-devouring death, there Existence itself and a dateless immortality.

The answer that is thus given is involved in the very form of the original question. The Truth behind Mind, Life, Sense must be that which controls by exceeding it; it is the Lord, the all-possessing Deva. This was the conclusion at which the Isha Upanishad arrived by the synthesis of all existences; the Kena arrives at it by the antithesis of one governing self-existence to all this that exists variously by another power of being than its own. Each follows its own method for the resolution of all things into the one Reality, but the conclusion is identical. It is the All-possessing and All-enjoying, who is reached by the renunciation of separate being, separate possession and separate delight.

But the Isha addresses itself to the awakened seeker; it begins therefore with the all-inhabiting Lord, proceeds to the all-becoming Self and returns to the Lord as the Self of the cosmic movement, because it has to justify works to the seeker of the Uncreated and to institute a divine life founded

on the joy of immortality and on the unified consciousness of the individual made one with the universal. The Kena addresses itself to the soul still attracted by the external life, not yet wholly awakened nor wholly a seeker; it begins therefore with the Brahman as the Self beyond Mind and proceeds to the Brahman as the hidden Lord of all our mental and vital activities, because it has to point this soul upward beyond its apparent and outward existence. But the two opening chapters of the Kena only state less widely from this other viewpoint the Isha's doctrine of the Self and its becomings; the last two repeat in other terms of thought the Isha's doctrine of the Lord and His movement.

The Eternal Beyond the Mind

The Upanishad first affirms the existence of this profounder, vaster, more puissant consciousness behind our mental being. That, it affirms, is Brahman. Mind, Life, Sense, Speech are not the utter Brahman; they are only inferior modes and external instruments. Brahman-consciousness is our real self and our true existence.

Mind and body are not our real self; they are mutable formations or images which we go on constructing in the drive of Time as a result of the mass of our past energies. For although those energies seem to us to lie dead in the past because their history is behind us, yet are they still existent in their mass and always active in the present and the future.

Neither is the ego-function our real self. Ego is only a faculty put forward by the discriminative mind to centralise round itself the experiences of the sense-mind and to serve as a sort of lynch-pin in the wheel which keeps together the movement. It is no more than an instrument, although it is true that so long as we are limited by our normal mentality, we are compelled by the nature of that mentality and the purpose of the instrument to mistake our ego-function for our very self.

Neither is it the memory that constitutes our real self. Memory is another instrument, a selective instrument for the practical management of our conscious activities. The ego-function uses it as a rest and support so as to preserve the sense of continuity without which our mental and vital activities could not be organised for a spacious enjoyment by the individual. But even our mental self comprises and is influenced in its being by a host of things which are not present to our memory, are subconscious and hardly grasped at all by our surface existence. Memory is essential to the continuity of the ego-sense, but it is not the constituent of the ego-sense, still less of the being.

Neither is moral personality our real self. It is only a changing formation, a pliable mould framed and used by our subjective life in order to give some appearance of fixity to the constantly mutable becoming which our mental limitations successfully tempt us to call ourselves.

Neither is the totality of that mutable conscious becoming, although

enriched by all that subconsciously underlies it, our real self. What we become is a fluent mass of life, a stream of experience pouring through time, a flux of Nature upon the crest of which our mentality rides. What we are is the eternal essence of that life, the immutable consciousness that bears the experience, the immortal substance of Nature and mentality.

For behind all and dominating all that we become and experience, there is something that originates, uses, determines, enjoys, yet is not changed by its origination, not affected by its instruments, not determined by its determinations, not worked upon by its enjoyings. What that is, we cannot know unless we go behind the veil of our mental being which knows only what is affected, what is determined, what is worked upon, what is changed. The mind can only be aware of that as something which we indefinitely are, not as something which it definably knows. For the moment our mentality tries to fix this something, it loses itself in the flux and the movement, grasps at parts, functions, fictions, appearances which it uses as planks of safety in the welter or tries to cut out a form from the infinite and say, "This is I." In the words of the Veda, "when the mind approaches That and studies it, That vanishes."

But behind the Mind is this other or Brahman-conscious-ness, Mind of our mind, Sense of our senses, Speech of our speech, Life of our life. Arriving at that, we arrive at Self; we can draw back from mind the image into Brahman the Reality.

But what differentiates that real from this apparent self? Or — since we can say no more than we have said already in the way of definition, since we can only indicate that "That" is not what "this" is, but is the mentally inexpressible absolute of all that is here, — what is the relation of this phenomenon to that reality? For it is the question of the relation that the Upanishad makes its starting-point; its opening question assumes that there is a relation and that the reality originates and governs the phenomenon.

Obviously, Brahman is not a thing subject to our mind, senses, speech or life-force; it is no object seen, heard, expressed, sensed, formed by thought, nor any state of body or mind that we become in the changing movement of the life. But the thought of the Upanishad attempts to awaken deeper echoes from our gulfs than this obvious denial of the mental and sensuous objectivity of the Brahman. It affirms that not only is it not an object of mind or a formation of life, but it is not even dependent

on our mind, life and senses for the exercise of its lordship and activity. It is that which does not think by the mind, does not live by the life, does not sense by the senses, does not find expression in the speech, but rather makes these things themselves the object of its superior, all-comprehending, all-knowing consciousness.

Brahman thinks out the mind by that which is beyond mind; it sees the sight and hears the hearing by that absolute vision and audition which are not phenomenal and instrumental but direct and inherent; it forms our expressive speech out of its creative word; it speeds out this life we cling to from that eternal movement of its energy which is not parceled out into forms but has always the freedom of its own inexhaustible infinity.

Thus the Upanishad begins its reply to its own question. It first describes Brahman as Mind of the mind, Sight of the sight, Hearing of the hearing, Speech of the speech, Life of the life. It then takes up each of these expressions and throws them successively into a more expanded form so as to suggest a more definite and ample idea of their meaning, so far as that can be done by words. To the expression "Mind of the mind" corresponds the expanded phrase "That which thinks not with the mind, that by which the mind is thought" and so on with each of the original descriptive expressions to the closing definition of the Life behind this life as "That which breathes not with the life-breath, that by which the life-power is brought forward into its movement".

And each of these exegetic lines is emphasised by the reiterated admonition, "That Brahman seek to know and not this which men follow after here." Neither Mind, Life, Sense and Speech nor their objects and expressions are the Reality which we have to know and pursue. True knowledge is of That which forms these instruments for us but is itself independent of their utilities. True possession and enjoyment is of that which, while it creates these objects of our pursuit, itself makes nothing the object of its pursuit and passion, but is eternally satisfied with all things in the joy of its immortal being.

The Supreme Word

The Upanishad, reversing the usual order of our logical thought which would put Mind and Sense first or Life first and Speech last as a subordinate function, begins its negative description of Brahman with an explanation of the very striking phrase, Speech of our speech. And we can see that it means a Speech beyond ours, an absolute expression of which human language is only a shadow and as if an artificial counterfeit. What idea underlies this phrase of the Upanishad and this precedence given to the faculty of speech?

Continually, in studying the Upanishads, we have to divest ourselves of modern notions and to realise as closely as possible the associations that lay behind the early Vedantic use of words. We must recollect that in the Vedic system the Word was the creatrix; by the Word Brahma creates the forms of the universe. Moreover, human speech at its highest merely attempts to recover by revelation and inspiration an absolute expression of Truth which already exists in the Infinite above our mental comprehension. Equally, then, must that Word be above our power of mental construction.

All creation is expression by the Word; but the form which is expressed is only a symbol or representation of the thing which is. We see this in human speech which only presents to the mind a mental form of the object; but the object it seeks to express is itself only a form or presentation of another Reality. That Reality is Brahman. Brahman expresses by the Word a form or presentation of himself in the objects of sense and consciousness which constitute the universe, just as the human word expresses a mental image of those objects. That Word is creative in a deeper and more original sense than human speech and with a power of which the utmost creativeness of human speech can be only a far-off and feeble analogy.

The word used here for utterance means literally a raising up to confront the mind. Brahman, says the Upanishad, is that which cannot be so raised up before the mind by speech.

Human speech, as we see, raises up only the presentation of a

presentation, the mental figure of an object which is itself only a figure of the sole Reality, Brahman. It has indeed a power of new creation, but even that power only extends to the creation of new mental images, that is to say, of adaptive formations based upon previous mental images. Such a limited power gives no idea of the original creative puissance which the old thinkers attributed to the divine Word.

If, however, we go a little deeper below the surface, we shall arrive at a power in human speech which does give us a remote image of the original creative Word. We know that vibration of sound has the power to create — and to destroy — forms; this is a commonplace of modern Science. Let us suppose that behind all forms there has been a creative vibration of sound.

Next, let us examine the relation of human speech to sound in general. We see at once that speech is only a particular application of the principle of sound, a vibration made by pressure of the breath in its passage through the throat and mouth. At first, beyond doubt, it must have been formed naturally and spontaneously to express the sensations and emotions created by an object or occurrence and only afterwards seized upon by the mind to express first the idea of the object and then ideas about the object. The value of speech would therefore seem to be only representative and not creative.

But, in fact, speech is creative. It creates forms of emotion, mental images and impulses of action. The ancient Vedic theory and practice extended this creative action of speech by the use of the Mantra. The theory of the Mantra is that it is a word of power born out of the secret depths of our being where it has been brooded upon by a deeper consciousness than the mental, framed in the heart and not originally constructed by the intellect, held in the mind, again concentrated on by the waking mental consciousness and then thrown out silently or vocally — the silent word is perhaps held to be more potent than the spoken — precisely for the work of creation. The Mantra can not only create new subjective states in ourselves, alter our psychical being, reveal knowledge and faculties we did not before possess, can not only produce similar results in other minds than that of the user, but can produce vibrations in the mental and vital atmosphere which result in effects, in actions and even in the production of material forms on the physical plane.

As a matter of fact, even ordinarily, even daily and hourly we do

produce by the word within us thought-vibrations, thought-forms which result in corresponding vital and physical vibrations, act upon ourselves, act upon others, and end in the indirect creation of actions and of forms in the physical world. Man is constantly acting upon man both by the silent and the spoken word and he so acts and creates, though less directly and powerfully, even in the rest of Nature. But because we are stupidly engrossed with the external forms and phenomena of the world and do not trouble to examine its subtle and non-physical processes, we remain ignorant of all this field of science behind.

The Vedic use of the Mantra is only a conscious utilisation of this secret power of the word. And if we take the theory that underlies it together with our previous hypothesis of a creative vibration of sound behind every formation, we shall begin to understand the idea of the original creative Word. Let us suppose a conscious use of the vibrations of sound which will produce corresponding forms or changes of form. But Matter is only, in the ancient view, the lowest of the planes of existence. Let us realise then that a vibration of sound on the material plane presupposes a corresponding vibration on the vital without which it could not have come into play; that again presupposes a corresponding originative vibration on the mental; the mental presupposes a corresponding originative vibration on the supramental at the very root of things. But a mental vibration implies thought and perception and a supramental vibration implies a supreme vision and discernment. All vibration of sound on that higher plane is, then, instinct with and expressive of this supreme discernment of a truth in things and is at the same time creative, instinct with a supreme power which casts into forms the truth discerned and eventually, descending from plane to plane, reproduces it in the physical form or object created in Matter by etheric sound. Thus we see that the theory of creation by the Word which is the absolute expression of the Truth, and the theory of the material creation by sound-vibration in the ether correspond and are two logical poles of the same idea. They both belong to the same ancient Vedic system.

This, then, is the supreme Word, Speech of our speech. It is vibration of pure Existence, instinct with the perceptive and originative power of infinite and omnipotent consciousness, shaped by the Mind behind mind into the inevitable word of the Truth of things; out of whatever substance on whatever plane, the form or physical expression emerges by its creative agency. The Supermind using the Word is the creative Logos.

The Word has its seed-sounds — suggesting the eternal syllable of the Veda, A M, and the seed-sounds of the Tantriks — which carry in them the principles of things; it has its forms which stand behind the revelatory and inspired speech that comes to man's supreme faculties, and these compel the forms of things in the universe; it has its rhythms, — for it is no disordered vibration, but moves out into great cosmic measures, — and according to the rhythm is the law, arrangement, harmony, processes of the world it builds. Life itself is a rhythm of God.

But what is it that is expressed or raised up before the mental consciousness by the Word in the phenomenal world? Not Brahman, but truths, forms and phenomena of Brahman. Brahman is not, cannot be expressed by the Word; he does not use the word here to express his very self, but is known only to his own self-awareness. And even the truths of himself that stand behind the forms of cosmic things are in their true reality always self-expressed to his eternal vision in a higher than the mental vibration, a rhythm and voice of themselves that is their own very soul of movement. Speech, a lesser thing, creates, expresses, but is itself only a creation and expression. Brahman is not expressed by speech, but speech is itself expressed by Brahman. And that which expresses speech in us, brings it up out of our consciousness with its strivings to raise up the truth of things to our mind, is Brahman himself as the Word, a Thing that is in the supreme superconscience. That Word, Speech of our speech, is in its essence of Power the Eternal himself and in its supreme movements a part of his very form and everlasting spiritual body, *brahmaṇo rūpam*.

Therefore it is not the happenings and phenomena of the world that we have to accept finally as our object of pursuit, but That which brings out from itself the Word by which they were thrown into form for our observation by the consciousness and for our pursuit by the will. In other words, the supreme Existence that has originated all.

Human speech is only a secondary expression and at its highest a shadow of the divine Word, of the seed-sounds, the satisfying rhythms, the revealing forms of sound that are the omniscient and omnipotent speech of the eternal Thinker, Harmonist, Creator. The highest inspired speech to which the human mind can attain, the word most unanalysably expressive of supreme truth, the most puissant syllable or *mantra* can only be its far-off representation.

The Necessity of Supermind

As the Upanishad asserts a speech behind this speech, which is the expressive aspect of the Brahman-consciousness, so it asserts a Mind behind this mind which is its cognitive aspect. And as we asked ourselves what could be the rational basis for the theory of the divine Word superior to our speech, so we have now to ask ourselves what can be the rational basis for this theory of a cognitive faculty or principle superior to Mind. We may say indeed that if we grant a divine Word creative of all things, we must also grant a divine Mind cognitive of the Word and of all that it expresses. But this is not a sufficient foundation; for the theory of the divine Word presents itself only as a rational possibility. A cognition higher than Mind presents itself on the other hand as a necessity which arises from the very nature of Mind itself, a necessity from which we cannot logically escape.

In the ancient system which admitted the soul's survival of the body, Mind was the man, in a very profound and radical sense of the phrase. It is not only that the human being is the one reasoning animal upon earth, the thinking race; he is essentially the mental being in a terrestrial body, the *manu*. Quite apart from the existence of a soul or self one in all creatures, the body is not even the phenomenal self of man; the physical life also is not himself; both may be dissolved, man will persist. But if the mental being also is dissolved, man as man ceases to be; for this is his centre and the nodus of his organism.

On the contrary, according to the theory of a material evolution upheld by modern Science, man is only Matter that has developed mind by an increasing sensibility to the shocks of its environment; and Matter being the basis of existence, there is nothing, except the physical elements, that can survive the dissolution of the body. But this formula is at most the obverse and inferior side of a much larger truth. Matter could not develop Mind if in or behind the force that constitutes physical forms there were not already a principle of Mind striving towards self-manifestation. The will to enlighten and consciously govern the life and the form must have been already existent in that which appears to us inconscient; it must have been there before mind was evolved. For, if there were no such necessity

of Mind in Matter, if the stuff of mentality were not there already and the will to mentalise, Mind could not possibly have come into being out of inconscient substance.

But in the mere chemical elements which go to constitute material forms or in electricity or in any other purely physical factor, whatever unconscious will or sensation they may be possessed by or possess, we can discover nothing which could explain the emergence of conscious sensation, which could constitute a will towards the evolution of thought or which could impose the necessity of such an evolution on inconscient physical substance. It is not then in the form of Matter itself, but in the Force which is at work in Matter, that we must seek the origin of Mind. That Force must either be itself conscient or contain the grain of mental consciousness inherent in its being and therefore the potentiality and indeed the necessity of its emergence. This imprisoned consciousness, though originally absorbed in the creation first of forms and then of physical relations and reactions between physical forms, must still have held in itself from the beginning, however long kept back and suppressed, a will to the ultimate enlightenment of these relations by the creation of corresponding conscious or mental values. Mind is then a concealed necessity which the subconscient holds in itself from the commencement of things; it is the thing that must emerge once the attractions and repulsions of Matter begin to be established; it is the suppressed secret and cause of the reactions of life in the metal, plant and animal.

If on the other hand we say that Mind in some such secret and suppressed form is not already existent in Matter, we must then suppose that it exists outside Matter and embraces it or enters into it. We must suppose a mental plane of existence which presses upon the physical and tends to possess it. In that case the mental being would be in its origin an entity which is formed outside the material world; but it prepares in that world bodies which become progressively more and more able to house and express Mind. We may image it forming, entering into and possessing the body, breaking into it, as it were, — as the Purusha in the Aitareya Upanishad is said to form the body and then to enter in by breaking open a door in Matter. Man would in this view be a mental being incarnate in the living body who at its dissolution leaves it with full possession of his mentality.

The two theories are far from being incompatible with each other; they

can be viewed as complements forming a single truth. For the involution of Mind, its latency in the material Force of the physical universe and in all its movements does not preclude the existence of a mental world beyond and above the reign of the physical principle. In fact, the emergence of such a latent Mind might well depend upon and would certainly profit by the aid and pressure of forces from a supra-physical kingdom, a mental plane of existence.

There are always two possible views of the universe. The one supposes, with modern Science, Matter to be the beginning of things and studies everything as an evolution from Matter; or, if not Matter, then, with the Sankhya philosophy, an indeterminate inconscient active Force or Prakriti of which even mind and reason are mechanical operations, — the conscious soul, if any exists, being a quite different and, although conscient, yet inactive entity. The other supposes the conscious soul, the Purusha, to be the material as well as the cause of the universe and Prakriti to be only its Shakti or the Force of its conscious being which operates upon itself as the material of forms.⁵⁷ The latter is the view of the Upanishads. Certainly, if we study the material world only, excluding all evidence of other planes as a dream or a hallucination, if we equally exclude all evidence of operations in mind which exceed the material limitation and study only its ordinary equation with Matter, we must necessarily accept the theory of Matter as the origin and as the indispensable basis and continent. Otherwise, we shall be irresistibly led towards the early Vedantic conclusions.

However this may be, even from the standpoint of the sole material world Man in the substance of his manhood is a mind occupying and using the life of the body — a mind that is greater than the Matter in which it has emerged. He is the highest present expression of the will in the material universe; the Force that has built up the worlds, so far as we are able to judge of its intention from its actual operations as we see them in their present formula upon earth, arrives in him at the thing it was seeking to express. It has brought out the hidden principle of Mind that now operates consciously and intelligently on the life and the body. Man is the satisfaction of the necessity which Nature bore secretly in her from the very commencement of her works; he is the highest possible Name or Numen on this planet; he is the realised terrestrial godhead.

[57] For example, the Aitareya Upanishad which shows us the Atman or Self using the Purusha as that in which all the operations of Nature are formed.

But all this is true only if we assume that for Nature's terrestrial activities Mind is the ultimate formula. In reality and when we study more deeply the phenomena of consciousness, the facts of mentality, the secret tendency, aspiration and necessity of man's own nature, we see that he cannot be the highest term. He is the highest realised here and now; he is not the highest realisable. As there is something below him, so there is something, if even only a possibility, above. As physical Nature concealed a secret beyond herself which in him she has released into creation, so he too conceals a secret beyond himself which he in turn must deliver to the light. That is his destiny.

This must necessarily be so because Mind too is not the first principle of things and therefore cannot be their last possibility. As Matter contained Life in itself, contained it as its own secret necessity and had to be delivered of that birth, and as Life contained Mind in itself, contained it as its own secret necessity and had to be delivered of the birth it held, so Mind too contains in itself that which is beyond itself, contains it as its own secret necessity and presses to be delivered, it also, of this supreme birth.

What is the rational necessity which forbids us to suppose Mind to be Nature's last birth and compels us to posit something beyond it of which itself is the indication? A consideration of the nature and working of mentality supplies us with the answer. For mentality is composed of three principal elements, thought, will and sensation. Sensation may be described as an attempt of divided consciousness to seize upon its object and enjoy it, thought as its attempt to seize upon the truth of the object and possess it, will as its attempt to seize upon the potentiality of the object and use it. At least these three things are such an attempt in their essentiality, in their instinct, in their subconscious purpose. But obviously the attempt is imperfect in its conditions and its success; its very terms indicate a barrier, a gulf, an incapacity. As Life is limited and hampered by the conditions of its synthesis with Matter, so Mind is limited and hampered by the conditions of its synthesis with Life in Matter. Neither Matter nor Life has found anything proper to their own formula which could help to conquer or sufficiently expand its limitations; they have been compelled each to call in a new principle, Matter to call into itself Life, Life to call into itself Mind. Mind also is not able to find anything proper to its own formula which can conquer or sufficiently expand the limitations imposed upon its workings; Mind also has to call in a new

principle beyond itself, freer than itself and more powerful.

In other words, Mind does not exhaust the possibilities of consciousness and therefore cannot be its last and highest expression. Mind tries to arrive at Truth and succeeds only in touching it imperfectly with a veil between; there must be in the nature of things a faculty or principle which sees the Truth unveiled, an eternal faculty of knowledge which corresponds to the eternal fact of the Truth. There is, says the Veda, such a principle; it is the Truth-Consciousness which sees the Truth directly and is in possession of it spontaneously. Mind labours to effect the will in it and succeeds only in accomplishing partially, with difficulty and insecurely the potentiality at which it works; there must be a faculty or principle of conscious effective force which corresponds to the unconscious automatic principle of self-fulfilment in Nature, and this principle must be sought for in the form of consciousness that exceeds Mind. Mind, finally, aspires to seize and enjoy the essential delight-giving quality, the *rasa* of things, but it succeeds only in attaining to it indirectly, holding it in an imperfect grasp and enjoying it externally and fragmentarily; there must be a principle which can attain directly, hold rightly, enjoy intimately and securely. There is, says the Veda, an eternal Bliss-consciousness which corresponds to the eternal *rasa* or essential delight-giving quality of all experience and is not limited by the insecure approximations of the sense in Mind.

If, then, such a deeper principle of consciousness exists, it must be that and not mind which is the original and fundamental intention concealed in Nature and which eventually and somewhere must emerge. But is there any reason for supposing that it must emerge here and in Mind, as Mind has emerged in Life and Life in Matter? We answer in the affirmative because Mind has in itself, however obscurely, that tendency, that aspiration and, at bottom, that necessity. There is one law from the lowest to the highest. Matter, when we examine it closely, proves to be instinct with the stuff of Life — the vibrations, actions and reactions, attractions and repulsions, contractions and expansions, the tendencies of combination, formation and growth, the seekings and responses which are the very substance of life; but the visible principle of life can only emerge when the necessary material conditions have been prepared which will permit it to organise itself in Matter. So also Life is instinct with the stuff

of Mind, abounds with an unconscious⁵⁸ sensation, will, intelligence, but the visible principle of Mind can only emerge when the necessary vital conditions have been prepared which will permit it to organise itself in living Matter. Mind too is instinct with the stuff of supermind — sympathies, unities, intuitions, emergences of pre-existent knowledge, instincts, imperative lights and movements, inherent self-effectivities of will which disguise themselves in a mental form; but the visible principle of supermind can only emerge when the necessary mental conditions are prepared which will permit it to organise itself in man, the mental living creature.

This necessary preparation is proceeding in human development as the corresponding preparations were developed in the lower stages of the evolution, — with the same gradations, retardations, inequalities; but still it is more enlightened, increasingly self-conscious, nearer to a conscious sureness. And the very fact that this progress is attended by less absorption in the detail, less timidity of error, a less conservative attachment to the step gained suggests as much as it contradicts the hope and almost the assurance that when the new principle emerges it will not be by the creation of a new and quite different type which, separated after its creation, will leave the rest of mankind in the same position to it as are the animals to man, but, if not by the elevation of humanity as a whole to a higher level, yet by an opening of the greater possibility to all of the race who have the will to rise. For Man, first among Nature's children, has shown the capacity to change himself by his own effort and the conscious aspiration to transcend.

These considerations justify to the reason the idea of a Mind beyond our mind, but only as a final evolution out of Matter. The Upanishad, however, enthrones it as the already existing creator and ruler of Mind; it is a secret principle already conscient and not merely contained inconsciently in the very stuff of things. But this is the natural conclusion — even apart from spiritual experience — from the nature of the supramental principle. For it is at its highest an eternal knowledge, will, bliss and conscious being and it is more reasonable to conclude that it is eternally conscient, though we are not conscious of it, and the source of the universe, than that it is eternally inconscient and only becomes conscient in Time as a result of the universe. Our inconscience of it is no

[58] I use the language of the materialist Haeckel in spite of its paradoxical form.

proof that it is inconscient of us: and yet our own incapacity is the only real basis left for the denial of an eternal Mind beyond mind superior to its creations and originative of the cosmos.

All other foundations for the rejection of this ancient wisdom have disappeared or are disappearing before the increasing light of modern knowledge.

Mind and Supermind

We arrive then at this affirmation of an all-cognitive principle superior to Mind and exceeding it in nature, scope and capacity. For the Upanishad affirms a Mind beyond mind as the result of intuition and spiritual experience and its existence is equally a necessary conclusion from the facts of the cosmic evolution. What then is this Mind beyond mind? how does it function? or by what means shall we arrive at the knowledge of it or possess it?

The Upanishad asserts about this supreme cognitive principle, first, that it is beyond the reach of mind and the senses; secondly, that it does not itself think with the mind; thirdly, that it is that by which mind itself is thought or mentalised; fourthly, that it is the very nature or description of the Brahman-consciousness.

When we say, however, that “Mind of mind” is the nature or description of the Brahman-consciousness, we must not forget that the absolute Brahman in itself is held to be unknowable and therefore beyond description. It is unknowable, not because it is a void and capable of no description except that of nothingness, nor because, although positive in existence, it has no content or quality, but because it is beyond all things that our present instruments of knowledge can conceive and because the methods of ideation and expression proper to our mentality do not apply to it. It is the absolute of all things that we know and of each thing that we know and yet nothing nor any sum of things can exhaust or characterise its essential being. For its manner of being is other than that which we call existence; its unity resists all analysis, its multiple infinities exceed every synthesis. Therefore it is not in its absolute essentiality that it can be described as Mind of the mind, but in its fundamental nature in regard to our mental existence. Brahman-consciousness is the eternal outlook of the Absolute upon the relative.

But even of this outlook we may say that it is beyond the reach of mind and speech and senses. Yet mind, speech and senses seem to be our only available means for acquiring and expressing knowledge. Must we not say then that this Brahman-consciousness also is unknowable and that we can

never hope to know it or possess it while in this body? Yet the Upanishad commands us to *know* this Brahman and by knowledge to possess it — for the knowledge intended by the words *viddhi*, *avedit*, is a knowledge that discovers and takes possession, — and it declares later on that it is here, in this body and on this earth that we must thus possess Brahman in knowledge, otherwise great is the perdition. A good deal of confusion has been brought into the interpretation of this Upanishad by a too trenchant dealing with the subtlety of its distinctions between the knowability and the unknowability of the Brahman. We must therefore try to observe exactly what the Upanishad says and especially to seize the whole of its drift by synthetic intuition rather than cut up its meaning so as to make it subject to our logical mentality.

The Upanishad sets out by saying that this Ruler of the mind, senses, speech and life is Mind of our mind, Life of our life, Sense of our senses, Speech of our speech; and it then proceeds to explain what it intends by these challenging phrases. But it introduces between the description and the explanation a warning that neither the description nor the explanation must be pushed beyond their proper limits or understood as more than guide-posts pointing us towards our goal. For neither Mind, Speech nor Sense can travel to the Brahman; therefore Brahman must be beyond all these things in its very nature, otherwise it would be attainable by them in their function. The Upanishad, although it is about to teach of the Brahman, yet affirms, “we know It not, we cannot distinguish how one should teach of it.” The two Sanskrit words that are here used, *vidmaḥ* and *vijānīmaḥ*, seem to indicate the one a general grasp and possession in knowledge, the other a total and exact comprehension in whole and detail, by synthesis and analysis. The reason of this entire inability is next given, “because Brahman is other than the known and It is there over the unknown”, possessing it and, as it were, presiding over it. The known is all that we grasp and possess by our present mentality; it is all that is not the supreme Brahman but only form and phenomenon of it to our sense and mental cognition. The unknown is that which is beyond the known and though unknown is not unknowable if we can enlarge our faculties or attain to others that we do not yet possess.

Yet the Upanishad next proceeds to maintain and explain its first description and to enjoin on us the knowledge of the Brahman which it so describes. This contradiction is not at once reconciled; it is only in the second chapter that the difficulty is solved and only in the fourth that the

means of knowledge are indicated. The contradiction arises from the nature of our knowledge itself which is a relation between the consciousness that seeks and the consciousness that is sought; where that relation disappears, knowledge is replaced by sheer identity. In what we call existence, the highest knowledge can be no more than the highest relation between that which seeks and that which is sought, and it consists in a modified identity through which we may pass beyond knowledge to the absolute identity. This metaphysical distinction is of importance because it prevents us from mistaking any relation in knowledge for the absolute and from becoming so bound by our experience as to lose or miss the fundamental awareness of the absolute which is beyond all possible description and behind all formulated experience. But it does not render the highest relation in our knowledge, the modified identity in experience worthless or otiose. On the contrary, it is that we must aim at as the consummation of our existence in the world. For if we possess it without being limited by it, — and if we are limited by it we have not true possession of it, — then in and through it we shall, even while in this body, remain in touch with the Absolute.

The means for the attainment of this highest knowledge is the constant preparation of the mind by the admission into it of a working higher than itself until the mind is capable of giving itself up to the supramental action which exceeds it and which will finally replace it. In fact, Mind also has to follow the law of natural progression which has governed our evolution in this world from Matter into Life and Life into Mind. For just as Life-consciousness is beyond the imprisoned material being and unattainable by it through its own instruments, just as mind-consciousness is beyond the first inconscient movements of life, so too this supramental consciousness is beyond the divided and dividing nature of Mind and unattainable by it through its own instruments. But as Matter is constantly prepared for the manifestation of Life until Life is able to move in it, possess it, manage in it its own action and reaction, and as Life is constantly prepared for the manifestation of Mind until Mind is able to use it, enlighten its actions and reactions by higher and higher mental values, so must it be with Mind and that which is beyond Mind.

And all this progression is possible because these things are only different formations of one being and one consciousness. Life only reveals in Matter that which is involved in Matter, that which is the secret meaning and essence of Matter. It reveals, as it were, to material existence

its own soul, its own end. So too Mind reveals in Life all that Life means, all that it obscurely is in essence but cannot realise because it is absorbed in its own practical motion and its own characteristic form. So also Supermind must intervene to reveal Mind to itself, to liberate it from its absorption in its own practical motion and characteristic form and enable the mental being to realise that which is the hidden secret of all its formal practice and action. Thus shall man come to the knowledge of that which rules within him and missions his mind to its mark, sends forth his speech, impels the life-force in its paths and sets his senses to their workings.

This supreme cognitive Principle does not think by the mind. Mind is to it an inferior and secondary action, not its own proper mode. For Mind, based on limitation and division, can act only from a given centre in the lower and obscured existence; but Supermind is founded on unity and it comprehends and pervades; its action is in the universal and is in conscious communion with a transcendent source eternal and beyond the formations of the universe. Supermind regards the individual in the universal and does not begin with him or make of him a separate being. It starts from the Transcendent and sees the universal and individual as they are in relation to it, as its terms, as its formulas; it does not start from the individual and universal to arrive at the Transcendent. Mind acquires knowledge and mastery; it reaches it by a constant mentalising and willing; Supermind possesses knowledge and mastery; possessing, it throws itself out freely in various willing and knowing. Mind gropes by divided sensation; it arrives at a sort of oneness through sympathy: Supermind possesses by a free and all-embracing sense; it lives in the unity of which various love and sympathy are only a secondary play of manifestation. Supermind starts from the whole and sees in it its parts and properties, it does not build up the knowledge of the whole by an increasing knowledge of the parts and properties; and even the whole is to it only a unity of sum, only a partial and inferior term of the higher unity of infinite essence.

We see, then, that these two cognitive Principles start from two opposite poles and act in opposite directions by opposite methods. Yet it is by the higher cognitive that the lower is formed and governed. Mind is thought by that which is beyond Mind; the mentalising consciousness shapes and directs its movement according to the knowledge and impulse it receives from this higher Supermind and even the stuff of which it is formed belongs to that Principle. Mentality exists because that which is

beyond Mind has conceived an inverse action of itself working in a thinner, poorer, darker, less powerful substance of conscious being and founded upon its self-concentration on different points in its own being and in different forms of its own being. Supermind fixes these points, sees how consciousness must act from them on other forms of itself and in obedience to the pressure of those other forms, once a particular rhythm or law of universal action is given; it governs the whole action of mentality according to what it thus fixes and sees. Even our ignorance is only the distorted action of a truth projected from the Supermind and could not exist except as such a distortion; and so likewise all our dualities of knowledge, sensation, emotion, force proceed from that higher vision, obey it and are a secondary and, as one might say, perverse action of the concealed Supermind itself which governs always this lower action in harmony with its first conception of a located consciousness, divided indeed and therefore not in possession of its world or itself, but feeling out towards that possession and towards the unity which, because of the Supermind in us, it instinctively, if obscurely, knows to be its true nature and right.

But, for this very reason, the feeling out, the attempt at acquisition can only succeed in proportion as the mental being abandons his characteristic mentality and its limitations in order to rise beyond to that Mind of the mind which is his origin and his secret governing principle. His mentality must admit Supramentality as Life has admitted Mind. So long as he worships, follows after, adheres to all this that he now accepts as the object of his pursuit, to the mind and its aims, to its broken methods, its constructions of will and opinion and emotion dependent on egoism, division and ignorance, he cannot rise beyond this death to that immortality which the Upanishad promises to the seeker. That Brahman we have to know and seek after and not this which men here adore and pursue.

The Upanishad is not satisfied with the definition of the Brahman-consciousness as Mind of the mind. Just as it has described it as Speech of the speech, so also it describes it as Eye of the eye, Ear of the ear. Not only is it an absolute cognition behind the play of expression, but also an absolute Sense behind the action of the senses. Every part of our being finds its fulfilment in that which is beyond its present forms of functioning and not in those forms themselves.

This conception of the all-governing supreme consciousness does not fall in with our ordinary theories about sense and mind and the Brahman. We know of sense only as an action of the organs through which embodied mind communicates with external Matter, and these sense-organs have been separately developed in the course of evolution; the senses therefore are not fundamental things, but only subordinate conveniences and temporary physical functionings of the embodied mind. Brahman, on the other hand, we conceive of by the elimination of all that is not fundamental, by the elimination even of the Mind itself. It is a sort of positive zero, an *X* or unknowable which corresponds to no possible equation of physical or psychological quantities. In essence this may or may not be true; but we have now to think not of the Unknowable but of its highest manifestation in consciousness; and this we have described as the outlook of the Absolute on the relative and as that which is the cause and governing power of all that we and the universe are. There in that governing cause there must be something essential and supreme of which all our fundamental functionings here are a rendering in the terms of embodied consciousness.

Sense, however, is not or does not appear to be fundamental; it is only an instrumentation of Mind using the nervous system. It is not even a pure mental functioning, but depends so much upon the currents of the Life-force, upon its electric energy vibrating up and down the nerves, that in the Upanishads the senses are called Pranas, powers or functionings of the Life-force. It is true that Mind turns these nervous impressions when communicated to it into mental values, but the sense-action itself seems to be rather nervous than mental. In any case there would, at first sight, appear to be no warrant in reason for attributing a Sense of the sense to that which is not embodied, to a supramental consciousness which has no need of any such instrumentation.

But this is not the last word about sense; this is only its outward appearance behind which we must penetrate. What, not in its functioning, but in its essence, is the thing we call sense? In its functioning, if we analyse that thoroughly, we see that it is the contact of the mind with an eidolon of Matter, — whether that eidolon be of a vibration of sound, a light-image of form, a volley of earth-particles giving the sense of odour, an impression of *rasa* or sap that gives the sense of taste, or that direct sense of disturbance of our nervous being which we call touch. No doubt, the contact of Matter with Matter is the original cause of these sensations;

but it is only the eidolon of Matter, as for instance the image of the form cast upon the eye, with which the mind is directly concerned. For the mind operates upon Matter not directly, but through the Life-force; that is its instrument of communication and the Life-force, being in us a nervous energy and not anything material, can seize on Matter only through nervous impressions of form, through contactual images, as it were, which create corresponding values in the energy-consciousness called in the Upanishads the Prana. Mind takes these up and replies to them with corresponding mental values, mental impressions of form, so that the thing sensed comes to us after a triple process of translation, first the material eidolon, secondly the nervous or energy-image, third the image reproduced in stuff of mind.

This elaborate process is concealed from us by the lightning-like rapidity with which it is managed, — rapidity in our impressions of Time; for in another notation of Time by a creature differently constituted each part of the operation might be distinctly sensible. But the triple translation is always there, because there are really three sheaths of consciousness in us, the material, *annakoṣa*, in which the physical contact and image are received and formed, the vital and nervous, *prāṇakoṣa*, in which there is a nervous contact and formation, the mental, *manaḥkoṣa*, in which there is mental contact and imaging. We dwell centred in the mental sheath and therefore the experience of the material world has to come through the other two sheaths before it can reach us.

The foundation of sense, therefore, is contact, and the essential contact is the mental without which there would not be sense at all. The plant, for instance, feels nervously, feels in terms of life-energy, precisely as the human nervous system does, and it has precisely the same reactions; but it is only if the plant has rudimentary mind that we can suppose it to be, as we understand the word, sensible of these nervous or vital impressions and reactions. For then it would feel not only nervously, but in terms of mind. Sense, then, may be described as in its essence mental contact with an object and the mental reproduction of its image.

All these things we observe and reason of in terms of this embodiment of mind in Matter; for these sheaths or *koṣas* are formations in a more and more subtle substance reposing on gross Matter as their base. Let us imagine that there is a mental world in which Mind and not Matter is the base. There sense would be quite a different thing in its operation. It would

feel mentally an image in Mind and throw it out into form in more and more gross substance; and whatever physical formations there might already be in that world would respond rapidly to the Mind and obey its modifying suggestions. Mind would be masterful, creative, originitive, not as with us either obedient to Matter and merely reproductive or else in struggle with it and only with difficulty able to modify a material predetermined and dully reluctant to its touch. It would be, subject to whatever supramental power might be above it, master of a ductile and easily responsive material. But still Sense would be there, because contact in mental consciousness and formation of images would still be part of the law of being.

Mind, in fact, or active consciousness generally has four necessary functions which are indispensable to it wherever and however it may act and of which the Upanishads speak in the four terms, *vijñāna*, *prajñāna*, *sanjñāna* and *ājñāna*. Vijnana is the original comprehensive consciousness which holds an image of things at once in its essence, its totality and its parts and properties; it is the original, spontaneous, true and complete view of it which belongs properly to the supermind and of which mind has only a shadow in the highest operations of the comprehensive intellect. Prajnana is the consciousness which holds an image of things before it as an object with which it has to enter into relations and to possess by apprehension and a combined analytic and synthetic cognition. Sanjnana is the contact of consciousness with an image of things by which there is a sensible possession of it in its substance; if prajnana can be described as the outgoing of apprehensive consciousness to possess its object in conscious energy, to know it, sanjnana can be described as the inbringing movement of apprehensive consciousness which draws the object placed before it back to itself so as to possess it in conscious substance, to feel it. Ajnana is the operation by which consciousness dwells on an image of things so as to hold, govern and possess it in power. These four, therefore, are the basis of all conscious action.

As our human psychology is constituted, we begin with sanjnana, the sense of an object in its image; the apprehension of it in knowledge follows. Afterwards we try to arrive at the comprehension of it in knowledge and the possession of it in power. There are secret operations in us, in our subconscious and superconscious selves, which precede this action, but of these we are not aware in our surface being and therefore for us they do not exist. If we knew of them, our whole conscious functioning

would be changed. As it is what happens is a rapid process by which we sense an image and have of it an apprehensive percept and concept, and a slower process of the intellect by which we try to comprehend and possess it. The former process is the natural action of the mind which has entirely developed in us; the latter is an acquired action, an action of the intellect and the intelligent will which represent in Mind an attempt of the mental being to do what can only be done with perfect spontaneity and mastery by something higher than Mind. The intellect and intelligent will form a bridge by which the mental being is trying to establish a conscious connection with the supramental and to prepare the embodied soul for the descent into it of a supramental action. Therefore the first process is comparatively easy, spontaneous, rapid, perfect; the second slow, laboured, imperfect. In proportion as the intellectual action becomes associated with and dominated by a rudimentary supramental action, — and it is this which constitutes the phenomenon of genius, — the second process also becomes more and more easy, spontaneous, rapid and perfect.

If we suppose a supreme consciousness, master of the world, which really conducts behind the veil all the operations the mental gods attribute to themselves, it will be obvious that that consciousness will be the entire Knower and Lord. The basis of its action or government of the world will be the perfect, original and all-possessing vijñana and ajñana. It will comprehend all things in its energy of conscious knowledge, control all things in its energy of conscious power. These energies will be the spontaneous inherent action of its conscious being creative and possessive of the forms of the universe. What part then will be left for the apprehensive consciousness and the sense? They will be not independent functions, but subordinate operations involved in the action of the comprehensive consciousness itself. In fact, all four there will be one rapid movement. If we had all these four acting in us with the unified rapidity with which the prajñana and sanjñana act, we should then have in our notation of Time some inadequate image of the unity of the supreme action of the supreme energy.

If we consider, we shall see that this must be so. The supreme consciousness must not only comprehend and possess in its conscious being the images of things which it creates as its self-expression, but it must place them before it — always in its own being, not externally — and have a certain relation with them by the two terms of apprehensive consciousness. Otherwise the universe would not take the form that it has

for us; for we only reflect in the terms of our organisation the movements of the supreme Energy. But by the very fact that the images of things are there held in front of an apprehending consciousness within the comprehending conscious being and not externalised as our individual mind externalises them, the supreme Mind and supreme Sense will be something quite different from our mentality and our forms of sensation. They will be terms of an entire knowledge and self-possession and not terms of an ignorance and limitation which strives to know and possess.

In its essential and general term our sense must reflect and be the creation of this supreme Sense. But the Upanishad speaks of a Sight behind our sight and a Hearing behind our hearing, not in general terms of a Sense behind our sense. Certainly eye and ear are only taken as typical of the senses, and are chosen because they are the highest and subtlest of them all. But still the differentiation of sense which forms part of our mentality is evidently held to correspond with a differentiation of some kind in the supreme Sense. How is this possible? It is what we have next to unravel by examining the nature and source of the functioning of the separate senses in ourselves, — their source in our mentality and not merely their functioning in the actual terms of our life-energy and our body. What is it in Mind that is fundamental to sight and hearing? Why do we see and hear and not simply sense with the mind?

Mind was called by Indian psychologists the eleventh and ranks as the supreme sense. In the ancient arrangement of the senses, five of knowledge and five of action, it was the sixth of the organs of knowledge and at the same time the sixth of the organs of action. It is a commonplace of psychology that the effective functioning of the senses of knowledge is inoperative without the assistance of the mind; the eye may see, the ear may hear, all the senses may act, but if the mind pays no attention, the man has not heard, seen, felt, touched or tasted. Similarly, according to psychology, the organs of action act only by the force of the mind operating as will or, physiologically, by the reactive nervous force from the brain which must be according to materialistic notions the true self and essence of all will. In any case, the senses or all senses, if there are other than the ten, — according to a text in the Upanishad there should be at least fourteen, seven and seven, — all senses appear to be only organisations, functionings, instrumentations of the mind-consciousness, devices which it has formed in the course of its evolution in living Matter.

Modern psychology has extended our knowledge and has admitted us to a truth which the ancients already knew but expressed in other language. We know now or we rediscover the truth that the conscious operation of mind is only a surface action. There is a much vaster and more potent subconscious mind which loses nothing of what the senses bring to it; it keeps all its wealth in an inexhaustible store of memory, *akṣitam śravaḥ*. The surface mind may pay no attention, still the subconscious mind attends, receives, treasures up with an infallible accuracy. The illiterate servant-girl hears daily her master reciting Hebrew in his study; the surface mind pays no attention to the unintelligible gibberish, but the subconscious mind hears, remembers and, when in an abnormal condition it comes up to the surface, reproduces those learned recitations with a portentous accuracy which the most correct and retentive scholar might envy. The man or mind has not heard because he did not attend; the greater man or mind within has heard because he always attends, or rather sub-tends, with an infinite capacity. So too a man put under an anaesthetic and operated upon has felt nothing; but release his subconscious mind by hypnosis and he will relate accurately every detail of the operation and its appropriate sufferings; for the stupor of the physical sense-organ could not prevent the larger mind within from observing and feeling.

Similarly we know that a large part of our physical action is instinctive and directed not by the surface but by the subconscious mind. And we know now that it is a mind that acts and not merely an ignorant nervous reaction from the brute physical brain. The subconscious mind in the catering insect knows the anatomy of the victim it intends to immobilise and make food for its young and it directs the sting accordingly, as unerringly as the most skilful surgeon, provided the mere limited surface mind with its groping and faltering nervous action does not get in the way and falsify the inner knowledge or the inner will-force.

These examples point us to truths which western psychology, hampered by past ignorance posing as scientific orthodoxy, still ignores or refuses to acknowledge. The Upanishads declare that the Mind in us is infinite; it knows not only what has been seen but what has not been seen, not only what has been heard but what has not been heard, not only what has been discriminated by the thought but what has not been discriminated by the thought. Let us say, then, in the tongue of our modern knowledge that the surface man in us is limited by his physical experiences; he knows

only what his nervous life in the body brings to his embodied mind; and even of those bringings he knows, he can retain and utilise only so much as his surface mind-sense attends to and consciously remembers; but there is a larger subliminal consciousness within him which is not thus limited. That consciousness senses what has not been sensed by the surface mind and its organs and knows what the surface mind has not learned by its acquisitive thought. That in the insect knows the anatomy of its victim; that in the man outwardly insensible not only feels and remembers the action of the surgeon's knife, but knows the appropriate reactions of suffering which were in the physical body inhibited by the anaesthetic and therefore non-existent; that in the illiterate servant-girl heard and retained accurately the words of an unknown language and could, as Yogic experience knows, by a higher action of itself understand those superficially unintelligible sounds.

To return to the Vedantic words we have been using, there is a vaster action of the Sanjnana which is not limited by the action of the physical sense-organs; it was this which sensed perfectly and made its own through the ear the words of the unknown language, through the touch the movements of the unfelt surgeon's knife, through the sense-mind or sixth sense the exact location of the centres of locomotion in the victim insect. There is also associated with it a corresponding vaster action of Prajnana, Ajnana and Vijnana not limited by the smaller apprehensive and comprehensive faculties of the external mind. It is this vaster Prajnana which perceived the proper relation of the words to each other, of the movement of the knife to the unfelt suffering of the nerves and of the successive relation in space of the articulations in the insect's body. Such perception was inherent in the right reproduction of the words, the right narration of the sufferings, the right successive action of the sting. The Ajnana or Knowledge-Will originating all these actions was also vaster, not limited by the faltering force that governs the operations directed by the surface mind. And although in these examples the action of the vaster Vijnana is not so apparent, yet it was evidently there working through them and ensuring their co-ordination.

But at present it is with the Sanjnana that we are concerned. Here we should note, first of all, that there is an action of the sense-mind which is superior to the particular action of the senses and is aware of things even without imaging them in forms of sight, sound, contact, but which also as a sort of subordinate operation, subordinate but necessary to completeness

of presentation, does image in these forms. This is evident in psychical phenomena. Those who have carried the study and experimentation of them to a certain extent, have found that we can sense things known only to the minds of others, things that exist only at a great distance, things that belong to another plane than the terrestrial but have here their effects; we can both sense them in their images and also feel, as it were, all that they are without any definite image proper to the five senses.

This shows, in the first place, that sight and the other senses are not mere results of the development of our physical organs in the terrestrial evolution. Mind, subconscious in all Matter and evolving in Matter, has developed these physical organs in order to apply its inherent capacities of sight, hearing etc., on the physical plane by physical means for a physical life; but they are inherent capacities and not dependent on the circumstance of terrestrial evolution and they can be employed without the use of the physical eye, ear, skin, palate. Supposing that there are psychical senses which act through a psychical body, and we thus explain these psychical phenomena, still that action also is only an organisation of the inherent functioning of the essential sense, the Sanjnana, which in itself can operate without bodily organs. This essential sense is the original capacity of consciousness to feel in itself all that consciousness has formed and to feel it in all the essential properties and operations of that which has form, whether represented materially by vibration of sound or images of light or any other physical symbol.

The trend of knowledge leads more and more to the conclusion that not only are the properties of form, even the most obvious such as colour, light etc., merely operations of Force, but form itself is only an operation of Force. This Force again proves to be self-power of conscious-being⁵⁹ in a state of energy and activity. Practically, therefore, all form is only an operation of consciousness impressing itself with presentations of its own workings. We see colour because that is the presentation which consciousness makes to itself of one of its own operations; but colour is only an operation of Force working in the form of Light, and Light again is only a movement, that is to say an operation of Force. The question is what is essential to this operation of Force taking on itself the presentation of form? For it is this that must determine the working of Sanjnana or Sense on whatever plane it may operate.

[59] *Devātmaśaktim svaguṇair nigūdhām*, self-power of the divine Existent hidden by its own modes. Shwetashwataara Upanishad.

Everything begins with vibration or movement, the original *kṣobha* or disturbance. If there is no movement of the conscious being, it can only know its own pure static existence. Without vibration⁶⁰ or movement of being in consciousness there can be no act of knowledge and therefore no sense; without vibration or movement of being in force there can be no object of sense. Movement of conscious being as knowledge becoming sensible of itself as movement of force, in other words the knowledge separating itself from its own working to watch that and take it into itself again by feeling, — this is the basis of universal Sanjnana. This is true both of our internal and external operations. I become anger by a vibration of conscious force acting as nervous emotion and I feel the anger that I have become by another movement of conscious force acting as light of knowledge. I am conscious of my body because I have myself become the body; that same force of conscious being which has made this form of itself, this presentation of its workings knows it in that form, in that presentation. I can know nothing except what I myself am; if I know others, it is because they also are myself, because my self has assumed these apparently alien presentations as well as that which is nearest to my own mental centre. All sensation, all action of sense is thus the same in essence whether external or internal, physical or psychical.

But this vibration of conscious being is presented to itself by various forms of sense which answer to the successive operations of movement in its assumption of form. For first we have intensity of vibration creating regular rhythm which is the basis or constituent of all creative formation; secondly, contact or intermixture of the movements of conscious being which constitute the rhythm; thirdly, definition of the grouping of movements which are in contact, their shape; fourthly, the constant welling up of the essential force to support in its continuity the movement that has been thus defined; fifthly, the actual enforcement and compression of the force in its own movement which maintains the form that has been assumed. In Matter these five constituent operations are said by the Sankhyas to represent themselves as five elemental conditions of substance, the etheric, atmospheric, igneous, liquid and solid; and the rhythm of vibration is seen by them as *śabda*, sound, the basis of hearing, the intermixture as contact, the basis of touch, the definition as shape, the

[60] The term is used not because it is entirely adequate or accurate, no physical term can be, but because it is most suggestive of the original outgoing of consciousness to seek itself.

basis of sight, the upflow of force as *rasa*, sap, the basis of taste, and the discharge of the atomic compression as *gandha*, odour, the basis of smell. It is true that this is only predicated of pure or subtle Matter; the physical matter of our world being a mixed operation of force, these five elemental states are not found there separately except in a very modified form. But all these are only the physical workings or symbols. Essentially all formation, to the most subtle and most beyond our senses such as form of mind, form of character, form of soul, amount when scrutinised to this fivefold operation of conscious-force in movement.

All these operations, then, the Sanjnana or essential sense must be able to seize, to make its own by that union in knowledge of knower and object which is peculiar to itself. Its sense of the rhythm or intensity of the vibrations which contain in themselves all the meaning of the form, will be the basis of the essential hearing of which our apprehension of physical sound or the spoken word is only the most outward result; so also its sense of the contact or intermixture of conscious force with conscious force must be the basis of the essential touch; its sense of the definition or form of force must be the basis of the essential sight; its sense of the upflow of essential being in the form, that which is the secret of its self-delight, must be the basis of the essential taste; its sense of the compression of force and the self-discharge of its essence of being must be the basis of the essential inhalation grossly represented in physical substance by the sense of smell. On whatever plane, to whatever kind of formation these essentialities of sense will apply themselves and on each they will seek an appropriate organisation, an appropriate functioning.

This various sense will, it is obvious, be in the highest consciousness a complex unity, just as we have seen that there the various operation of knowledge is also a complex unity. Even if we examine the physical senses, say, the sense of hearing, if we observe how the underlying mind receives their action, we shall see that in their essence all the senses are in each other. That mind is not only aware of the vibration which we call sound; it is aware also of the contact and interchange between the force in the sound and the nervous force in us with which that intermixes; it is aware of the definition or form of the sound and of the complex contacts or relations which make up the form; it is aware of the essence or outwelling conscious force which constitutes and maintains the sound and prolongs its vibrations in our nervous being; it is aware of our own nervous inhalation of the vibratory discharge proceeding from the

compression of force which makes, so to speak, the solidity of the sound. All these sensations enter into the sensitive reception and joy of music which is the highest physical form of this operation of force, — they constitute our physical sensitiveness to it and the joy of our nervous being in it; diminish one of them and the joy and the sensitiveness are to that extent dulled. Much more must there be this complex unity in a higher than the physical consciousness and most of all must there be unity in the highest. But the essential sense must be capable also of seizing the secret essence of all conscious being in action, in itself and not only through the results of the operation; its appreciation of these results can be nothing more than itself an outcome of this deeper sense which it has of the essence of the Thing behind its appearances.

If we consider these things thus subtly in the light of our own deeper psychology and pursue them beyond the physical appearances by which they are covered, we shall get to some intellectual conception of the sense behind our senses or rather the Sense of our senses, the Sight of our sight and the Hearing of our hearing. The Brahman-consciousness of which the Upanishad speaks is not the Absolute withdrawn into itself, but that Absolute in its outlook on the relative; it is the Lord, the Master-Soul, the governing Transcendent and All, He who constitutes and controls the action of the gods on the different planes of our being. Since it constitutes them, all our workings can be no more than psychical and physical results and representations of something essential proper to its supreme creative outlook, our sense a shadow of the divine Sense, our sight of the divine Sight, our hearing of the divine Hearing. Nor is that divine Sight and Hearing limited to things physical, but extend themselves to all forms and operations of conscious being.

The supreme Consciousness does not depend on what we call sight and hearing for its own essential seeing and audition. It operates by a supreme Sense, creative and comprehensive, of which our physical and psychical sight and hearing are external results and partial operations. Neither is it ignorant of these, nor excludes them; for since it constitutes and controls, it must be aware of them but from a supreme plane, *param dhāma*, which includes all in its view; for its original action is that highest movement of Vishnu which, the Veda tells us, the seers behold like an eye extended in heaven. It is that by which the soul sees its seeings and hears its hearings; but all sense only assumes its true value and attains to its absolute, its immortal reality when we cease to pursue the satisfactions of the mere

external and physical senses and go beyond even the psychical being to this spiritual or essential which is the source and fountain, the knower, constituent and true valuer of all the rest.

This spiritual sense of things, secret and superconscient in us, alone gives their being, worth and reality to the psychical and physical sense; in themselves they have none. When we attain to it, these inferior operations are as it were taken up into it and the whole world and everything in it changes to us and takes on a different and a non-material value. That Master-consciousness in us senses our sensations of objects, sees our seeings, hears our hearings no longer for the benefit of the senses and their desires, but with the embrace of the self-existent Bliss which has no cause, beginning or end, eternal in its own immortality.

The Superlife — Life of Our Life

But the Brahman-consciousness is not only Mind of our mind, Speech of our speech, Sense of our sense; it is also Life of our life. In other words, it is a supreme and universal energy of existence of which our own material life and its sustaining energy are only an inferior result, a physical symbol, an external and limited functioning. That which governs our existence and its functionings, does not live and act by them, but is their superior cause and the supra-vital principle out of which they are formed and by which they are controlled.

The English word life does duty for many very different shades of meaning; but the word Prana familiar in the Upanishad and in the language of Yoga is restricted to the life-force whether viewed in itself or in its functionings. The popular significance of Prana was indeed the breath drawn into and thrown out from the lungs and so, in its most material and common sense, the life or the life-breath; but this is not the philosophic significance of the word as it is used in the Upanishads. The Prana of the Upanishads is the life-energy itself which was supposed to occupy and act in the body with a fivefold movement, each with its characteristic name and each quite as necessary to the functioning of the life of the body as the act of respiration. Respiration in fact is only one action of the chief movement of the life-energy, the first of the five, — the action which is most normally necessary and vital to the maintenance and distribution of the energy in the physical frame, but which can yet be suspended without the life being necessarily destroyed.

The existence of a vital force or life-energy has been doubted by western Science, because that Science concerns itself only with the most external operations of Nature and has as yet no true knowledge of anything except the physical and outward. This Prana, this life-force is not physical in itself; it is not material energy, but rather a different principle supporting Matter and involved in it. It supports and occupies all forms and without it no physical form could have come into being or could remain in being. It acts in all material forces such as electricity and is nearest to self-manifestation in those that are nearest to pure force; material forces could not exist or act without it, for from it they derive

their energy and movement and they are its vehicles. But all material aspects are only field and form of the Prana which is in itself a pure energy, their cause and not their result. It cannot therefore be detected by any physical analysis; physical analysis can only resolve for us the combinations of those material happenings which are its results and the external signs and symbols of its presence and operation.

How then do we become aware of its existence? By that purification of our mind and body and that subtilisation of our means of sensation and knowledge which become possible through Yoga. We become capable of analysis other than the resolution of forms into their gross physical elements and are able to distinguish the operations of the pure mental principle from those of the material and both of these from the vital or dynamic which forms a link between them and supports them both. We are then able to distinguish the movements of the Pranic currents not only in the physical body which is all that we are normally aware of, but in that subtle frame of our being which Yoga detects underlying and sustaining the physical. This is ordinarily done by the process of Pranayama, the government and control of the respiration. By Pranayama the Hathayogin is able to control, suspend and transcend the ordinary fixed operation of the Pranic energy which is all that Nature needs for the normal functioning of the body and of the physical life and mind, and he becomes aware of the channels in which that energy distributes itself in all its workings and is therefore able to do things with his body which seem miraculous to the ignorant, just as the physical scientist by his knowledge of the workings of material forces is able to do things with them which would seem to us magic if their law and process were not divulged. For all the workings of life in the physical form are governed by the Prana and not only those which are normal and constant and those which, being always potential, can be easily brought forward and set in action, but those which are of a more remote potentiality and seem to our average experience difficult or impossible.

But the Pranic energy supports not only the operations of our physical life, but also those of the mind in the living body. Therefore by the control of the Pranic energy it is not only possible to control our physical and vital functionings and to transcend their ordinary operation, but to control also the workings of the mind and to transcend its ordinary operations. The human mind in fact depends always on the Pranic force which links it with the body through which it manifests itself, and it is able to deploy its own

force only in proportion as it can make that energy available for its own uses and subservient to its own purposes. In proportion, therefore, as the Yogin gets back to the control of the Prana, and by the direction of its batteries opens up those nervous centres (*cakras*) in which it is now sluggish or only partially operative, he is able to manifest powers of mind, sense and consciousness which transcend our ordinary experience. The so-called occult powers of Yoga are such faculties which thus open up of themselves as the Yogin advances in the control of the Pranic force and, purifying the channels of its movement, establishes an increasing communication between the consciousness of his subtle subliminal being and the consciousness of his gross physical and superficial existence.

Thus the Prana is vital or nervous force which bears the operations of mind and body, is yoked by them as it were like a horse to a chariot and driven by the mind along the paths on which it wishes to travel to the goal of its desire. Therefore it is described in this Upanishad as yoked and moving forward and again as being led forward, the images recalling the Vedic symbol of the Horse by which the Pranic force is constantly designated in the Rig-veda. It is in fact that which does all the action of the world in obedience to conscious or subconscious mind and in the conditions of material force and material form. While the mind is that movement of Nature in us which represents in the mould of our material and phenomenal existence and within the triple term of the Ignorance the knowledge aspect of the Brahman, the consciousness of the knower, and body is that which similarly represents the being of the existent in the mask of phenomenally divisible substance, so Prana or life-energy represents in the flux of phenomenal things the force, the active dynamis of the Lord who controls and enjoys the manifestation of His own being.⁶¹ It is a universal energy present in every atom and particle of the universe, and active in every stirring and current of the constant flux and interchange which constitutes the world.

But just as mind is only an inferior movement of the supreme Conscious-Being and above mind there is a divine and infinite principle of consciousness, will and knowledge which controls the ignorant action of mind, and it is by this superior principle and not by mind that Brahman cognises His own being whether in itself or in its manifestation, so also it must be with this Life-force. The characteristics of the Life-force as it

[61] The three are the reverse aspects of Chit, Sat and Chit-Tapas.

manifests itself in us are desire, hunger, an enjoyment which devours the object enjoyed and a sensational movement and activity of response which gropes after possession and seeks to pervade, embrace, take into itself the object of its desire.⁶² It is not in this breath of desire and mortal enjoyment that the true life can consist or the highest, divine energy act, any more than the supreme knowledge can think in the terms of ignorant, groping, limited and divided mind. As the movements of mind are merely representations in the terms of the duality and the ignorance, reflections of a supreme consciousness and knowledge, so the movements of this life-force can only be similar representations of a supreme energy expressing a higher and truer existence possessed of that consciousness and knowledge and therefore free from desire, hunger, transient enjoyment and hampered activity. What is desire here must there be self-existent Will or Love; what is hunger here must there be desireless satisfaction; what is here enjoyment must there be self-existent delight; what is here a groping action and response, must be there self-possessing and all-possessing energy, — such must be the Life of our life by which this inferior action is sustained and led to its goal. Brahman does not breathe with the breath, does not live by this Life-force and its dual terms of birth and death.

What then is this Life of our life? It is the supreme Energy⁶³ which is nothing but the infinite force in action of the supreme conscious Being in His own illumined self. The Self-existent is luminously aware of Himself and full of His own delight; and that self-awareness is a timeless self-possession which in action reveals itself as a force of infinite consciousness omnipotent as well as omniscient; for it exists between two poles, one of eternal stillness and pure identity, the other of eternal energy and identity of All with itself, the stillness eternally supporting the energy. That is the true existence, the Life from which our life proceeds; that is the immortality, while what we cling to as life is “hunger that is death”. Therefore the object of the wise must be to pass in their illumined consciousness beyond the false and phenomenal terms of life and death to this immortality.

[62] All these significances are intended by the Vedic Rishis in their use of the word *aśva*, Horse, for the *prāṇa*, the root being capable of all of them as we see from the words *āśā*, hope; *aśanā*, hunger; *aś*, to eat; *aś*, to enjoy; *āśu*, swift; *aś*, to move, attain, pervade, etc.

[63] Tapas or Chit-Shakti.

Yet is this Life-force, however inferior its workings, instinct with the being, will, light of that which it represents, of that which transcends it; by That it is “led forward” on its paths to a goal which its own existence implies by the very imperfection of its movements and renderings. This death called life is not only a dark figure of that light, but it is the passage by which we pass through transmutation of our being from the death-sleep of Matter into the spirit’s infinite immortality.

The Great Transition

The thought of the Upanishad as expressed in its first chapter in the brief and pregnant sentences of the Upanishadic style, amounts then to this result that the life of the mind, senses, vital activities in which we dwell is not the whole or the chief part of our existence, not the highest, not self-existent, not master of itself. It is an outer fringe, a lower result, an inferior working of something beyond; a superconscient Existence has developed, supports and governs this partial and fragmentary, this incomplete and unsatisfying consciousness and activity of the mind, life and senses. To rise out of this external and surface consciousness towards and into that superconscient is our progress, our goal, our destiny of completeness and satisfaction.

The Upanishad does not assert the unreality, but only the incompleteness and inferiority of our present existence. All that we follow after here is an imperfect representation, a broken and divided functioning of what is eternally in an absolute perfection on that higher plane of existence. This mind of ours unpossessed of its object, groping, purblind, besieged by error and incapacity, its action founded on an external vision of things, is only the shadow thrown by a superconscient Knowledge which possesses, creates and securely uses the truth of things because nothing is external to it, nothing is other than itself, nothing is divided or at war within its all-comprehensive self-awareness. That is the Mind of our mind. Our speech, limited, mechanical, imperfectly interpretative of the outsides of things, restricted by the narrow circle of the mind, based on the appearances of sense is only the far-off and feeble response, the ignorant vibration returned to a creative and revelatory Word which has built up all the forms which our mind and speech seek to comprehend and express. Our sense, a movement in stuff of consciousness vibratory to outward impacts, attempting imperfectly to grasp them by laboured and separately converging reactions, is only the faulty image of a supreme Sense which at once, fully, harmoniously unites itself with and enjoys all that the supreme Mind and Speech create in the self-joyous activity of the divine and infinite existence. Our life, a breath of force and movement and possession attached to a form of mind and body and restricted by the form, limited in

its force, hampered in its movement, besieged in its possession and therefore a thing of discords at war with itself and its environment, hungering and unsatisfied, moving inconstantly from object to object and unable to embrace and retain their multiplicity, devouring its objects of enjoyment and therefore transient in its enjoyments, is only a broken movement of the one, undivided, infinite Life which is all-possessing and ever satisfied because in all it enjoys its eternal self unimprisoned by the divisions of Space, unoccupied by the moments of Time, undeluded by the successions of Cause and Circumstance.

This superconscient Existence, one, conscious of itself, conscious both of its eternal peace and its omniscient and omnipotent force, is also conscious of our cosmic existence which it holds in itself, inspires secretly and omnipotently governs. It is the Lord of the Isha Upanishad who inhabits all the creations of His Force, all form of movement in the ever mobile principle of cosmos. It is our self and that of which and by which we are constituted in all our being and activities, the Brahman. The mortal life is a dual representation of That with two conflicting elements in it, negative and positive. Its negative elements of death, suffering, incapacity, strife, division, limitation are a dark figure which conceal and serve the development of that which its positive elements cannot yet achieve, — immortality hiding itself from life in the figure of death, delight hiding itself from pleasure in the figure of suffering, infinite force hiding itself from finite effort in the figure of incapacity, fusion of love hiding itself from desire in the figure of strife, unity hiding itself from acquisition in the figure of division, infinity hiding itself from growth in the figure of limitation. The positive elements suggest what the Brahman is, but never are what the Brahman is, although their victory, the victory of the gods, is always the victory of the Brahman over its own self-negations, always the self-affirmation of His vastness against the denials of the dark and limiting figure of things. Still, it is not this vastness merely, but the absolute infinity which is Brahman itself. And therefore within this dual figure of things we cannot attain to our self, our Highest; we have to transcend in order to attain. Our pursuit of the positive elements of this existence, our worship of the gods of the mind, life, sense is only a preparatory to the real travail of the soul, and we must leave this lower Brahman and know that Higher if we are to fulfil ourselves. We pursue, for instance, our mental growth, we become mental beings full of an accomplished thought-power and thought-acquisition, *dhīrāḥ*, in order that we may by thought of mind

go beyond mind itself to the Eternal. For always the life of mind and senses is the jurisdiction of death and limitation; beyond is the immortality.

The wise, therefore, the souls seated and accomplished in luminous thought-power put away from them the dualities of our mind, life and senses and go forward from this world; they go beyond to the unity and the immortality. The word used for going forward is that which expresses the passage of death; it is also that which the Upanishad uses for the forward movement of the Life-force yoked to the car of embodied mind and sense on the paths of life. And in this coincidence we can find a double and most pregnant suggestion.

It is not by abandoning life on earth in order to pursue immortality on other more favourable planes of existence that the great achievement becomes possible. It is here, *ihaiya*, in this mortal life and body that immortality must be won, here in this lower Brahman and by this embodied soul that the Higher must be known and possessed. "If here one find it not, great is the perdition." This Life-force in us is led forward by the attraction of the supreme Life on its path of constant acquisition through types of the Brahman until it reaches a point where it has to go entirely forward, to go across out of the mortal life, the mortal vision of things to some Beyond. So long as death is not entirely conquered, this going beyond is represented in the terms of death and by a passing into other worlds where death is not present, where a type of immortality is tasted corresponding to that which we have found here in our soul-experience; but the attraction of death and limitation is not overpassed because they still conceal something of immortality and infinity which we have not yet achieved; therefore there is a necessity of return, an insistent utility of farther life in the mortal body which we do not overcome until we have passed beyond all types to the very being of the Infinite, One and Immortal.

The worlds of which the Upanishad speaks are essentially soul-conditions and not geographical divisions of the cosmos. This material universe is itself only existence as we see it when the soul dwells on the plane of material movement and experience in which the spirit involves itself in form, and therefore all the framework of things in which it moves by the life and which it embraces by the consciousness is determined by the principle of infinite division and aggregation proper to Matter, to

substance of form. This becomes then its world or vision of things. And to whatever soul-condition it climbs, its vision of things will change from the material vision and correspond to that other condition, and in that other framework it will move in its living and embrace it in its consciousness. These are the worlds of the ancient tradition.

But the soul that has entirely realised immortality passes beyond all worlds and is free from frameworks. It enters into the being of the Lord; like this supreme superconscient Self and Brahman, it is not subdued to life and death. It is no longer subject to the necessity of entering into the cycle of rebirth, of travelling continually between the imprisoning dualities of death and birth, affirmation and negation; for it has transcended name and form. This victory, this supreme immortality it must achieve here as an embodied soul in the mortal framework of things. Afterwards, like the Brahman, it transcends and yet embraces the cosmic existence without being subject to it. Personal freedom, personal fulfilment is then achieved by the liberation of the soul from imprisonment in the form of this changing personality and by its ascent to the One that is the All. If afterwards there is any assumption of the figure of mortality, it is an assumption and not a subjection, a help brought to the world and not a help to be derived from it, a descent of the ensouled superconscient existence not from any personal necessity, but from the universal need in the cosmic labour for those yet unfree and unfulfilled to be helped and strengthened by the force that has already described the path up to the goal in its experience and achieved under the same conditions the Work and the Sacrifice.

Before we can proceed to the problem how, being what we are and the Brahman being what it is, we can effect the transition from the status of mind, life and senses proper to man over to the status proper to the supreme Consciousness which is master of mind, life and senses, another and prior question arises. The Upanishad does not state it explicitly, but implies and answers it with the strongest emphasis on the solution and the subtlest variety in its repetition of the apparent paradox that is presented.

The Master-Consciousness of the Brahman is that for which we have to abandon this lesser status of the mere creature subject to the movement of Nature in the cosmos; but after all this Master-Consciousness, however high and great a thing it may be, has a relation to the universe and the cosmic movement; it cannot be the utter Absolute, Brahman superior to all

relativities. This Conscious-Being who originates, supports and governs our mind, life, senses is the Lord; but where there is no universe of relativities, there can be no Lord, for there is no movement to transcend and govern. Is not then this Lord, as one might say in a later language, not so much the creator of Maya as himself a creation of Maya? Do not both Lord and cosmos disappear when we go beyond all cosmos? And is it not beyond all cosmos that the only true reality exists? Is it not this only true reality and not the Mind of our mind, the Sense of our sense, the Life of our life, the Word behind our speech, which we have to know and possess? As we must go behind all effects to the Cause, must we not equally go beyond the Cause to that in which neither cause nor effects exist? Is not even the immortality spoken of in the Veda and Upanishads a petty thing to be overpassed and abandoned? and should we not reach towards the utter Ineffable where mortality and immortality cease to have any meaning?

The Upanishad does not put to itself the question in this form and language which only became possible when Nihilistic Buddhism and Vedantic Illusionism had passed over the face of our thought and modified philosophical speech and concepts. But it knows of the ineffable Absolute which is the utter reality and absoluteness of the Lord even as the Lord is the absolute of all that is in the cosmos. Of That it proceeds to speak in the only way in which it can be spoken of by the human mind.

Its answer to the problem is that That is precisely the Unknowable⁶⁴ of which no relations can be affirmed⁶⁵ and about which therefore our intellect must for ever be silent. The injunction to know the utterly Unknowable would be without any sense or practical meaning. Not that That is a Nihil, a pure Negative, but it cannot either be described by any of the positives of which our mind, speech or perception is capable, nor even can it be indicated by any of them. It is only a little that we know; it is only in the terms of the little that we can put the mental forms of our knowledge. Even when we go beyond to the real form of the Brahman which is not this universe, we can only indicate, we cannot really describe. If then we think we have known it perfectly, we betray our ignorance; we show that we know very little indeed, not even the little that we can put into the forms of our knowledge. For the universe seen as our mind sees it

[64] *Ajñeyam atarkyam.*

[65] *Avyavahāryam.*

is the little, the divided, the parcelling out of existence and consciousness in which we know and express things by fragments, and we can never really cage in our intellectual and verbal fictions that infinite totality. Yet it is through the principles manifested in the universe that we have to arrive at That, through the life, through the mind and through that highest mental knowledge which grasps at the fundamental Ideas that are like doors concealing behind them the Brahman and yet seeming to reveal Him.

Much less, then, if we can only thus know the Master-Consciousness which is the form of the Brahman, can we pretend to know its utter ineffable reality which is beyond all knowledge. But if this were all, there would be no hope for the soul and a resigned Agnosticism would be the last word of wisdom. The truth is that though thus beyond our mentality and our highest ideative knowledge, the Supreme does give Himself both to this knowledge and to our mentality in the way proper to each and by following that way we can arrive at Him, but only on condition that we do not take our mentalising by the mind and our knowing by the higher thought for the full knowledge and rest in that with a satisfied possession.

The way is to use our mind rightly for such knowledge as is open to its highest, purified capacity. We have to know the form of the Brahman, the Master-Consciousness of the Lord through and yet beyond the universe in which we live. But first we must put aside what is mere form and phenomenon in the universe; for that has nothing to do with the form of the Brahman, the body of the Self, since it is not His form, but only His most external mask. Our first step therefore must be to get behind the forms of Matter, the forms of Life, the forms of Mind and go back to that which is essential, most real, nearest to actual entity. And when we have gone on thus eliminating, thus analysing all forms into the fundamental entities of the cosmos, we shall find that these fundamental entities are really only two, ourselves and the gods.

The gods of the Upanishad have been supposed to be a figure for the senses, but although they act in the senses, they are yet much more than that. They represent the divine power in its great and fundamental cosmic functionings whether in man or in mind and life and matter in general; they are not the functionings themselves but something of the Divine which is essential to their operation and its immediate possessor and cause. They are, as we see from other Upanishads, positive self-representations of

the Brahman leading to good, joy, light, love, immortality as against all that is a dark negation of these things. And it is necessarily in the mind, life, senses, and speech of man that the battle here reaches its height and approaches to its full meaning. The gods seek to lead these to good and light; the Titans, sons of darkness, seek to pierce them with ignorance and evil.⁶⁶ Behind the gods is the Master-Consciousness of which they are the positive cosmic self-representations.

The other entity which represents the Brahman in the cosmos is the self of the living and thinking creature, man. This self also is not an external mask; it is not form of the mind or form of the life or form of the body. It is something that supports these and makes them possible, something that can say positively like the gods, "I am" and not only "I seem". We have then to scrutinise these two entities and see what they are in relation to each other and to the Brahman; or, as the Upanishad puts it, "That of it which is thou, that of it which is in the gods, *this* is what thy mind has to resolve." Well, but what then of the Brahman is myself? and what of the Brahman is in the Gods? The answer is evident. I am a representation in the cosmos, but for all purposes of the cosmos a real representation of the Self; and the gods are a representation in the cosmos — a real representation since without them the cosmos could not continue — of the Lord. The one supreme Self is the essentiality of all these individual existences; the one supreme Lord is the Godhead in the gods.

The Self and the Lord are one Brahman, whom we can realise through our self and realise through that which is essential in the cosmic movement. Just as our self constitutes our mind, body, life, senses, so that Self constitutes all mind, body, life, senses; it is the origin and essentiality of things. Just as the gods govern, supported by our self, the cosmos of our individual being, the action of our mind, senses and life, so the Lord governs as Mind of the mind, Sense of the sense, Life of the life, supporting His active divinity by His silent essential self-being, all cosmos and all form of being. As we have gone behind the forms of the cosmos to that which is essential in their being and movement and found our self and the gods, so we have to go behind our self and the gods and find the one supreme Self and the one supreme Godhead. Then we can say, "I think that I know."

But at once we have to qualify our assertion. I think not that I know

[66] *Chhandogya and Brihadaranyaka Upanishads.*

perfectly, for that is impossible in the terms of our instruments of knowledge. I do not think for a moment that I know the Unknowable, that that can be put into the forms through which I must arrive at the Self and Lord; but at the same time I am no longer in ignorance, I know the Brahman in the only way in which I can know Him, in His self-revelation to me in terms not beyond the grasp of my psychology, manifest as the Self and the Lord. The mystery of existence is revealed in a way that utterly satisfies my being because it enables me first to comprehend it through these figures as far as it can be comprehended by me and, secondly, to enter into, to live in, to be one in law and being with and even to merge myself in the Brahman.

If we fancy that we have grasped the Brahman by the mind and in that delusion fix down our knowledge of Him to the terms our mentality has found, then our knowledge is no knowledge; it is the little knowledge that turns to falsehood. So too those who try to fix Him into our notion of the fundamental ideas in which we discern Him by the thought that rises above ordinary mental perception, have no real discernment of the Brahman, since they take certain idea-symbols for the Reality. On the other hand if we recognise that our mental perceptions are simply so many clues by which we can rise beyond mental perception and if we use these fundamental idea-symbols and the arrangement of them which our uttermost thought makes in order to go beyond the symbol to that reality, then we have rightly used mind and the higher discernment for their supreme purpose. Mind and the higher discernment are satisfied of the Brahman even in being exceeded by Him.

The mind can only reflect in a sort of supreme understanding and experience the form, the image of the supreme as He shows Himself to our mentality. Through this reflection we find, we know; the purpose of knowledge is accomplished, for we find immortality, we enter into the law, the being, the beatitude of the Brahman-consciousness. By self-realisation of Brahman as our self we find the force, the divine energy which lifts us beyond the limitation, weakness, darkness, sorrow, all-pervading death of our mortal existence; by the knowledge of the one Brahman in all beings and in all the various movement of the cosmos we attain beyond these things to the infinity, the omnipotent being, the omniscient light, the pure beatitude of that divine existence.

This great achievement must be done here in this mortal world, in this

limited body; for if we do it, we arrive at our true existence and are no longer bound down to our phenomenal becoming. But if here we find it not, great is the loss and perdition; for we remain continually immersed in the phenomenal life of the mind and body and do not rise above it into the true supramental existence. Nor, if we miss it here, will death give it to us by our passage to another and less difficult world. Only those who use their awakened self and enlightened powers to distinguish and discover that One and Immortal in all existences, the all-originating self, the all-inhabiting Lord, can make the real passage which transcends life and death, can pass out of this mortal status, can press beyond and rise upward into a world-transcending immortality.

This, then, and no other is the means to be seized on and the goal to be reached. “There is no other path for the great journey.” The Self and the Lord are that indeterminable, unknowable, ineffable Parabrahman and when we seek rather that which is indeterminable and unknowable to us, it is still the Self and the Lord always that we find, though by an attempt which is not the straight and possible road intended for the embodied soul seeking here to accomplish its true existence.⁶⁷ They are the self-manifested Reality which so places itself before man as the object of his highest aspiration and the fulfilment of all his activities.

[67] *Gita*.

The Parable of the Gods

From its assertion of the relative knowableness of the unknowable Brahman and the justification of the soul's aspiration towards that which is beyond its present capacity and status the Upanishad turns to the question of the means by which that high-reaching aspiration can put itself into relation with the object of its search. How is the veil to be penetrated and the subject consciousness of man to enter into the master-consciousness of the Lord? What bridge is there over this gulf? Knowledge has already been pointed out as the supreme means open to us, a knowledge which begins by a sort of reflection of the true existence in the awakened mental understanding. But Mind is one of the gods; the Light behind it is indeed the greatest of the gods, Indra. Then, an awakening of all the gods through their greatest to the essence of that which they are, the one Godhead which they represent. By the mentality opening itself to the Mind of our mind, the sense and speech also will open themselves to the Sense of our sense and to the Word behind our speech and the life to the Life of our life. The Upanishad proceeds to develop this consequence of its central suggestion by a striking parable or apologue.

The gods, the powers that affirm the Good, the Light, the Joy and Beauty, the Strength and Mastery have found themselves victorious in their eternal battle with the powers that deny. It is Brahman that has stood behind the gods and conquered for them; the Master of all who guides all has thrown His deciding will into the balance, put down his darkened children and exalted the children of Light. In this victory of the Master of all the gods are conscious of a mighty development of themselves, a splendid efflorescence of their greatness in man, their joy, their light, their glory, their power and pleasure. But their vision is as yet sealed to their own deeper truth; they know of themselves, they know not the Eternal; they know the godheads, they do not know God. Therefore they see the victory as their own, the greatness as their own. This opulent efflorescence of the gods and uplifting of their greatness and light is the advance of man to his ordinary ideal of a perfectly enlightened mentality, a strong and sane vitality, a well-ordered body and senses, a harmonious, rich, active and happy life, the Hellenic ideal which the modern world holds to be our

ultimate potentiality. When such an efflorescence takes place whether in the individual or the kind, the gods in man grow luminous, strong, happy; they feel they have conquered the world and they proceed to divide it among themselves and enjoy it.

But such is not the full intention of Brahman in the universe or in the creature. The greatness of the gods is His own victory and greatness, but it is only given in order that man may grow nearer to the point at which his faculties will be strong enough to go beyond themselves and realise the Transcendent. Therefore Brahman manifests Himself before the exultant gods in their well-ordered world and puts to them by His silence the heart-shaking, the world-shaking question, "If ye are all, then what am I? for see, I am and I am here." Though He manifests, He does not reveal Himself, but is seen and felt by them as a vague and tremendous presence, the Yaksha, the Daemon, the Spirit, the unknown Power, the Terrible beyond good and evil for whom good and evil are instruments towards His final self-expression. Then there is alarm and confusion in the divine assembly; they feel a demand and a menace; on the side of the evil the possibility of monstrous and appalling powers yet unknown and unmastered which may wreck the fair world they have built, upheave and shatter to pieces the brilliant harmony of the intellect, the aesthetic mind, the moral nature, the vital desires, the body and senses which they have with such labour established; on the side of the good the demand of things unknown which are beyond all these and therefore are equally a menace, since the little which is realised cannot stand against the much that is unrealised, cannot shut out the vast, the infinite that presses against the fragile walls we have erected to define and shelter our limited being and pleasure. Brahman presents itself to them as the Unknown; the gods knew not what was this Daemon.

Therefore Agni first arises at their bidding to discover its nature, limits, identity. The gods of the Upanishad differ in one all-important respect from the gods of the Rig-veda; for the latter are not only powers of the One, but conscious of their source and true identity; they know the Brahman, they dwell in the supreme Godhead, their origin, home and proper plane is the superconscient Truth. It is true they manifest themselves in man in the form of human faculties and assume the appearance of human limitations, manifest themselves in the lower cosmos and assume the mould of its cosmic operations; but this is only their lesser and lower movement and beyond it they are for ever the One, the

Transcendent and Wonderful, the Master of Force and Delight and Knowledge and Being. But in the Upanishads the Brahman idea has grown and cast down the gods from this high pre-eminence so that they appear only in their lesser human and cosmic workings. Much of their other Vedic aspects they keep. Here the three gods Indra, Vayu, Agni represent the cosmic Divine on each of its three planes, Indra on the mental, Vayu on the vital, Agni on the material. In that order, therefore, beginning from the material they approach the Brahman.

Agni is the heat and flame of the conscious force in Matter which has built up the universe; it is he who has made life and mind possible and developed them in the material universe where he is the greatest deity. Especially he is the primary impeller of speech of which Vayu is the medium and Indra the lord. This heat of conscious force in Matter is Agni Jatavedas, the knower of all births: of all things born, of every cosmic phenomenon he knows the law, the process, the limit, the relation. If then it is some mighty Birth of the cosmos that stands before them, some new indeterminate developed in the cosmic struggle and process, who shall know him, determine his limits, strength, potentialities if not Agni Jatavedas?

Full of confidence he rushes towards the object of his search and is met by the challenge, "Who art thou? What is the force in thee?" His name is Agni Jatavedas, the Power that is at the basis of all birth and process in the material universe and embraces and knows their workings and the force in him is this that all that is thus born, he as the flame of Time and Death can devour. All things are his food which he assimilates and turns into material of new birth and formation. But this all-devourer cannot devour with all his force a fragile blade of grass so long as it has behind it the power of the Eternal. Agni is compelled to return, not having discovered. One thing only is settled that this Daemon is no Birth of the material cosmos, no transient thing that is subject to the flame and breath of Time; it is too great for Agni.

Another god rises to the call. It is Vayu Matarishwan, the great Life-Principle, he who moves, breathes, expands infinitely in the mother element. All things in the universe are the movement of this mighty Life; it is he who has brought Agni and placed him secretly in all existence; for him the worlds have been upbuilt that Life may move in them, that it may act, that it may riot and enjoy. If this Daemon be no birth of Matter,

but some stupendous Life-force active whether in the depths or on the heights of being, who shall know it, who shall seize it in his universal expansion if not Vayu Matarishwan?

There is the same confident advance upon the object, the same formidable challenge, "Who art thou? What is the force in thee?" This is Vayu Matarishwan and the power in him is this that he, the Life, can take all things in his stride and growth and seize on them for his mastery and enjoyment. But even the veriest frailest trifle he cannot seize and master so long as it is protected against him by the shield of the Omnipotent. Vayu too returns, not having discovered. One thing only is settled that this is no form or force of cosmic Life which operates within the limits of the all-grasping vital impulse; it is too great for Vayu.

Indra next arises, the Puissant, the Opulent. Indra is the power of the Mind; the senses which the Life uses for enjoyment, are operations of Indra which he conducts for knowledge and all things that Agni has upbuilt and supports and destroys in the universe are Indra's field and the subject of his functioning. If then this unknown Existence is something that the senses can grasp or, if it is something that the mind can envisage, Indra shall know it and make it part of his opulent possessions. But it is nothing that the senses can grasp or the mind envisage, for as soon as Indra approaches it, it vanishes. The mind can only envisage what is limited by Time and Space and this Brahman is that which, as the Rig-veda has said, is neither today nor tomorrow and though it moves and can be approached in the conscious being of all conscious existences, yet when the mind tries to approach it and study it in itself, it vanishes from the view of the mind. The Omnipresent cannot be seized by the senses, the Omniscient cannot be known by the mentality.

But Indra does not turn back from the quest like Agni and Vayu; he pursues his way through the highest ether of the pure mentality and there he approaches the Woman, the many-shining, Uma Haimavati; from her he learns that this Daemon is the Brahman by whom alone the gods of mind and life and body conquer and affirm themselves, and in whom alone they are great. Uma is the supreme Nature from whom the whole cosmic action takes its birth; she is the pure summit and highest power of the One who here shines out in many forms. From this supreme Nature which is also the supreme Consciousness the gods must learn their own truth; they must proceed by reflecting it in themselves instead of limiting themselves

to their own lower movement. For she has the knowledge and consciousness of the One, while the lower nature of mind, life and body can only envisage the many. Although therefore Indra, Vayu and Agni are the greatest of the gods, the first coming to know the existence of the Brahman, the others approaching and feeling the touch of it, yet it is only by entering into contact with the supreme consciousness and reflecting its nature and by the elimination of the vital, mental, physical egoism so that their whole function shall be to reflect the One and Supreme that Brahman can be known by the gods in us and possessed. The conscious force that supports our embodied life must become simply and purely a reflector of that supreme Consciousness and Power of which its highest ordinary action is only a twilight figure; the Life must become a passively potent reflection and pure image of that supreme Life which is greater than all our utmost actual and potential vitality; the Mind must resign itself to be no more than a faithful mirror of the image of the superconscious Existence. By this conscious surrender of mind, life and senses to the Master of our senses, life and mind who alone really governs their action, by this turning of the cosmic existence into a passive reflection of the eternal being and a faithful reproducer of the nature of the Eternal we may hope to know and through knowledge to rise into that which is superconscious to us; we shall enter into the Silence that is master of an eternal, infinite, free and all-blissful activity.

The Transfiguration of the Self and the Gods

The means of the knowledge of Brahman are, we have seen, to get back behind the forms of the universe to that which is essential in the cosmos, — and that which is essential is twofold, the gods in Nature and the self in the individual, — and then to get behind these to the Beyond which they represent. The practical relation of the gods to Brahman in this process of divine knowledge has been already determined. The cosmic functionings through which the gods act, mind, life, speech, senses, body, must become aware of something beyond them which governs them, by which they are and move, by whose force they evolve, enlarge themselves and arrive at power and joy and capacity; to that they must turn from their ordinary operations; leaving these, leaving the false idea of independent action and self-ordering which is an egoism of mind and life and sense they must become consciously passive to the power, light and joy of something which is beyond themselves. What happens then is that this divine Unnameable reflects Himself openly in the gods. His light takes possession of the thinking mind, His power and joy of the life, His light and rapture of the emotional mind and the senses. Something of the supreme image of Brahman falls upon the world-nature and changes it into divine nature.

All this is not done by a sudden miracle. It comes by flashes, revelations, sudden touches and glimpses; there is as if a leap of the lightning of revelation flaming out from those heavens for a moment and then returning into its secret source; as if the lifting of the eyelid of an inner vision and its falling again because the eye cannot look long and steadily on the utter light. The repetition of these touches and visitings from the Beyond fixes the gods in their upward gaze and expectation, constant repetition fixes them in a constant passivity; not moving out any longer to grasp at the forms of the universe mind, life and senses will more and more be fixed in the memory, in the understanding, in the joy of the touch and vision of that transcendent glory which they have now resolved to make their sole object; to that only they will learn to respond and not to the touches of outward things. The silence which has fallen on them and which is now their foundation and status will become their knowledge of

the eternal silence which is Brahman; the response of their functioning to a supernal light, power, joy will become their knowledge of the eternal activity which is Brahman. Other status, other response and activity they will not know. The mind will know nothing but the Brahman, think of nothing but the Brahman, the Life will move to, embrace, enjoy nothing but the Brahman, the eye will see, the ear hear, the other senses sense nothing but the Brahman.

But is then a complete oblivion of the external the goal? Must the mind and senses recede inward and fall into an unending trance and the life be for ever stilled? This is possible, if the soul so wills, but it is not inevitable and indispensable. The Mind is cosmic, one in all the universe; so too are the Life, and the Sense, so too is Matter of the body; and when they exist in and for the Brahman only, they will not only know this but will sense, feel and live in that universal unity. Therefore to whatever thing they turn which to the individual sense and mind and life seems now external to them, there also it is not the mere form of things which they will know, think of, sense, embrace and enjoy, but always and only the Brahman. Moreover, the external will cease to exist for them, because nothing will be external but all things internal to us, even the whole world and all that is in it. For the limit of ego, the wall of individuality will break; the individual Mind will cease to know itself as individual, it will be conscious only of universal Mind one everywhere in which individuals are only knots of the one mentality; so the individual life will lose its sense of separateness and live only in and as the one life in which all individuals are simply whirls of the indivisible flood of Pranic activity; the very body and senses will be no longer conscious of a separated existence, but the real body which the man will feel himself to be physically will be the whole Earth and the whole universe and the whole indivisible form of things wheresoever existent, and the senses also will be converted to this principle of sensation so that even in what we call the external, the eye will see Brahman only in every sight, the ear will hear Brahman only in every sound, the inner and outer body will feel Brahman only in every touch and the touch itself as if internal in the greater body. The soul whose gods are thus converted to this supreme law and religion, will realise in the cosmos itself and in all its multiplicity the truth of the One besides whom there is no other or second. Moreover, becoming one with the formless and infinite, it will exceed the universe itself and see all the worlds not as external, not even as commensurate with itself, but as if within it.

And in fact, in the higher realisation it will not be Mind, Life, Sense of which even the mind, life and sense themselves will be originally aware, but rather that which constitutes them. By this process of constant visiting and divine touch and influence the Mind of the mind, that is to say, the superconscient Knowledge will take possession of the mental understanding and begin to turn all its vision and thinking into luminous stuff and vibration of light of the Supermind. So too the sense will be changed by the visitings of the Sense behind the sense and the whole sense-view of the universe itself will be altered so that the vital, mental and supramental will become visible to the senses with the physical only as their last, outermost and smallest result. So too the Life will become a superlife, a conscious movement of the infinite Conscious-Force; it will be impersonal, unlimited by any particular acts and enjoyment, unbound to their results, untroubled by the dualities or the touch of sin and suffering, grandiose, boundless, immortal. The material world itself will become for these gods a figure of the infinite, luminous and blissful Superconscient.

This will be the transfiguration of the gods, but what of the self? For we have seen that there are two fundamental entities, the gods and the self, and the self in us is greater than the cosmic Powers, its Godward destination more vital to our perfection and self-fulfilment than any transfiguration of these lesser deities. Therefore not only must the gods find their one Godhead and resolve themselves into it; that is to say, not only must the cosmic principles working in us resolve themselves into the working of the One, the Principle of all principles, so that they shall become only a unified existence and single action of That in spite of all play of differentiation, but also and with a more fundamental necessity the self in us which supports the action of the gods must find and enter into the one Self of all individual existences, the indivisible Spirit to whom all souls are no more than dark or luminous centres of its consciousness.

This the self of man, since it is the essentiality of a mental being, will do through the mind. In the gods the transfiguration is effected by the Superconscient itself visiting their substance and opening their vision with its flashes until it has transformed them; but the mind is capable of another action which is only apparently movement of mind, but really the movement of the self towards its own reality. The mind seems to go to That, to attain to it; it is lifted out of itself into something beyond and, although it falls back, still by the mind the will of knowledge in the mental thought continually and at last continuously remembers that into which it

has entered. On this the Self through the mind seizes and repeatedly dwells and so doing it is finally caught up into it and at last able to dwell securely in that transcendence. It transcends the mind, it transcends its own mental individualisation of the being, that which it now knows as itself; it ascends and takes foundation in the Self of all and in the status of self-joyous infinity which is the supreme manifestation of the Self. This is the transcendent immortality, this is the spiritual existence which the Upanishads declare to be the goal of man and by which we pass out of the mortal state into the heaven of the Spirit.

What then happens to the gods and the cosmos and all that the Lord develops in His being? Does it not all disappear? Is not the transfiguration of the gods even a mere secondary state through which we pass towards that culmination and which drops away from us as soon as we reach it? And with the disappearance of the gods and the cosmos does not the Lord too, the Master-Consciousness, disappear so that nothing is left but the one pure indeterminate Existence self-blissful in an eternal inaction and non-creation? Such was the conclusion of the later Vedanta in its extreme monistic form and such was the sense which it tried to read into all the Upanishads; but it must be recognised that in the language whether of the Isha or the Kena Upanishad there is absolutely nothing, not even a shade or a nuance pointing to it. If we want to find it there, we have to put it in by force; for the actual language used favours instead the conclusion of other Vedantic systems, which considered the goal to be the eternal joy of the soul in a Brahmaloaka or world of the Brahman in which it is one with the infinite existence and yet in a sense still a soul able to enjoy differentiation in the oneness.

In the next verse we have the culmination of the teaching of the Upanishad, the result of the great transcendence which it has been setting forth and afterwards the description of the immortality to which the souls of knowledge attain when they pass beyond the mortal status. It declares that Brahman is in its nature "That Delight," Tadvanam. "Vana" is the Vedic word for delight or delightful, and "Tadvanam" means therefore the transcendent Delight, the all-blissful Ananda of which the Taittiriya Upanishad speaks as the highest Brahman from which all existences are born, by which all existences live and increase and into which all existences arrive in their passing out of death and birth. It is as this transcendent Delight that the Brahman must be worshipped and sought. It is this beatitude therefore which is meant by the immortality of the

Upanishads. And what will be the result of knowing and possessing Brahman as the supreme Ananda? It is that towards the knower and possessor of the Brahman is directed the desire of all creatures. In other words, he becomes a centre of the divine Delight shedding it on all the world and attracting all to it as to a fountain of joy and love and self-fulfilment in the universe.

This is the culmination of the teaching of the Upanishad; there was a demand for the secret teaching that enters into the ultimate truth, for the “Upanishad”, and in response this doctrine has been given. It has been uttered, the Upanishad of the Brahman, the hidden ultimate truth of the supreme Existence; its beginning was the search for the Lord, Master of mind, life, speech and senses in whom is the absolute of mind, the absolute of life, the absolute of speech and senses and its close is the finding of Him as the transcendent Beatitude and the elevation of the soul that finds and possesses it into a living centre of that Delight towards which all creatures in the universe shall turn as to a fountain of its ecstasies. ***

The Upanishad closes with two verses which seem to review and characterise the whole work in the manner of the ancient writings when they have drawn to their close. This Upanishad or gospel of the inmost Truth of things has for its foundation, it is said, the practice of self-mastery, action and the subdual of the sense-life to the power of the Spirit. In other words, life and works are to be used as a means of arriving out of the state of subjection proper to the soul in the ignorance into a state of mastery which brings it nearer to the absolute self-mastery and all-mastery of the supreme Soul seated in the knowledge. The Vedas, that is to say, the utterances of the inspired seers and the truths they hold, are described as all the limbs of the Upanishad; in other words, all the convergent lines and aspects, all the necessary elements of this great practice, this profound psychological self-training and spiritual aspiration are set forth in these great Scriptures, channels of supreme knowledge and indicators of a supreme discipline. Truth is its home; and this Truth is not merely intellectual verity, — for that is not the sense of the word in the Vedic writings, — but man’s ultimate human state of true being, true consciousness, right knowledge, right works, right joy of existence, all indeed that is contrary to the falsehood of egoism and ignorance. It is by these means, by using works and self-discipline for mastery of oneself and for the generation of spiritual energy, by fathoming in all its parts the knowledge and repeating the high example of the great Vedic seers and by

living in the Truth that one becomes capable of the great ascent which the Upanishad opens to us.

The goal of the ascent is the world of the true and vast existence of which the Veda speaks as the Truth that is the final goal and home of man. It is described here as the greater infinite heavenly world, (Swargaloka, Swarloka of the Veda), which is not the lesser Swarga of the Puranas or the lesser Brahmaloaka of the Mundaka Upanishad, its world of the sun's rays to which the soul arrives by works of virtue and piety, but falls from them by the exhaustion of their merit; it is the higher Swarga or Brahman-world of the Katha which is beyond the dual symbols of birth and death, the higher Brahman-worlds of the Mundaka which the soul enters by knowledge and renunciation. It is therefore a state not belonging to the Ignorance, but to Knowledge. It is, in fact, the infinite existence and beatitude of the soul in the being of the all-blissful existence; it is too the higher status, the light of the Mind beyond the mind, the joy and eternal mastery of the Life beyond the life, the riches of the Sense beyond the senses. And the soul finds in it not only its own largeness but finds too and possesses the infinity of the One and it has firm foundation in that immortal state because there a supreme Silence and eternal Peace are the secure foundation of eternal Knowledge and absolute Joy.

A Last Word

We have now completed our review of this Upanishad; we have considered minutely the bearings of its successive utterances and striven to make as precise as we can to the intelligence the sense of the puissant phrases in which it gives us its leading clues to that which can never be entirely expressed by human speech. We have some idea of what it means by that Brahman, by the Mind of mind, the Life of life, the Sense of sense, the Speech of speech, by the opposition of ourselves and the gods, by the Unknowable who is yet not utterly unknowable to us, by the transcendence of the mortal state and the conquest of immortality.

Fundamentally its teaching reposes on the assertion of three states of existence, the human and mortal, the Brahman-consciousness which is the absolute of our relativities, and the utter Absolute which is unknowable. The first is in a sense a false status of misrepresentation because it is a continual term of apparent opposites and balancings where the truth of things is a secret unity; we have here a bright or positive figure and a dark or negative figure and both are figures, neither the Truth; still in that we now live and through that we have to move to the Beyond. The second is the Lord of all this dual action who is beyond it; He is the truth of Brahman and not in any way a falsehood or misrepresentation, but the truth of it as attained by us in our eternal supramental being; in Him are the absolutes of all that here we experience in partial figures. The Unknowable is beyond our grasp because though it is the same Reality, yet it exceeds even our highest term of eternal being and is beyond Existence and Non-existence; it is therefore to the Brahman, the Lord who has a relation to what we are that we must direct our search if we would attain beyond what temporarily seems to what eternally is.

The attainment of the Brahman is our escape from the mortal status into Immortality, by which we understand not the survival of death, but the finding of our true self of eternal being and bliss beyond the dual symbols of birth and death. By immortality we mean the absolute life of the soul as opposed to the transient and mutable life in the body which it assumes by birth and death and rebirth and superior also to its life as the mere mental being who dwells in the world subjected helplessly to this law of death and

birth or seems at least by his ignorance to be subjected to this and to other laws of the lower Nature. To know and possess its true nature, free, absolute, master of itself and its embodiments is the soul's means of transcendence, and to know and possess this is to know and possess the Brahman. It is also to rise out of mortal world into immortal world, out of world of bondage into world of largeness, out of finite world into infinite world. It is to ascend out of earthly joy and sorrow into a transcendent Beatitude.

This must be done by the abandonment of our attachment to the figure of things in the mortal world. We must put from us its death and dualities if we would compass the unity and immortality. Therefore it follows that we must cease to make the goods of this world or even its right, light and beauty our object of pursuit; we must go beyond these to a supreme Good, a transcendent Truth, Light and Beauty in which the opposite figures of what we call evil disappear. But still, being in this world, it is only through something in this world itself that we can transcend it; it is through its figures that we must find the absolute. Therefore, we scrutinise them and perceive that there are first these forms of mind, life, speech and sense, all of them figures and imperfect suggestions, and then behind them the cosmic principles through which the One acts. It is to these cosmic principles that we must proceed and turn them from their ordinary aim and movement in the world to find their own supreme aim and absolute movement in their own one Godhead, the Lord, the Brahman; they must be drawn to leave the workings of ordinary mind and find the superconscious Mind, to leave the workings of ordinary speech and sense and find the supramental Sense and original Word, to leave the apparent workings of mundane Life and find the transcendent Life.

Besides the gods, there is our self, the spirit within who supports all this action of the gods. Our spirit too must turn from its absorption in its figure of itself as it sees it involved in the movement of individual life, mind, body and subject to it and must direct its gaze upward to its own supreme Self who is beyond all this movement and master of it all. Therefore the mind must indeed become passive to the divine Mind, the sense to the divine Sense, the life to the divine Life and by receptivity to constant touches and visitings of the highest be transfigured into a reflection of these transcendences; but also the individual self must through the mind's aspiration upwards, through upliftings of itself beyond, through constant memory of the supreme Reality in which during these

divine moments it has lived, ascend finally into that Bliss and Power and Light.

But this will not necessarily mean the immersion into an all-oblivious Being eternally absorbed in His own inactive self-existence. For the mind, sense, life going beyond their individual formations find that they are only one centre of the sole Mind, Life, Form of things and therefore they find Brahman in that also and not only in an individual transcendence; they bring down the vision of the superconscient into that also and not only into their own individual workings. The mind of the individual escapes from its limits and becomes the one universal mind, his life the one universal life, his bodily sense the sense of the whole universe and even more as his own indivisible Brahman-body. He perceives the universe in himself and he perceives also his self in all existences and knows it to be the one, the omnipresent, the single-multiple all-inhabiting Lord and Reality. Without this realisation he has not fulfilled the conditions of immortality. Therefore it is said that what the sages seek is to distinguish and see the Brahman in all existences; by that discovery, realisation and possession of Him everywhere and in all they attain to their immortal existence.

Still although the victory of the gods, that is to say, the progressive perfection of the mind, life, body in the positive terms of good, right, joy, knowledge, power is recognised as a victory of the Brahman and the necessity of using life and human works in the world as a means of preparation and self-mastery is admitted, yet a final passing away into the infinite heavenly world or status of the Brahman-consciousness is held out as the goal. And this would seem to imply a rejection of the life of the cosmos. Well then may we ask, we the modern humanity more and more conscious of the inner warning of that which created us, be it Nature or God, that there is a work for the race, a divine purpose in its creation which exceeds the salvation of the individual soul, because the universal is as real or even more real than the individual, we who feel more and more, in the language of the Koran, that the Lord did not create heaven and earth in a jest, that Brahman did not begin dreaming this world-dream in a moment of aberration and delirium, — well may we ask whether this gospel of individual salvation is all the message even of this purer, earlier, more catholic Vedanta. If so, then Vedanta at its best is a gospel for the saint, the ascetic, the monk, the solitary, but it has not a message which the widening consciousness of the world can joyfully accept as the word for which it was waiting. For there is evidently something vital that has

escaped it, a profound word of the riddle of existence from which it has turned its eyes or which it was unable or thought it not worth while to solve.

Now certainly there is an emphasis in the Upanishads increasing steadily as time goes on into an over-emphasis, on the salvation of the individual, on his rejection of the lower cosmic life. This note increases in them as they become later in date, it swells afterwards into the rejection of all cosmic life whatever and that becomes finally in later Hinduism almost the one dominant and all-challenging cry. It does not exist in the earlier Vedic revelation where individual salvation is regarded as a means towards a great cosmic victory, the eventual conquest of heaven and earth by the superconscious Truth and Bliss and those who have achieved the victory in the past are the conscious helpers of their yet battling posterity. If this earlier note is missing in the Upanishads, then, — for great as are these Scriptures, luminous, profound, sublime in their unsurpassed truth, beauty and power, yet it is only the ignorant soul that will make itself the slave of a book, — then in using them as an aid to knowledge we must insistently call back that earlier missing note, we must seek elsewhere a solution for the word of the riddle that has been ignored. The Upanishad alone of extant scriptures gives us without veil or stinting, with plenitude and a noble catholicity the truth of the Brahman; its aid to humanity is therefore indispensable. Only, where anything essential is missing, we must go beyond the Upanishads to seek it, — as for instance when we add to its emphasis on divine knowledge the indispensable ardent emphasis of the later teachings upon divine love and the high emphasis of the Veda upon divine works.

The Vedic gospel of a supreme victory in heaven and on earth for the divine in man, the Christian gospel of a kingdom of God and divine city upon earth, the Puranic idea of progressing Avatars ending in the kingdom of the perfect and the restoration of the Golden Age, not only contain behind their forms a profound truth, but they are necessary to the religious sense in mankind. Without it the teaching of the vanity of human life and of a passionate fleeing and renunciation can only be powerful in passing epochs or else on the few strong souls in each age that are really capable of these things. The rest of humanity will either reject the creed which makes that its foundation or ignore it in practice while professing it in precept or else must sink under the weight of its own impotence and the sense of the illusion of life or of the curse of God upon the world as

mediaeval Christendom sank into ignorance and obscurantism or later India into stagnant torpor and the pettiness of a life of aimless egoism. The promise for the individual is well, but the promise for the race is also needed. Our father Heaven must remain bright with the hope of deliverance, but also our mother Earth must not feel herself for ever accursed.

It was necessary at one time to insist even exclusively on the idea of individual salvation so that the sense of a Beyond might be driven into man's mentality, as it was necessary at one time to insist on a heaven of joys for the virtuous and pious so that man might be drawn by that shining bait towards the practice of religion and the suppression of his unbridled animality. But as the lures of earth have to be conquered, so also have the lures of heaven. The lure of a pleasant Paradise of the rewards of virtue has been rejected by man; the Upanishads belittled it ages ago in India and it is now no longer dominant in the mind of the people; the similar lure in popular Christianity and popular Islam has no meaning for the conscience of modern humanity. The lure of a release from birth and death and withdrawal from the cosmic labour must also be rejected, as it was rejected by Mahayanist Buddhism which held compassion and helpfulness to be greater than Nirvana. As the virtues we practise must be done without demand of earthly or heavenly reward, so the salvation we seek must be purely internal and impersonal; it must be the release from egoism, the union with the Divine, the realisation of our universality as well as our transcendence, and no salvation should be valued which takes us away from the love of God in his manifestation and the help we can give to the world. If need be, it must be taught for a time, "Better this hell with our other suffering selves than a solitary salvation."

Fortunately, there is no need to go to such lengths and deny one side of the truth in order to establish another. The Upanishad itself suggests the door of escape from any over-emphasis in its own statement of the truth. For the man who knows and possesses the supreme Brahman as the transcendent Beatitude becomes a centre of that delight to which all his fellows shall come, a well from which they can draw the divine waters. Here is the clue that we need. The connection with the universe is preserved for the one reason which supremely justifies that connection; it must subsist not from the desire of personal earthly joy, as with those who are still bound, but for help to all creatures. Two then are the objects of the high-reaching soul, to attain the Supreme and to be for ever for the good of

all the world, — even as Brahman Himself; whether here or elsewhere, does not essentially matter. Still where the struggle is thickest, there should be the hero of the spirit, that is surely the highest choice of the son of Immortality; the earth calls most, because it has most need of him, to the soul that has become one with the universe.

And the nature of the highest good that can be done is also indicated, — though other lower forms of help are not therefore excluded. To assist in the lesser victories of the gods which must prepare the supreme victory of the Brahman may well be and must be in some way or other a part of our task; but the greatest helpfulness of all is this, to be a human centre of the Light, the Glory, the Bliss, the Strength, the Knowledge of the Divine Existence, one through whom it shall communicate itself lavishly to other men and attract by its magnet of delight their souls to that which is the Highest.

MUNDAKA UPANISHAD

First Mundaka

CHAPTER I

*brahmā devānām prathamah sambabhūva viśvasya kartā bhuvanasya
goptā |
sa brahmavidyām sarvavidyāpratiṣṭhām atharvāya jyeṣṭhaputrāya
prāha ||*

1. Brahma first of the Gods was born, the creator of all, the world's protector, he to Atharvan, his eldest son, declared the God-knowledge in which all sciences have their foundation.

*atharvaṇe yām pravadeta brahmātharvā tām purovācāngire
brahmavidyām |
sa bhāradvājāya satyavahāya prāha bhāradvājo 'ngirase parāvarām ||*

2. The God-knowledge by Brahma declared to Atharvan, Atharvan of old declared to Angir; he to Satyavaha the Bharadvaja told it, the Bharadvaja to Angiras, both the higher and the lower knowledge.

*śaunako ha vai mahāśālo 'ngirasam vidhivadupasannah papraccha |
kasmin nu bhagavo vijñāte sarvamidaṁ vijñātaṁ bhavatīti ||*

3. Shaunaka, the great house-lord, came to Angiras in the due way of the disciple and asked of him, "Lord, by knowing what does all this that is become known? "

*tasmai sa hovāca — dve vidye veditavye iti ha sma yad brahmavido
vadanti
parā caivāparā ca ||*

4. To him thus spoke Angiras: Twofold is the knowledge that must be

known of which the knowers of the Brahman tell, the higher and the lower knowledge.

*tatrāparā rgvedo yajurvedaḥ sāmavedo 'tharvavedaḥ śikṣā kalpo
vyākaraṇam niruktaṁ chando jyotiṣamiti |
atha parā yayā tadakṣaramadhigamyate ||*

5. Of which the lower, the Rig-veda and the Yajur-veda, and the Sama-veda and the Atharva-veda, chanting, ritual, grammar, etymological interpretation, and prosody and astronomy. And then the higher by which is known the Immutable.

*yat tadadreśyamagrāhyamagotramavarṇamacakṣuḥśrotram
tadapāñipādam |
nityam vibhum sarvagataṁ susūkṣmam tadavyayam yad bhūtayoniṁ
paripāśyanti dhīrāḥ ||*

6. That the invisible, that the unseizable, without connections, without hue, without eye or ear, that which is without hands or feet, eternal, pervading, which is in all things and impalpable, that which is Imperishable, that which is the womb of creatures sages behold everywhere.

*yathorṇanābhīḥ sṛjate grhṇate ca yathā pṛthivyāmośadhayaḥ
sambhavanti |
yathā sataḥ puruṣāt keśalomāni tathākṣarāt sambhavatīha viśvam ||*

7. As the spider puts out and gathers in, as herbs spring up upon the earth, as hair of head and body grow from a living man, so here all is born from the Immutable.

*tapasā cīyate brahma tato 'nnamabhijāyate |
annāt prāṇo manaḥ satyam lokāḥ karmasu cāmṛtam ||*

8. Brahman grows by his energy at work, and then from Him is Matter born, and out of Matter life, and mind and truth and the worlds, and in works immortality.

*yaḥ sarvajñaḥ sarvavid yasya jñānamayaṁ tapaḥ |
tasmādetad brahma nāma rūpamannaṁ ca jāyate ||*

9. He who is the Omniscient, the all-wise. He whose energy is all made of knowledge, from Him is born this that is Brahman here, this Name and Form and Matter.

CHAPTER II

*tadetat satyaṁ mantreṣu karmāṇi kavayo yānyapaśyaṁstāni tretāyām
bahudhā santatāni |
tānyācaratha niyataṁ satyakāmā eṣa vaḥ panthāḥ sukṛtasya loke ||*

1. This is That, the Truth of things: works which the sages beheld in the Mantras⁶⁸ were in the Treta⁶⁹ manifoldly extended. Works do ye perform religiously with one passion for the Truth; this is your road to the heaven of good deeds.

*yadā lelāyate hyarciḥ samiddhe havyavāhane |
tadājyabhāgāvantareṇāhutīḥ pratipādayecchradhayāhutam ||*

2. When the fire of the sacrifice is kindled and the flame sways and quivers, then between the double pourings of butter cast therein with faith thy offerings.

*yasyāgnihotramadarśamapaurṇamāsamacāturmāsyamanāgrayaṇamat
ithivarjitam ca |
ahutamavaiśvadevamavidhinā hutamāsaptamāmstasya lokān hinasti ||*

[68] The inspired verses of the Veda.

[69] The second of the four ages.

3. For he whose altar-fires are empty of the new-moon offering and the full-moon offering, and the offering of the rains and the offering of the first fruits, or unfed, or fed without right ritual, or without guests or without the dues to the Vishwa-Devas, destroys his hope of all the seven worlds.

*kālī karālī ca manojavā ca sulohitā yā ca sudhūmravarṇā |
sphulinginī viśvarucī ca devī lelāyamānā iti sapta jihvāḥ ||*

4. Kali, the black, Karali, the terrible, Manojava, thought-swift, Sulohita, blood-red, Sudhumravarna, smoke-hued, Sphulingini, scattering sparks, Vishwaruchi, the all-beautiful these are the seven swaying tongues of the fire.

*eteṣu yaścarate bhrājamāneṣu yathākālaṁ cāhutayo hyādadāyan |
taṁ nayantyetāḥ sūryasya raśmayo yatra devānāṁ patireko 'dhivāsaḥ ||*

5. He who in these when they are blazing bright performs the rites, in their due season, him his fires of sacrifice take and they lead him, these rays of the sun, there where the Over-lord of the Gods is the Inhabitant on high.

*ehyehīti tamāhutayaḥ suvarcasāḥ sūryasya raśmibhiryajamānaṁ
vahanti |
priyām vācamabhivadantyo 'rcayantya eṣa vaḥ puṇyaḥ sukṛto
brahmalokaḥ ||*

6. "Come with us", "Come with us", they cry to him, these luminous fires of sacrifice and they bear him by the rays of the sun speaking to him pleasant words of sweetness, doing him homage, "This is your holy world of Brahman and the heaven of your righteousness."

*plavā hyete adṛāhā yajñarūpā aṣṭādaśoktamavaram yeṣu karma |
etacchreyo ye 'bhinandanti mūāhā jarāmṛtyuṁ te punarevāpi yanti ||*

7. But frail are the ships of sacrifice, frail these forms of sacrifice, all the eighteen of them, in which are declared the lower works; fools are they who hail them as the highest good and they come yet again to this world of age and death.

*avidyāyāmantare vartamānāḥ svayaṁ dhīrāḥ pañâitam manyamānāḥ |
jaṅghanyamānāḥ pariyanti mūâhā andhenaiva nīyamānā yathāndhāḥ ||*

8. They who dwell shut within the ignorance and they hold themselves for learned men thinking, "We, even we are the wise and the sages" — fools are they and they wander around beaten and stumbling like blind men led by the blind.

*avidyāyaṁ bahudhā vartamānā vayaṁ
kṛtārthā ityabhimanyanti bālāḥ |
yat karmino na pravedayanti rāgāt tenāturāḥ kṣīṅgalokāścyavante ||*

9. They dwell in many bonds of the Ignorance, children thinking, "We have achieved our aim of Paradise"; for when the men of works are held by their affections, and arrive not at the Knowledge, then they are overtaken by anguish, then their Paradise wastes by enjoying and they fall from their heavens.

*iṣṭāpūrtam manyamānā variṣṭham nānyacchreyo vedayante
pramūâhāḥ |
nākasya pṛṣṭhe te sukṛte 'nubhūtvemaṁ lokam hīnataram vā viśanti ||*

10. Minds bewildered who hold the oblation offered and the well dug for the greatest righteousness and know not any other highest good, on the back of heaven they enjoy the world won by their righteousness and enter again this or even a lower world.

*tapahśraddhe ye hyupavasantyarāṇye sântā vidvāṁso bhaikṣyacaryām
carantaḥ |*

sūryadvāreṇa te virajāḥ prayānti yatrāmṛtaḥ sa puruṣo hyavyayātmā ||

11. But they who in the forest follow after faith and self-discipline, calm and full of knowledge, living upon alms, cast from them the dust of their passions, and through the gate of the Sun they pass on there where is the Immortal, the Spirit, the Self undecaying and imperishable.

*parīkṣya lokān karmacitān brāhmaṇo nirvedamāyānnāstyakṛtaḥ
kṛtena |*

*tadvijñānārthaṁ sa gurumevābhigacchet samitpāṇiḥ śrotriyam
brahmaniṣṭham ||*

12. The seeker of the Brahman, having put to the test the worlds piled up by works, arrives at world-distaste, for⁷⁰ not by work done is reached He who is Uncreated. For the knowledge of That, let him approach, fuel in hand, a Guru, one who is learned in the Veda and is devoted to contemplation of the Brahman.

*tasmai sa vidvānupasannāya samyak praśāntacittāya śamānvitāya |
yenākṣaram puruṣam veda satyam provāca tām tattvato
brahmavidyām ||*

13. To him because he has taken entire refuge with him, with a heart tranquillised and a spirit at peace, that man of knowledge declares in its principles the science of the Brahman by which one comes to know the Immutable Spirit, the True and Real.

[70] Or, He, the uncreated, lives not by that which is made. Literally, not by the made (or, by that which is done) the Unmade (He who is uncreated).

Second Mundaka

CHAPTER I

*tadetat satyaṃ yathā sudīptāt pāvakād
visphuliṅgāḥ sahasraśaḥ prabhavante sarūpāḥ |
tathākṣarād vividhāḥ somya bhāvāḥ
prajāyante tatra caivāpi yanti ||*

1. This is That, the Truth of things: as from one high-kindled fire thousands of different sparks are born and all have the same form of fire, so, O fair son, from the immutable manifold becomings are born and even into that they depart.

*divyo hyamūrtaḥ puruṣaḥ sa bāhyābhyantaro hyajaḥ |
aprāṇo hyamanāḥ śubhro hyakṣarāt parataḥ paraḥ ||*

2. He, the divine, the formless Spirit, even He is the outward and the inward and he the Unborn; He is beyond life, beyond mind, luminous. Supreme beyond the immutable.

*etasmājjāyate prāṇo manaḥ sarvendriyāṇi ca |
kham vāyurjyotirāpaḥ pṛthivī viśvasya dhāriṇī ||*

3. Life and mind and the senses are born from Him and the sky, and the wind, and light, and the waters and earth upholding all that is.

*agnirmūrdhā cakṣuṣī candrasūryau diśaḥ śrotre vāg vivṛtāśca vedāḥ |
vāyuh prāṇo hṛdayaṃ viśvamasya padbhyāṃ pṛthivī hyeṣa
sarvabhūtāntarātmā ||*

4. Fire is the head of Him and His eyes are the Sun and Moon, the quarters His organs of hearing and the revealed Vedas are his voice, air is His

breath, the universe is His heart, Earth lies at His feet. He is the inner Self in all beings.

*tasmādagñiḥ samidho yasya sūryaḥ somāt parjanya oṣadhayaḥ
pṛthivyām |
pumān retaḥ siñcati yoṣitāyām bahvīḥ prajāḥ puruṣāt samprasūtāḥ ||*

5. From Him is fire, of which the Sun is the fuel, then rain from the Soma, herbs upon the earth, and the male casts his seed into woman: thus are these many peoples born from the Spirit.

*tasmādṛcaḥ sāma yajūmṣi dīkṣā yajñāśca sarve kratavo dakṣiṇāśca |
samvatsaraśca yajamānaśca lokāḥ somo yatra pavate yatra sūryaḥ ||*

6. From Him are the hymns of the Rig-veda, the Sama and the Yajur, initiation, and all sacrifices and works of sacrifice, and dues given, the year and the giver of the sacrifice and the worlds, on which the moon shines and the sun.

*tasmācca devā bahudhā samprasūtāḥ sādhyā manuṣyāḥ paśavo
vayāṁsi |
prāṇāpānau vrīhiyavau tapaśca śraddhā satyaṁ brahmacaryam
vidhiśca ||*

7. And from Him have issued many gods, and demi-gods and men and beasts and birds, the main breath and downward breath, and rice and barley, and askesis and faith and Truth, and chastity and rule of right practice.

*sapta prāṇāḥ prabhavanti tasmāt saptārçiṣaḥ samidhaḥ sapta homāḥ |
sapta ime lokā yeṣu caranti prāṇā guhāśayā nihitāḥ sapta sapta ||*

8. The seven breaths are born from Him and the seven lights and kinds of fuel and the seven oblations and these seven worlds in which move the

life-breaths set within with the secret heart for their dwelling-place,
seven and seven.

*ataḥ samudrā girayaśca sarve'smāt syandante sindhavaḥ sarvarūpāḥ |
ataśca sarvā ośadhayo rasaśca yenaiṣa bhūtaistiṣṭhate hyantarātmā ||*

9. From Him are the oceans and all these mountains and from Him flow rivers of all forms, and from Him are all plants, and sensible delight which makes the soul to abide with the material elements.

*puruṣa evedaṁ viśvaṁ karma tapo brahma parāmṛtam |
etad yo veda nihitaṁ guhāyām so'vidyāgranthim vikiratītha somya ||*

10. The Spirit is all this universe; he is works and askesis and the Brahman, supreme and immortal. O fair son, he who knows this hidden in the secret heart, scatters even here in this world the knot of the Ignorance.

CHAPTER TWO

*āviḥ samnihitaṁ guhācaram nāma mahat padamatraitat samarpitam |
ejat prāṇannimiśacca yadetajjānatha sadasadvareṇyam param
vijñānād yad variṣṭhaṁ prajānām ||*

1. Manifested, it is here set close within, moving in the secret heart, this is the mighty foundation and into it is consigned all that moves and breathes and sees. This that is that great foundation here, know, as the Is and Is-not, the supremely desirable, greatest and the Most High, beyond the knowledge of creatures.

*yadarcimad yadaṇubhyo 'ṇu ca
yasmimllokā nihitā lokinaśca |
tadetadaḥsaram brahma sa prāṇastadu vānmanah
tadetat satyam tadamṛtam tad veddhavyam somya viddhi ||*

2. That which is the Luminous, that which is smaller than the atoms, that in which are set the worlds and their peoples, That is This, — it is Brahman immutable: life is That, it is speech and mind. That is This, the True and Real, it is That which is immortal: it is into That that thou must pierce, O fair son, into That penetrate.

*dhanurgrhītvaupaniṣadam mahāstram śaram hyupāsānīsitam
sandhayīta |*

āyamyā tadbhāvagatena cetasā lakṣyam tadevākṣaram somya viddhi ||

3. Take up the bow of the Upanishad, that mighty weapon, set to it an arrow sharpened by adoration, draw the bow with a heart wholly devoted to the contemplation of That, and O fair son, penetrate into That as thy target, even into the Immutable.

*praṇavo dhanuḥ śaro hyātmā brahma tallakṣyamucyate |
apramattena veddhavyam śaravat tanmayo bhavet ||*

4. OM is the bow and the soul is the arrow, and That, even the Brahman, is spoken of as the target. That must be pierced with an unfaltering aim; one must be absorbed into That as an arrow is lost in its target.

*yasmin dyauḥ pṛthivī cāntarikṣamotam manaḥ
saha prāṇaiśca sarvaiḥ |*

tamevaikaṁ jānatha ātmānamanyā vāco vimuñcathāmṛtasyaiṣa setuḥ ||

5. He in whom are inwoven heaven and earth and the mid-region, and mind with all the life-currents, Him know to be the one Self; other words put away from you: this is the bridge to immortality.

arā iva rathanābhau samhatā yatra nāāyaḥ

sa eṣo'ntaścarate bahudhā jāyamānaḥ |

omityevam dhyāyatha ātmānam

svasti vaḥ pārāya tamasaḥ parastāt ||

6. Where the nerves are brought close together like the spokes in the nave of a chariot-wheel, this is He that moves within, — there is He manifoldly born. Meditate on the Self as OM and happy be your passage to the other shore beyond the darkness.

*yaḥ sarvajñaḥ sarvavid yasyaiṣa mahimā bhuvī |
divye brahmapure hyeṣa vyomnyātmā pratiṣṭhitaḥ ||*

7. The Omniscient, the All-wise, whose is this might and majesty upon the earth, is this self enthroned in the Divine city of the Brahman, in his ethereal heaven.

*manomayaḥ prāṇasarīranetā
pratiṣṭhito 'nne hṛdayam sannidhāya |
tad vijñānena paripaśyanti dhīrā
ānandarūpamamṛtaṁ yad vibhāti ||*

8. A mental being, leader of the life and the body, has set a heart in matter, in matter he has taken his firm foundation. By its knowing the wise see everywhere around them That which shines in its effulgence, a shape of Bliss and Immortal.

*bhidyate hṛdayagranthiśchidyante sarvasamśayāḥ |
kṣīyante cāsya karmāṇi tasmin drṣṭe parāvare ||*

9. The knot of the heart strings is rent, cut away are all doubts, and a man's works are spent and perish, when is seen That which is at once the being below and the Supreme.

*hiraṇmaye pare kośe virajam brahma niṣkalam |
tacchubhram jyotiṣām jyotistad yadātmavidō viduḥ ||*

10. In a supreme golden sheath the Brahman lies, stainless, without parts. A Splendour is That, It is the Light of Lights, It is That which the self-knowers know.

*na tatra sūryo bhāti na candratāraḥ
nemā vidyuto bhānti kuto 'yamagniḥ |
tameva bhāntamanubhāti sarvaṃ
tasya bhāsā sarvamideva vibhāti ||*

11. There the sun shines not and the moon has no splendour and the stars are blind; there these lightnings flash not, how then shall burn this earthly fire? All that shines is but the shadow of his shining; all this universe is effulgent with his light.

*brahmaivedamamṛtaṃ purastād brahma paścād brahma
dakṣiṇataścottareṇa |
adhaścordhvaṃ ca prasṛtaṃ brahmaivedaṃ viśvamideva variṣṭham ||*

12. All this is Brahman immortal, naught else; Brahman is in front of us. Brahman behind us, and to the south of us and to the north of us⁷¹ and below us and above us; it stretches everywhere. All this is Brahman alone, all this magnificent universe.

[71] Or, to the right and the left of us

Third Mundaka

CHAPTER I

*dvā suparṇā sayujā sakhāyā samānam vṛkṣam pariśasvajāte |
tayoranyaḥ pippalaṁ svādvattyanaśnannanyo abhicākaśīti ||*

1. Two birds, beautiful of wing, close companions, cling to one common tree: of the two one eats the sweet fruit of the tree, the other eats not but watches his fellow.

*samāne vṛkṣe puruṣo nimagno 'nīsayā śocati muhyamānaḥ |
juṣṭam yadā paśyatyanyamīśamasya mahimānamiti vītaśokaḥ ||*

2. The soul is the bird that sits immersed on the one common tree; but because he is not lord he is bewildered and has sorrow. But when he sees that other who is the Lord and beloved, he knows that all is His greatness and his sorrow passes away from him.

*yadā paśyaḥ paśyate rukmavarṇam kartāramīśam puruṣam
brahmayonim |
tadā vidvān punyapāpe vidhūya nirañjanaḥ paramam sāmyamupaiti ||*

3. When, a seer, he sees the Golden-hued, the maker, the Lord, the Spirit who is the source of Brahman⁷², then he becomes the knower and shakes from his wings sin and virtue; pure of all stain he reaches the supreme identity.⁷³

*prāṇo hyeṣa yaḥ sarvabhūtairvibhāti
vijānan vidvān bhavate nātivādī |*

[72] Or, whose source is Brahman; Shankara admits the other meaning as an alternative, but explains it as 'the source of the lower Brahman'.

[73] Or, pure of all staining tinge he reaches to a supreme equality.

ātmakrīāa ātmaratiḥ
kriyāvāneṣa brahmavidām variṣṭhaḥ ॥

4. This is the life in things that shines manifested by all these beings; a man of knowledge coming wholly to know this, draws back from creeds and too much disputings. In the Self his delight, at play in the Self, doing works, — the best is he among the knowers of the Eternal.

satyena labhyastapasā hyeṣa ātmā
samyagjñānena brahmacaryeṇa nityam |
antaḥśarīre jyotirmayo hi śubhro
yam paśyanti yatayaḥ kṣṇadoṣāḥ ॥

5. The Self can always be won by truth, by self-discipline, by integral knowledge, by a life of purity, — this Self that is in the inner body, radiant, made all of light whom, by the perishing of their blemishes, the doers of askesis behold.

satyameva jayate nānṛtaṁ satyena panthā vitato devayānaḥ |
yenākramantṛṣayo hyāptakāmā yatra tat satyasya paramam
nidhānam ॥

6. It is Truth that conquers and not falsehood; by Truth was stretched out the path of the journey of the gods, by which the sages winning their desire ascend there where Truth has its Supreme abode.

br̥hacca tad divyamacintyarūpaṁ sūkṣmācca tat sūkṣmataram vibhāti |
dūrāt sudūre tadihāntike ca paśyatsvihaiva nihitam guhāyām ॥

7. Vast is That, divine, its form unthinkable; it shines out subtler than the subtle,⁷⁴ very far and farther than farness, it is here close to us, for those who have vision it is even here in this world; it is here, hidden in the secret heart.

[74] Or, minuter than the minute,

*na cakṣuṣā gr̥hyate nāpi vācā nānyairdevaistapasā karmaṇā vā |
jñānaprasādena viśuddhasattvastatastu taṁ paśyate niṣkalam
dhyāyamānaḥ ||*

8. Eye cannot seize, speech cannot grasp Him, nor these other godheads; not by austerity can he be held nor by works: only when the inner being is purified by a glad serenity of knowledge, then indeed, meditating, one beholds the Spirit indivisible.

*eṣo 'ṅurātmā cetasā veditavyo
yasmin prāṇaḥ pañcadhā samviveśa |
prāṇaiścittam sarvamotaṁ prajānām
yasmin viśuddhe vibhavatyēṣa ātmā ||*

9. This self is subtle and has to be known by a thought-mind into which the life-force has made its fivefold entry: all the conscious heart of creatures is shot through and inwoven with the currents of the life-force and only when it is purified can this Self manifest its power.⁷⁵

*yaṁ yaṁ lokaṁ manasā samvibhāti
viśuddhasattvaḥ kāmāyate yāṁśca kāmān |
taṁ taṁ lokaṁ jayate tāmśca kāmān-
stasmādātmajñam hyarcayed bhūtikāmaḥ ||*

10. Whatever world the man whose inner being is purified sheds the light of his mind upon, and whatsoever desires he cherishes, that world he takes by conquest, and those desires. Then, let whosoever seeks for success and well-being approach with homage a self-knower.

CHAPTER II

sa vedaitat paramam brahma dhāma yatra viśvaṁ nihitam bhāti

[75] The verb *vibhavati* seems here to have a complex sense and to mean, 'to manifest its full power and pervading presence'.

śubhram |

upāsate puruṣam ye hyakāmāste śukrametadativartanti dhīrāḥ ||

1. He knows this supreme Brahman as the highest abiding place in which shines out, inset, the radiant world. The wise who are without desire and worship the Spirit pass beyond this sperm⁷⁶ .

*kāmān yaḥ kāmāyate manyamānaḥ sa kāmabhirjāyate tatra tatra |
paryāptakāmasya kṛtātmanastu ihaiva sarve pravilīyanti kāmāḥ ||*

2. He who cherishes desires and his mind dwells with his longings, is by his desires born again wherever they lead him, but the man who has won all his desire⁷⁷ and has found his soul, for him even here, in this world vanish away all desires.

*nāyamātmā pravacanena labhyo na medhayā na bahunā śrutena |
yamevaiṣa vṛṇute tena labhyastasyaiṣa ātmā vivṛṇute tanuṁ svām ||*

3. This Self is not won by exegesis, nor by brain-power, nor by much learning of Scripture. Only by him whom It chooses can it be won; to him this Self unveils its own body.

*nāyamātmā balahīnena labhyo na ca pramādāt tapaso vāpyaliṅgāt |
etairupāyairyatate yastu vidvāṁstasyaiṣa ātmā viśate brahmadhāma ||*

4. This Self cannot be won by any who is without strength, nor with error in the seeking, nor by an askesis without the true mark: but when a man of knowledge strives by these means his Self enters into Brahman, his abiding place.

[76] Shankara takes it so in the sense of semen virile, which is the cause of birth into the cosmos. But it is possible that it means rather 'pass beyond this brilliant universe', the radiant world which has just been spoken of, to the greater Light which is its abiding place and source, the supreme Brahman.

[77] Or, finished with desires

samprāpyainamṛṣayo jñānatṛptāḥ kṛtātmāno vītarāgāḥ praśāntāḥ |
te sarvagaṃ sarvataḥ prāpya dhīrā yuktātmānaḥ sarvamevāviśanti ||

5. Attaining to him, seers glad with fullness of knowledge, perfected in the self, all passions cast from them, tranquillised, — these, the wise, come to the all-pervading from every side, and, uniting themselves with him enter utterly the All.

vedāntavijñānasuniścitārthāḥ samnyāsayogād yatayaḥ śuddhasattvāḥ |
te brahmalokeṣu parāntakāle parāmṛtāḥ parimucyanti sarve ||

6. Doers of askesis who have made sure of the aim⁷⁸ of the whole-knowledge of Vedanta, the inner being purified by the Yoga of renunciation, all in the hour of their last end passing beyond death are released into the worlds of the Brahman.

gatāḥ kalāḥ pañcadaśa pratiṣṭhā devāśca sarve pratidevatāsu |
karmāṇi vijñānamayaśca ātmā pare 'vyaye sarva ekībhavanti ||

7. The fifteen parts return into their foundations, and all the gods pass into their proper godheads, works and the Self of Knowledge, — all become one in the Supreme and Imperishable.

yathā nadyaḥ syandamānāḥ samudre 'stam gacchanti nāmarūpe vihāya |
tathā vidvān nāmarūpād vimuktaḥ parātparam puruṣamupaiti divyam ||

8. As rivers in their flowing reach their home⁷⁹ in the ocean and cast off their names and forms, even so one who knows is delivered from name and form and reaches the Supreme beyond the Most High, even the Divine Person.

[78] Or, meaning

[79] Or, come to their end

*sa yo ha vai tat paramam brahma veda
brahmaiva bhavati nāsyā'brahmavit kule bhavati |
tarati śokam tarati pāpmānam
guhāgranthibhyo vimukto'mṛto bhavati ||*

9. He, verily, who knows that Supreme Brahman becomes himself Brahman; in his lineage none is born who knows not the Brahman. He crosses beyond sorrow, he crosses beyond sin, he is delivered from the knotted cord of the secret heart and becomes immortal.

*tadetadṛcā'bhyuktam ||
kriyāvantaḥ śrotriyā brahmaniṣṭhāḥ
svayam juhvata ekarṣim śraddhayantaḥ |
teṣāmevaitām brahmavidyām vadeta
śirovrataḥ vidhivad yaistu cīrṇam ||*

10. This is That declared by the Rig-veda. Doers of works, versed in the Veda, men absorbed in the Brahman, who putting their faith in the sole-seer offer themselves to him sacrifice, — to them one should speak this Brahman-Knowledge, men by whom the Vow of the Head has been done according to the rite.

*tadetat satyamṛṣiraṅgirāḥ purovāca naitadacīrṇavrato'dhīte |
namaḥ paramaṛṣibhyo namaḥ paramaṛṣibhyaḥ ||*

11. This is That, the Truth of things which the seer Angiras spoke of old. This none learns who has not performed the Vow of the Head. Salutation to the seers supreme! Salutation to the seers supreme!

KATHA UPANISHAD

of the Black Yajurveda

FIRST CYCLE

FIRST CHAPTER

*OM úsan ha vai vājaśravasaḥ sarvavedasaṁ dadau |
tasya ha naciketā nāma putra āsa ||*

1. Vajashravasa, desiring, gave all he had. Now Vajashravasa had a son named Nachiketas.

*taṁ ha kumāraṁ santaṁ dakṣiṇāsu nīyamānāsu śraddhā'viveśa |
so'manyata ||*

2. As the gifts were led past, faith took possession of him who was yet a boy unwed and he pondered:

*pītodakā jagdhatṛṇā dugdhadohā nirindriyāḥ |
anandā nāma te lokāstānsa gacchati tā dadat ||*

3. "Cattle that have drunk their water, eaten their grass, yielded their milk, worn out their organs, of undelight are the worlds which he reaches who gives such as these."

*sa hovāca pitaraṁ tata kasmai mām dāsyasīti |
dvitīyaṁ tṛtīyaṁ taṁ hovāca mṛtyave tvā dadāmīti ||*

4. He said to his father, "Me, O my father, to whom wilt thou give? " A second time and a third he said it, and he replied, "To Death I give thee."

*bahūnāmemi prathamō bahūnāmemi madhyamaḥ |
kiṁ svidyamasya kartavyaṁ yanmayādyā kariṣyati ||*

5. "Among many I walk the first, among many I walk the mid-most; something Death means to do which today by me he will accomplish.

*anupaśya yathā pūrve pratipaśya tathā'pare |
sasyamiva martyaḥ pacyate sasyamivājāyate punaḥ |*

6. "Look back and see, even as were the men of old, — look round! — even so are they that have come after. Mortal man withers like the fruits of the field and like the fruits of the field he is born again."

*vaiśvānaraḥ praviśatyatithirbrāhmaṇo gṛhān |
tasyaitām śāntim kurvanti hara vaivasvatodakam |*

His attendants say to Yama:

7. "Fire is the Brahmin who enters as a guest the houses of men; him thus they appease. Bring, O son of Vivasvan,⁸⁰ the water of the guest-rite.

*āśāpratīkṣe saṃgataṃ sūnṛtām ceṣṭāpūrte putrapaśūmśca sarvān |
etad vṛṅkte puruṣasyālpamedhaso yasyānaśnanvasati brāhmaṇo gṛhe ||*

8. "That man of little understanding in whose house a Brahmin dwells fasting, all his hope and his expectation and all he has gained and the good and truth that he has spoken and the wells he has dug and the sacrifices he has offered and all his sons and his cattle are torn from him by that guest unhonoured."

*tisro rātrīryadavātsīrgṛhe me'naśnanbrahmannatithirnamasyaḥ |
namaste'stu brahmansvasti me'stu tasmātprati trīnvarānvṛṅiṣva |*

Yama speaks:

[80] Yama, lord of death, is also the master of the Law in the world, and he is therefore the child of the Sun, luminous Master of Truth from which the Law is born.

9. "Because for three nights thou hast dwelt in my house, O Brahmin, a guest worthy of reverence, — salutation to thee, O Brahmin, on me let there be the weal, — therefore three boons do thou choose, for each night a boon."

*śāntasamkalpaḥ sumanā yathā syādvītamanyurgautamo
mā'bhi mṛtyo |
tvatprasṛṣṭam mā'bhidetpratīta etattrayānām prathamam varam
vṛṇe ||*

Nachiketas speaks:

10. "Tranquillised in his thought and serene of mind be the Gautama, my father, let his passion over me pass away from him; assured in heart let him greet me from thy grasp delivered; this boon I choose, the first of three."

*yathā purastād bhavitā pratīta auddālakirāruṇirmatprasṛṣṭaḥ |
sukham rātrīḥ śayitā vītamanyustvām
dadṛśivānmṛtyumukhātpramuktam ||*

Yama speaks:

11. "Even as before assured in heart and by me released, shall he be, Auddalaki Aruni, thy father; sweetly shall he sleep through the nights and his passion shall pass away from him, having seen thee from death's jaws delivered."

*svarge loke na bhayaṁ kimcanāsti na tatra tvam na jarayā bibheti |
ubhe tīrtvā 'śanāyāpipāse śokātigo modate svargaloke ||*

Nachiketas speaks:

12. "In heaven fear is not at all, in heaven, O Death, thou art not, nor old age and its terrors; crossing over hunger and thirst as over two rivers, leaving sorrow behind the soul in heaven rejoices.

*sa tvāgniṃ svargyamadhyeṣi mṛtyo prabrūhi tvam śraddadhānāya mahyam |
svargalokā amṛtatvam bhajanta etad dvitīyena vṛṇe vareṇa ||*

13. "Therefore that heavenly Flame⁸¹ which thou, O Death, studieth, expound unto me, for I believe. They who win their world of heaven, have immortality for their portion. This for the second boon I have chosen."

*pra te bravīmi tadu me nibodha svargyamagniṃ naciketah prajānan |
anantalokāptimatho pratiṣṭhām viddhi tvametam nihitam guhāyām ||*

Yama speaks:

14. "Hearken to me and understand, O Nachiketas; I declare to thee that heavenly Flame, for I know it. Know this to be the possession of infinite existence and the foundation and the thing hidden in the secret cave of our being."

*lokādimagniṃ tamuvāca tasmai yā iṣṭakā yāvatīrvā yathā vā |
sa cāpi tatpratyaavadadyathoktamathāsya mṛtyuḥ punarevāha tuṣṭaḥ ||*

15. Of the Flame that is the world's beginning⁸² he told him and what are the bricks to him and how many and the way of their setting; and Nachiketas too repeated it even as it was told; then Death was pleased

[81] The celestial force concealed subconsciously in man's mortality by the kindling of which and its right ordering man transcends his earthly nature; not the physical flame of the external sacrifice to which these profound phrases are inapplicable.

[82] The Divine Force, concealed in the subconscious, is that which has originated and built up the worlds. At the other end in the superconscious it reveals itself as the Divine Being, Lord and Knower who has manifested Himself out of the Brahman.

and said to him yet farther;

*tamabravītpṛīyamāṇo mahātmā varam tavehādya dadāmi bhūyaḥ |
tavaiva nāmnā bhavitāyamagniḥ sṛṅkām cemāmanekarūpām grhāṇa ||*

16. Yea, the Great Soul was gratified and said to him, "Yet a farther boon today I give thee; for even by thy name shall this Fire be called; this necklace also take unto thee, a necklace⁸³ of many figures.

*triṅciketastribhiretya sandhim trikarmakṛttarati janmamṛtyū |
brahmajajñam devamāyām vidaditvā nicāyyemām śāntimatyantameti ||*

17. "Whoso lights the three fires⁸⁴ of Nachiketas and comes to union with the Three⁸⁵ and does the triple works,⁸⁶ beyond birth and death he crosses; for he finds the God of our adoration, the Knower⁸⁷ who is born from the Brahman, whom having beheld he attains to surpassing peace.

*triṅciketastrayametadviditvā ya evam vidvāṁścinate nāciketam |
sa mṛtyupāśānpurataḥ praṇodya śokātigo modate svargaloke ||*

18. "When a man has the three flames of Nachiketas and knows this that is Triple, when so knowing he beholds the Flame of Nachiketas, then he thrusts from in front of him the meshes of the snare of death; leaving

[83] The necklace of many figures is Prakriti, creative Nature which comes under the control of the soul that has attained to the divine existence.

[84] Probably, the divine force utilised to raise to divinity the triple being of man.

[85] Possibly, the three Purushas, soul-states or Personalities of the divine Being, indicated by the three letters A U M. The highest Brahman is beyond the three letters of the mystic syllable.

[86] The sacrifice of the lower existence to the divine, consummated on the three planes of man's physical, vital and mental consciousness.

[87] The Purusha or Divine Being, Knower of the Field, who dwells within all and for whose pleasure Prakriti fulfils the cosmic play.

sorrow behind him he in heaven rejoices.

*eṣa te'gnirnaciketah svargyo yamavrṇīthā dvitīyena vareṇa |
etamagniṃ tavaiva pravakṣyanti janāsastrīyaṃ varam naciketo
vrṇīṣva ||*

19. "This is the heavenly Flame, O Nachiketas, which thou hast chosen for the second boon; of this Flame the peoples shall speak that it is thine indeed. A third boon choose, O Nachiketas."

*yeyaṃ prete vicikitsā manuṣye'stīyeke nāyamastīti caike |
etadvidyāmanuśiṣṭastvayā'ham varāṇāmeṣa varastrīyah ||*

Nachiketas speaks:

20. "This debate that there is over the man who has passed and some say 'This he is not' and some that 'he is', that, taught by thee, I would know; this is the third boon of the boons of my choosing."

*devairatrāpi vicikitsitaṃ purā na hi suvijñeyamaṇuṣeṣa dharmah |
anyaṃ varam naciketo vrṇīṣva mā moparotsīrati mā srjainam ||*

Yama speaks:

21. "Even by the gods was this debated of old; for it is not easy of knowledge, since very subtle is the law of it. Another boon choose, O Nachiketas; importune me not, nor urge me; this, this abandon."

*devairatrāpi vicikitsitaṃ kila tvaṃ ca mṛtyo yanna sujñeyamāttha |
vaktā cāśya tvādr̥ganyo na labhyo nānyo varastulya etasya kaścit ||*

Nachiketas speaks:

22. "Even by the gods was this debated, it is sure, and thou thyself hast said that it is not easy of knowledge; never shall I find another like thee⁸⁸ to tell of it, nor is there any other boon that is equal."

*śatāyusaḥ putrapautrānvr̥ṇīṣva bahūnpaśūnhastihiraṇyamaśvān |
bhūmermahadāyatanam̐ vr̥ṇīṣva svayaṁ ca jīva śarado yāvadicchasi ||*

Yama speaks:

23. "Choose sons and grandsons who shall live each a hundred years, choose much cattle and elephants and gold and horses; choose a mighty reach of earth and thyself live for as many years as thou listest.

*etattulyaṁ yadi manyase varaṁ vr̥ṇīṣva vittaṁ cirajīvikāṁ ca |
mahābhūmau naciketastvamedhi kāmānām̐ tvā kāmabhājam̐ karomi ||*

24. "This boon if thou deemest equal to that of thy asking, choose wealth and long living; possess thou; O Nachiketas, a mighty country; I give thee thy desire of all desirable things for thy portion.

*ye ye kāmā durlabhā martyaloke sarvāṅkāmām̐śchadataḥ
prārthayaṣva |
imā rāmāḥ sarathāḥ satūryā nahīdṛśā lambhanīyā manuṣyaiḥ |
ābhirmatprattābhiḥ paricārayaṣva naciketo maraṇam̐ mānuprākṣīḥ ||*

25. "Yea, all desires that are hard to win in the world of mortals, all demand at thy pleasure; lo, these delectable women with their chariots and their bugles, whose like are not to be won by men, these I will give thee, live with them for thy hand-maidens. But of death question not, O Nachiketas."

śvobhāvā martyasya yadantakaitatsarvendriyāṅām̐ jarayanti tejaḥ |

[88] Yama is the knower and keeper of the cosmic Law through which the soul has to rise by death and life to the freedom of Immortality.

api sarvaṃ jīvitamaḥpameva tavaiva vāhāstava nṛtyagīte ḥ

Nachiketas speaks:

26. "Until the morrow mortal man has these things, O Ender, and they wear away all this keenness and glory of his senses; nay, all life is even for a little. Thine are these chariots and thine the dancing of these women and their singing.

*na vittena tarpaṇīyo manuṣyo lapsyāmahe vittamadrākṣma cettvā ḥ
jīviṣyāmo yāvadiśiṣyasi tvam varastu me varaṇīyaḥ sa eva ḥ*

27. "Man is not to be satisfied by riches, and riches we shall have if we have beheld thee and shall live as long as thou shall be lord of us.⁸⁹ This boon and no other is for my choosing.

*ajīryatāmamṛtānāmupetya jīryanmartyaḥ kvadhaḥsthaḥ prajānan ḥ
abhidhyāyanvarṇaratipramodānatidīrghe jīvite ko rameta ḥ*

28. "Who that is a mortal man and grows old and dwells down upon the unhappy earth, when he has come into the presence of the ageless Immortals and knows, yea, who when he looks very close at beauty and enjoyment and pleasure, can take delight in overlong living?

*yasminnidaṃ vicikitsanti mṛtyo yatsāmparāye mahati brūhi nastat ḥ
yo 'yaṃ varo gūāhamanupraviṣṭo nānyam tasmānnaciketā vṛṇīte ḥ*

29. "This of which they thus debate, O Death, declare to me, even that which is in the great passage; than this boon which enters in into the secret that is hidden from us, no other chooses Nachiketas."

[89] Life being a figure of death and Death of life, the only true existence is the infinite, divine and immortal.

FIRST CYCLE

SECOND CHAPTER

*anyacchreyo 'nyadutaiva preyaste ubhe nānārthe puruṣaṁ sinītaḥ |
tayoh śreya ādadānasya sādhu bhavati hīyate 'rthādya u preyo vṛṇīte ||*

Yama speaks:

1. "One thing is the good and quite another thing is the pleasant, and both seize upon a man with different meanings. Of these whoso takes the good, it is well with him; he falls from the aim of life who chooses the pleasant.

*śreyaśca preyaśca manuṣyametaṣtau samparītya vivinakti dhīraḥ |
śreyo hi dhīro 'bhi preyaso vṛṇīte preyo mando yogakṣemādvṛṇīte ||*

2. "The good and the pleasant come to a man and the thoughtful mind turns all around them and distinguishes. The wise chooses out the good from the pleasant, but the dull soul chooses the pleasant rather than the getting of his good and its having.

*sa tvam priyānpriyarūpāmśca kāmānabhidhyāyannaciketo 'tyasrākṣīḥ |
naitām sṛṅkāṁ vittamayīmavāpto yasyām majjanti bahavo manuṣyāḥ ||*

3. "And thou, O Nachiketas, hast looked close at the objects of desire, at pleasant things and beautiful, and thou hast cast them from thee: thou hast not entered into the net of riches in which many men sink to perdition.

*dūramete viparīte viṣūcī avidyā yā ca vidyeti jñātā |
vidyābhīpsinaṁ naciketasam manye na tvā kāmā bahavo 'lolupanta ||*

4. "For far apart are these, opposite, divergent, the one that is known as the Ignorance and the other the Knowledge. But Nachiketas I deem truly desirous of the knowledge whom so many desirable things could not make to lust after them.

*avidyāyāmantare vartamānāḥ svayaṁ dhīrāḥ pañâitammanyamānāḥ |
dandramyamāṇāḥ pariyanti mūâhā andhenaiva nīyamānā
yathāndhāḥ |*

5. "They who dwell in the ignorance, within it, wise in their own wit and deeming themselves very learned, men bewildered are they who wander about stumbling round and round helplessly like blind men led by the blind.

*na sâmparāyaḥ pratibhāti bālaṁ pramādyantam
vittamohena mūâham |
ayaṁ loko nâsti para iti mānī punaḥ punarvaśamāpadyate me ||*

6. "The childish wit bewildered and drunken with the illusion of riches cannot open its eyes to see the passage to heaven: for he that thinks this world is and there is no other, comes again and again into Death's thralldom.

*śravaṇyāpi bahubhiryo na labhyaḥ śṛṇvanto 'pi
bahavo yaṁ na vidyuh |
âścaryo vaktā kuśalo 'sya labdhâścaryo jñātā kuśalānuśiṣṭaḥ ||*

7. "He that is not easy to be heard of by many, and even of those that have heard, they are many who have not known Him, — a miracle is the man that can speak of Him wisely or is skilful to win Him, and when one is found, a miracle is the listener who can know Him even when taught of Him by the knower.

na nareṇāvareṇa prokta eṣa suvijñeyo bahudhā cintyamānaḥ |

ananyaprokte gativatra nāstyanyān hyatarkyamanupramāṇāt ||

8. "An inferior man cannot tell you of Him; for thus told thou canst not truly know Him, since He is thought of in many aspects. Yet unless told of Him by another thou canst not find thy way to Him; for He is subtler than subtlety and that which logic cannot reach.

*naiṣā tarkeṇa matirāpaneyā proktānyenaiva sujñānāya preṣṭha |
yām tvamāpaḥ satyadhṛtirbatāsi tvādrñ no bhūyānnaciketaḥ praṣṭā ||*

9. "This wisdom is not to be had by reasoning, O beloved Nachiketas; only when told thee by another it brings real knowledge, — the wisdom which thou hast gotten. Truly thou art steadfast in the Truth! Even such a questioner as thou art may I meet with always."

*jānāmyaham śevadhirtyanityam na
hyadhruvaiḥ prāpyate hi dhruvam tat |
tato mayā nāciketaścito 'gniranityairdravyaiḥ prāptavānasmi nityam ||*

Nachiketas speaks:

10. "I know of treasure that it is not for ever; for not by things unstable shall one attain That One which is stable; therefore I heaped the fire of Nachiketas, and by the sacrifice of momentary things I won the Eternal."

*kāmasyāptim jagataḥ pratiṣṭhām kratorānantyamabhayasya pāram |
stomam mahadurugāyam pratiṣṭhām dṛṣṭvā dhṛtyā dhīro
naciketo 'tyasrākṣīḥ ||*

Yama speaks:

11. "When thou hast seen in thy grasp, O Nachiketas, the possession of desire and the firm foundation of this world and an infinity of power

and the other shore of security and great praise and wide-moving foundation,⁹⁰ wise and strong in steadfastness thou didst cast these things from thee.

*taṁ durdarśaṁ gūāhamanupraviṣṭaṁ guhāhitaṁ gahvareṣṭham
purāṇam |*

adhyātmayogādhighamena devaṁ matvā dhīro harṣasokau jahāti ||

12. "Realising the God by attainment to Him through spiritual Yoga, even the Ancient of Days who hath entered deep into that which is hidden and is hard to see, for he is established in our secret being and lodged in the cavern heart of things, the wise and steadfast man casts away from him joy and sorrow.

*etacchrutvā samparigṛhya martyaḥ pravṛhya
dharmyamaṇumetaṁāpya |*

sa modate modanīyaṁ hi labdhvā vivṛtaṁ sadma naciketasam manye ||

13. "When a mortal man has heard, when he has grasped, when he has forcefully separated the Righteous One from his body and won that subtle Being, then he has delight, for he has got that which one can indeed delight in. Verily, I deem of Nachiketas as a house wide open."

*anyatra dharmādanyatrādharmādanyatrāsmātkṛtākṛtāt |
anyatra bhūtācca bhavyācca yattatpaśyasi tadvada ||*

Nachiketas speaks:

14. "Tell me of That which thou seest elsewhere than in virtue and elsewhere than in unrighteousness, elsewhere than in this created and this uncreated, elsewhere than in that which has been and that which shall be."

[90] Or, and great fame chanted through widest regions,

*sarve vedā yatpadamāmananti tapāmsi sarvāṇi ca yadvadanti |
yadicchanto brahmacaryam caranti tatte padam samgrahaṇa
bravīmyomityetat ||*

Yama speaks:

15. "The seat or goal that all the Vedas glorify and which austerities declare, for the desire of which men practise holy living, of That will I tell thee in brief compass. OM is that goal, O Nachiketas.

*etaddhyevākṣaram brahma etaddhyevākṣaram param |
etaddhyevākṣaram jñātvā yo yadicchati tasya tat ||*

16. "For this Syllable is Brahman, this Syllable is the Most High: this Syllable if one knows, whatsoever one shall desire, it is his.

*etadāmbanam śreṣṭhametadāmbanam param |
etadāmbanam jñātvā brahmaloke mahīyate ||*

17. "This support is the best, this support is the highest, knowing this support one grows great in the world of the Brahman.

*na jāyate mriyate vā vipaścinnāyam kutaścinna babhūva kaścit |
ajo nityaḥ śāśvato 'yam purāṇo na hanyate hanyamāne śarīre ||*

18. "The Wise One is not born, neither does he die: he came not from anywhere, neither is he any one: he is unborn, he is everlasting, he is ancient and sempiternal: he is not slain in the-slaying of the body.

*hantā cenmanyate hantum hataścenmanyate hatam |
ubhau tau na vijānīto nāyam hanti na hanyate ||*

19. "If the slayer think that he slays, if the slain think that he is slain, both of these have not the knowledge. This slays not, neither is He slain.

*aṅoraṅīyānmahato mahīyānātmāsya jantornihito guhāyām |
tamakratuḥ paśyati vītaśoko dhātuprasādānmahimānamātmanaḥ ||*

20. "Finer than the fine, huger than the huge the self hides in the secret heart of the creature: when a man strips himself of will and is weaned from sorrow, then he beholds Him; purified from the mental elements he sees the greatness of the Self-being.

*āsīno dūram vrajati śayāno yāti sarvataḥ |
kastaṁ madāmadam devaṁ madanyo jñātumarhati ||*

21. "Seated He journeys far off, lying down he goes everywhere. Who other than I is fit to know God, even Him who is rapture and the transcendence of rapture?

*aśarīram śarīreṣvanavastheṣvavasthitam |
mahāntam vibhumātmānam matvā dhīro na śocati ||*

22. "Realising the Bodiless in bodies, the Established in things unsettled, the Great and Omnipresent Self, the wise and steadfast soul grieves no longer.

*nāyamātmā pravacanena labhyo na medhayā na bahunā śrutena |
yamevaiṣa vṛṇute tena labhyastasyaiṣa ātmā vivṛṇute tanūm svām ||*

23. "The Self is not to be won by eloquent teaching, nor by brain power, nor by much learning: but only he whom this Being chooses can win Him; for to him this Self bares His body.

*nāvīrato duścaritānnāśānto nāsamāhitaḥ |
nāśāntamānaso vāpi prajñānenainamāpnuyāt ||*

24. "None who has not ceased from doing evil, or who is not calm, or not

concentrated in his being, or whose mind has not been tranquillised, can by wisdom attain to Him.

*yasyā brahma ca kṣatram ca ubhe bhavata odanaḥ |
mṛtyuryasyopasecanam ka itthā veda yatra saḥ ||*

25. "He to whom the sages are as meat and heroes as food for his eating and Death is an ingredient of His banquet, how thus-shall one know of Him where He abides? "

FIRST CYCLE

THIRD CHAPTER

*ṛtaṁ pibantau sukṛtasya loke guhām praviṣṭau parame parārdhe |
chāyātapau brahmavido vadanti pañcāgnayo ye ca triṅāciketāḥ ||*

Yama speaks:

1. "There are two that drink deep of the truth in the world of work well accomplished: they are lodged in the secret plane of being, in the highest kingdom of the most High: as of light and shade the knowers of Brahman speak of them, and those of the five fires and those who kindle thrice the fire of Nachiketas.

*yaḥ seturījānānāmakṣaram brahma yatparam |
abhayam titṛṣatām pāram nāciketam śakemahi ||*

2. "May we have strength to kindle the Agni of Nachiketas for he is the bridge of those who do sacrifice and he is Brahman Supreme and imperishable, and the far shore of security to those who would cross this Ocean.

*ātmānam rathinam viddhi śarīram rathameva tu |
buddhim tu sārathim viddhi manaḥ pragrahameva ca ||*

3. "Know the body for a chariot and the soul for the master of the chariot: know Reason for the charioteer and the mind for the reins only.

*indriyāṇi hayānāhurviṣayāmsteṣu gocarān |
ātmendriyamanoyuktam bhoktetyāhurmanīṣiṅaḥ ||*

4. "The senses they speak of as the steeds and the objects of sense as the

paths in which they move; and One yoked with self and the mind and the senses, as the enjoyer, say the thinkers.

*yastvavijñānavānbhavatyayuktena manasā sadā |
tasyendriyāṅyavaśyāni duṣṭāśvā iva sāratheḥ ||*

5. "Now he that is without knowledge with his mind ever unapplied, his senses are to him as wild horses and will not obey their driver of the chariot.

*yastu vijñānavānbhavati yuktena manasā sadā |
tasyendriyāṅi vaśyāni sadaśvā iva sāratheḥ ||*

6. "But he that has knowledge with his mind ever applied, his senses are to him as noble steeds and they obey the driver.

*yastvavijñānavānbhavatyamanaskaḥ sadā śuciḥ |
na sa tatpadamāpnoti samsāram cādhiḡacchati ||*

7. "Yea, he that is without knowledge and is unmindful and is ever unclean, reaches not that goal, but wanders in the cycle of phenomena.

*yastu vijñānavānbhavati samanaskaḥ sadā śuciḥ |
sa tu tatpadamāpnoti yasmād bhūyo na jāyate ||*

8. "But he that has knowledge and is mindful, pure always, reaches that goal whence he is not born again.

*vijñānasārathiryastu manahpragrahavānnaraḥ |
so dhvanaḥ pāramāpnoti tadviṣṇoḥ paramam padam ||*

9. "That man who uses the mind for reins and the knowledge for the driver, reaches the end of his road, the highest seat of Vishnu.

*indriyebhyaḥ parā hyarthā arthebhyas̄ca param̄ manaḥ |
manasastu parā buddhirbuddherātmā mahānparaḥ ||*

10. "Than the senses the objects of sense are higher: and higher than the objects of sense is the Mind: and higher than the Mind is the faculty of knowledge: and than that the Great-Self is higher.

*mahataḥ paramavyaktamavyaktātpuruṣaḥ paraḥ |
puruṣānna param̄ kiñcitsā kāṣṭhā sā parā gatiḥ ||*

11. "And higher than the Great-Self is the Unmanifest and higher than the Unmanifest is the Purusha: than the Purusha there is none higher: He is the culmination. He is the highest goal of the journey.

*eṣa sarveṣu bhūteṣu gūāhotmā na prakāśate |
dr̄syate tvagryayā buddhyā sūkṣmayā sūkṣmadarśibhiḥ ||*

12. "He is the secret Self in all existences and does not manifest Himself to the vision: yet is He seen by the seers of the subtle by a subtle and perfect understanding.

*yacchedvānmanasī prājñastadyacchejjñāna ātmani |
jñānamātmani mahati niyacchettadyacchecchānta ātmani ||*

13. "Let the wise man restrain speech in his mind and mind in Self, and knowledge in the Great-Self, and that again let him restrain in the Self that is at peace.

*uttiṣṭhata jāgrata prāpya varānnibodhata |
kṣurasya dhārā niśitā duratyayā durgam̄ pathastatkavayo vadanti ||*

14. "Arise, awake, find out the great ones and learn of them: for sharp as a razor's edge, hard to traverse, difficult of going is that path, say the sages.

*aśabdamasparśamarūpamavyayam tathā'rasam
nityamagandhavacca yat |
anādyanantaṃ mahataḥ param dhruvaṃ nicāyya
tanmṛtyumukhātpramucyate ||*

15. "That in which sound is not, nor touch, nor shape, nor diminution, nor taste nor smell, that which is eternal, and It is without end or beginning, higher than the Great-Self, the stable; that having seen, from the mouth of death there is deliverance."

*nāciketamupākhyānaṃ mṛtyuproktaṃ sanātanam |
uktvā śrutvā ca medhāvī brahmaloke mahīyate ||*

16. The man of intelligence having spoken or heard the eternal story of Nachiketas wherein Death was the speaker, grows great in the world of the Brahman.

*ya imaṃ paramaṃ guhyaṃ śrāvayed brahmasāmsadi |
prayataḥ śrāddhakāle vā tadānantyāya kalpate tadānantyāya kalpata
iti ||*

17. He who being pure recites this supreme secret at the time of the Shraddha in the assembly of the Brahmins, that turns for him to infinite existence.

SECOND CYCLE

FIRST CHAPTER

*parāñci khāni vyatṛṇatsvayambhūstasmātparān paśyati nāntarātman |
kaściddhīraḥ pratyagātmānaikaṣadāvṛttacakṣuramṛtatvamicchan ||*

Yama speaks:

1. "The self-born has set the doors of the body to face outwards, therefore the soul of a man gazes outward and not at the Self within: hardly a wise man here and there, desiring immortality, turns his eyes inward and sees the Self within him.

*parācaḥ kāmānanuyanti bālāste mṛtyoryanti vitatasya pāśam |
atha dhīrā amṛtatvaṁ viditvā dhruvamadhruveṣviha na prārthayante ||*

2. "The rest childishly follow after desire and pleasure and walk into the snare of Death that gapes wide for them. But calm souls, having learned of immortality, seek not for permanence in the things of this world that pass and are not.

*yena rūpaṁ rasam gandham śabdānsparśāmśca maithunān |
etenaiva vijānāti kimatra pariśiṣyate | etadvai tat ||*

3. "By the Self one knows form and taste and smell, by the Self one knows sound and touch and the joy of man with woman: what is there left in this world of which the Self not knows? *This is That thou seekest.*

*svapnāntaṁ jāgaritāntaṁ cobhau yenānupaśyati |
mahāntaṁ vibhumātmānaṁ matvā dhīro na śocati ||*

4. "The calm soul having comprehended the great Lord, the omnipresent Self by whom one beholds both to the end of dream and to the end of waking, ceases from grieving.

*ya imam madhvadam veda atmānam jīvamantikāt |
īśānam bhūtabhavyasya na tato vijugupsate | etadvai tat ||*

5. "He that has known from the very close this Eater of sweetness, the Jiva, the self within that is lord of what was and what shall be, shrinks not thereafter from aught nor abhors any. *This is That thou seekest.*

*yaḥ pūrvam tapaso jātamadbyaḥ pūrvamajāyata |
guhām praviśya tiṣṭhantam yo bhūtebhirvyapaśyata | etadvai tat ||*

6. "He is the seer that sees Him who came into being before austerity and was before the waters: peep in the heart of the creature he sees Him, for there He stands by the mingling of the elements. *This is That thou seekest.*

*yā prāṇena sambhavatyaditirdevatāmayī |
guhām praviśya tiṣṭhantīm yā bhūtebhirvyajāyata | etadvai tat ||*

7. "This is Aditi, the mother of the Gods, who was born through the Prana and by the mingling of the elements had her being: deep in the heart of things she has entered, there she is seated. *This is That thou seekest.*

*aranyornihito jātavedā garbha iva subhrto garbhiṅbhiḥ |
dive diva tāyo jāgrvadbhirhaviṣmadbhirmanuṣyebhiragniḥ |
etadvai tat ||*

8. "As a woman carries with care the unborn child in her womb, so is the Master of Knowledge lodged in the tinders: and day by day should men worship him, who live the waking life and stand before him with sacrifices; for he is that Agni. *This is That thou seekest.*

*yataścodeti sūryo 'staṁ yatra ca gacchati |
taṁ devāḥ sarve 'rpitāstadu nātyeti kaścana | etadvai tat ||*

9. "He from whom the sun arises and to whom the sun returns, and in Him are all the Gods established; none passes beyond Him. *This is That thou seekest.*

*yadeveha tadamutra yadamutra tadanviha |
mṛtyoḥ sa mṛtyumāpnoti ya iha nāneva paśyati ||*

10. "What is in this world, is also in the other: and what is in the other, that again is in this: who thinks he sees difference here, from death to death he goes.

*manasaivedamāptavyaṁ neha nānāsti kiñcana |
mṛtyoḥ sa mṛtyuṁ gacchati ya iha nāneva paśyati ||*

11. "Through the mind must we understand that there is nothing in this world that really varies: who thinks he sees difference here, from death to death he goes.

*aṅguṣṭhamātraḥ puruṣo madhya ātmani tiṣṭhati |
īśāno bhūtabhavyasya na tato vijugupsate | etadvai tat ||*

12. "The Purusha who is seated in the midst of our self is no larger than the finger of a man; He is the Lord of what was and what shall be. Him having seen one shrinks not from aught, nor abhors any. *This is That thou seekest.*

*aṅguṣṭhamātraḥ puruṣo jyotirivādhūmakāḥ |
īśāno bhūtabhavyasya sa evādyā sa u śvaḥ | etadvai tat ||*

13. "The Purusha that is within us is no larger than the finger of a man: He is like a blazing fire that is without smoke, He is lord of His past and His future. He alone, is today and He alone shall be tomorrow. *This is*

That thou seekest.

*yathodakam durge vr̥ṣtam parvateṣu vidhāvati |
evam dharmānpr̥thak paśyaṅstānevānuvidhāvati ||*

14. "As water that rains in the rough and difficult places, runs to many sides on the mountain tops, so he that sees separate law and action of the One Spirit, follows in the track of what he sees.

*yathodakam śuddhe śuddhamāsiktam tādr̥geva bhavati |
evam munervijānata ātmā bhavati gautama ||*

15. "But as pure water that is poured into pure water, even as it was such it remains, so is it with the soul of the thinker who knows God, O seed of Gautama."

SECOND CYCLE

SECOND CHAPTER

*puramekādaśadvāramajasyāvakraçetasah |
anuṣṭhāya na śocati vimuktaśca vimucyate | etadvai tat ||*

Yama speaks:

1. "The unborn who is not devious-minded has a city with eleven gates: when he takes up his abode in it, he grieves not, but when he is set free from it, that is his deliverance. *This is That thou seekest.*

*hamsaḥ śuciśadvasurantarikṣasaddhotā vediśadatithirduroṇasat |
nṛṣadvarasadṛtasadvyomasadabjā gojā ṛtajā adrijā ṛtaṁ bṛhat ||*

2. "Lo, the Swan whose dwelling is in the purity, He is the Vasu in the inter-regions, the Sacrificer at the altar, the Guest in the vessel of the drinking: He is in man and in the Great Ones and His home is in the law, and His dwelling is in the firmament: He is all that is born of water and all that is born of earth and all that is born on the mountains. He is the Truth and He is the Mighty One.

*ūrdhvaṁ prāṇamunnayatyapānaṁ pratyagasyati |
madhye vāmanamāsīnaṁ viśve devā upāsate ||*

3. "This is He that draws the main breath upward and casts the lower breath downward. The Dwarf that sits in the centre, to Him all the Gods do homage.

*asya visraṅsamānasya śarīrasthasya dehinaḥ |
dehādvimucyamānasya kimatra pariśisyate | etadvai tat ||*

4. "When this encased Spirit that is in the body, falls away from it, when He is freed from its casing, what is there then that remains? *This is That thou seekest.*

*na prāṇena nāpānena martyo jīvati kaścana |
itareṇa tu jīvanti yasminnetāvupāsritau ||*

5. "Man that is mortal lives not by the breath, no, nor by the lower breath; but by something else we live in which both these have their being.

*hanta ta idaṃ pravakṣyāmi guhyaṃ brahma sanātanam |
yathā ca maraṇaṃ prāpya ātmā bhavati gautama ||*

6. "Surely, O Gautama, I will tell thee of this secret and eternal Brahman and likewise what becomes of the soul when one dies.

*yonimanye prapadyante śarīratvāya dehinaḥ |
sthāṇumanye 'nusaṃyanti yathākarma yathāśrutam ||*

7. "For some enter a womb to the embodying of the Spirit and others follow after the Immovable: according to their deeds - is their goal and after the measure of their revealed knowledge.

*ya eṣa supteṣu jāgarti kāmam kāmam puruṣo nirmimāṇaḥ |
tadeva śukraṃ tad brahma tadevāmṛtamucyate |
tasmimllokāḥ śritāḥ sarve tadu nātyeti kaścana | etadvai tat ||*

8. "This that wakes in the sleepers creating desire upon desire, this Purusha, Him they call the Bright One, Him Brahman, Him Immortality, and in Him are all the worlds established: none goes beyond Him. *This is That thou seekest.*

*agniryathaiko bhuvanaṃ praviṣṭo rūpaṃ rūpaṃ pratirūpo babhūva |
ekastathā sarvabhūtāntarātmā rūpaṃ rūpaṃ pratirūpo bahiṣca ||*

9. "Even as one Fire has entered into the world, but it shapes itself to the forms it meets, so there is one Spirit within all creatures, but it shapes itself to form and form: it is likewise outside these.

*vāyuryathaiko bhuvanaṃ praviṣṭo rūpaṃ rūpaṃ pratirūpo babhūva |
ekastathā sarvabhūtāntarātmā rūpaṃ rūpaṃ pratirūpo bahiṣca ||*

10. "Even as one Air has entered into the world, but it shapes itself to the forms it meets, so there is one Spirit within all creatures, but it shapes itself to form and form: it is likewise outside these.

*sūryo yathā sarvalokasya cakṣurna lipyate cākṣuṣairbāhyadoṣaiḥ |
ekastathā sarvabhūtāntarātmā na lipyate lokaduḥkhena bāhyaḥ ||*

11. "Even as the Sun is the eye of all this world, yet is not soiled by the outward blemishes of the visual, so there is one Spirit within all creatures, but the sorrow of this world soils it not: for it is beyond grief and danger.

*eko vaśī sarvabhūtāntarātmā ekaṃ rūpaṃ bahudhā yaḥ karoti |
tamātmasthaṃ ye'nupaśyanti dhīrāsteṣāṃ sukhaṃ śāśvatam
netareṣāṃ ||*

12. "One calm and controlling Spirit within all creatures that makes one form into many fashions: the calm and strong who see Him in their self as in a mirror, theirs is eternal felicity and 'tis not for others.

*nityo'nityānām cetanaścetanānāmeko bahūnām yo vidadhāti kāmān |
tamātmasthaṃ ye'nupaśyanti dhīrāsteṣāṃ śāntiḥ śāśvatī netareṣāṃ ||*

13. "The One Eternal in the transient, the One consciousness in many conscious beings, who being One orders the desires of many: the calm and strong who behold Him in their self as in a mirror, theirs is eternal peace and 'tis not for others.

*tadetaditi manyante 'nirdeśyam paramam sukham |
katham nu tadvijānīyām kimu bhāti vibhāti vā ||*

14. " 'This is He' is all they can realise of Him, a highest felicity which none can point to nor any define it. How shall I know of Him whether He shines or reflects one light and another?

*na tatra sūryo bhāti na candratārakam nemā vidyuto bhānti
kuto 'yamagniḥ |
tameva bhāntamanubhāti sarvaṁ tasya bhāsā sarvamidam vibhāti ||*

15. "There the sun cannot shine and the moon has no lustre: all the stars are blind: there our lightnings flash not, neither any earthly fire. For all that is bright is but the shadow of His brightness and by His shining all this shines."

SECOND CYCLE

THIRD CHAPTER

*ūrdhvamūlo 'vāksākha eṣo 'śvatthaḥ sanātanaḥ |
tadeva śukraṁ tad brahma tadevāmṛtamucyate |
tasminllokāḥ śritāḥ sarve tadu nātyeti kaścana |
etadvai tat ||*

Yama speaks:

1. "This is an eternal Ashwattha-tree whose root is above, but its branches are downward. It is He that is called the Bright One and Brahman, and Immortality, and in Him are all the worlds established, none goes beyond Him. *This is That thou seekest.*

*yadidaṁ kiñca jagatsarvaṁ prāṇa ejati niḥśṛtam |
mahad bhayaṁ vajramudyataṁ ya etadviduramṛtāste bhavanti ||*

2. "All this universe of motion moves in the Prana and from the Prana also it proceeded: a mighty terror is He, yea, a thunderbolt uplifted. Who know Him, are the immortals.

*bhayādasyāgnistapati bhayāttapati sūryaḥ |
bhayādiraśca vāyuśca mṛtyurdhāvati pañcamāḥ ||*

3. "For fear of Him the Fire burns: for fear of Him the Sun gives heat: for fear of Him Indra and Vayu and Death hasten in their courses.

*iha cedaśakadboddhūṁ prāk śarīrasya visrasaḥ |
tataḥ sargeṣu lokeṣu śarīratvāya kalpate ||*

4. "If in this world of men and before thy body fall from thee, thou wert

able to apprehend it, then thou availeth for embodiment in the worlds that He creates.

*yathā''darśe tathātmani yathā svapne tathā piṭṛloke |
yathāpsu parīva dadṛśe tathā gandharvaloke
chāyātapyoriva brahmaloke ||*

5. "In the self one sees God as in a mirror, but as in a dream in the world of the Fathers: and as in water one sees the surface of an object, so one sees Him in the world of the Gandharvas. But He is seen as light and shade in the heaven of the Spirit.

*indriyānām pṛthagbhāvamudayāstamayau ca yat |
pṛthagutpadyamānānām matvā dhīro na śocati ||*

6. "The calm soul having comprehended the separateness of the senses and the rising of them and their setting and their separate emergence, puts from him pain and sorrow.

*indriyebhyaḥ paraṁ mano manasaḥ sattvamuttamam |
sattvādadhi mahānātmā mahato 'vyaktamuttamam ||*

7. "The mind is higher than the senses, and higher than the mind is the genius, above the genius is the Mighty Spirit, and higher than the Mighty One is the Unmanifested.

*avyaktāttu paraḥ puruṣo vyāpako 'liṅga eva ca |
yaṁ jñātvā mucyate janturamṛtatvaṁ ca gacchati ||*

8. "But highest above the Unmanifested is the Purusha who pervades all and alone has no sign nor feature. Mortal man knowing Him is released into immortality.

na samdṛśe tiṣṭhati rūpamasya na cakṣuṣā paśyati kaścanainam |

hr̥dā manīṣā manasā 'bhikḷpto ya etaviduramṛtāste bhavanti ||

9. "God has not set His body within the ken of seeing, neither does any man with the eye behold Him, but to the heart and the mind and the super-mind He is manifest. Who know Him are the immortals.

*yadā pañcāvatiṣṭhante jñānāni manasā saha |
buddhiśca na viceṣṭati tāmāhuḥ paramām gatim ||*

10. "When the five senses cease and are at rest and the mind rests with them and the higher mind ceases from its workings, that is the highest state, say thinkers.

*tām yogamiti manyante sthirāmindriyadhāraṇām |
apramattastadā bhavati yogo hi prabhavāpyayau ||*

11. "The state unperturbed when the senses are imprisoned in the mind, of this they say 'It is Yoga'. Then man becomes very vigilant, for Yoga is the birth of things and their ending.⁹¹

*naiva vācā na manasā prāptuṃ śakyo na cakṣuṣā |
astīti bruvato 'nyatra katham tadupalabhyate ||*

12. "Not with the mind has man the power to get God, no, nor through speech, nor by the eye. Unless one says 'He is', how can one become sensible of Him?

*astītyevopalabdhyastattvabhāvena cobhayoḥ |
astītyevopalabdhasya tattvabhāvaḥ prasīdati ||*

13. "One must apprehend God in the concept 'He Is' and also in His essential: but when he has grasped Him as the 'Is', then the essential of God dawns upon a man.

[91] Shankara interprets, "as Yoga has a beginning (birth) so has an ending". But this is not what the Sruti says.

*yadā sarve pramucyante kāmā ye 'sya hṛdi śritāḥ |
atha martyo 'mṛto bhavatyatra brahma samaśnute ||*

14. "When every desire that finds lodging in the heart of man, has been loosened from its moorings, then this mortal puts on immortality: even here he tastes God, in this human body.

*yadā sarve prabhidante hṛdayasyeha granthayaḥ |
atha martyo 'mṛto bhavatyetāvaddhyanusāsanam ||*

15. "Yea, when all the strings of the heart are rent asunder, even here, in this human birth, then the mortal becomes immortal. This is the whole teaching of the Scriptures.

*śataṁ caikā ca hṛdayasya nāāyastāsām mūrdhānamabhiniḥṛtaikā |
tayordhvamāyannamṛtatvameti viśvaññanyā utkramaṇe bhavanti ||*

16. "A hundred and one are the nerves of the heart, and of all these only one issues out through the head of a man: by this his soul mounts up to its immortal home, but the rest lead him to all sorts and conditions of births in his passing.

*aṅguṣṭhamātraḥ puruṣo 'ntarātmā sadā janānām hṛdaye sanniviṣṭaḥ |
taṁ svāccharīrātpravṛhenmuñjādiveṣīkām dhairyena |
taṁ vidyācchukramamṛtaṁ taṁ vidyācchukramamṛtamiti ||*

17. "The Purusha, the Spirit within, who is no larger than the finger of a man is seated for ever in the heart of creatures: one must separate Him with patience from one's own body as one separates from a blade of grass its main fibre. Thou shalt know Him for the Bright Immortal, yea, for the Bright Immortal."

mṛtyuproktām naciketo 'tha labdhvā vidyāmetām yogavidhiṁ ca

kṛtsnam |

*brahmaprāpto virajo 'bhūdvimṛtyuranyo 'pyevam yo
vidadhyātmameva ||*

18. Thus did Nachiketas with Death for his teacher win the God-knowledge: he learned likewise the whole ordinance of Yoga: thereafter he obtained God and became void of stain and void of death. So shall another be who comes likewise to the Science of the Spirit.

READINGS IN THE TAITTIRIYA UPANISHAD

The Knowledge of Brahman

The knower of Brahman reacheth that which is supreme.

This is that verse which was spoken; “Truth, Knowledge, Infinity the Brahman,

He who knoweth that hidden in the secrecy in the supreme ether,
Enjoyeth all desires along with the wise-thinking Brahman. ”

This is the burden of the opening sentences of the Taittiriya Upanishad's second section; they begin its elucidation of the highest truth. Or in the Sanskrit,

brahmavid āpnoti param —

tad eṣābhuktā — satyam jñānam anantam brahma —

yo veda nihitam guhāyām — parame vyoman —

so' śnute sarvān kāmān — saha brahmaṇā vipaściteti.

But what is Brahman?

Whatever reality is in existence, by which all the rest subsists, that is Brahman. An Eternal behind all instabilities, a Truth of things which is implied, if it is hidden in all appearances, a Constant which supports all mutations, but is not increased, diminished, abrogated, — there is such an unknown *X* which makes existence a problem, our own self a mystery, the universe a riddle. If we were only what we seem to be to our normal self-awareness, there would be no mystery; if the world were only what it can be made out to be by the perceptions of the senses and their strict analysis in the reason, there would be no riddle; and if to take our life as it is now and the world as it has so far developed to our experience were the whole possibility of our knowing and doing, there would be no problem. Or at best there would be but a shallow mystery, an easily solved riddle, the problem only of a child's puzzle. But there is more, and that more is the hidden head of the Infinite and the secret heart of the Eternal. It is the highest and this highest is the all; there is none beyond and there is none

other than it. To know it is to know the highest and by knowing the highest to know all. For as it is the beginning and source of all things, so everything else is its consequence; as it is the support and constituent of all things, so the secret of everything else is explained by its secret; as it is the sum and end of all things, so everything else amounts to it and by throwing itself into it achieves the sense of its own existence.

This is the Brahman.

* * *

If this unknown be solely an indecipherable, only undefinable *X*, always unknown and unknowable, the hidden never revealed, the secret never opened to us, then our mystery would for ever remain a mystery, our riddle insoluble, our problem intangible. Its existence, even while it determines all we are, know and do, could yet make no practical difference to us; for our relation to it would then be a blind and helpless dependence, a relation binding us to ignorance and maintainable only by that ignorance. Or again, if it be in some way knowable, but the sole result of knowledge were an extinction or cessation of our being, then within our being it could have no consequences; the very act and fructuation of knowledge would bring the annihilation of all that we now are, not its completion or fulfilment. The mystery, riddle, problem would not be so much solved as abolished, for it would lose all its data. In effect we should have to suppose that there is an eternal and irreconcilable opposition between Brahman and what we now are, between the supreme cause and all its effects or between the supreme source and all its derivations. And it would then seem that all that the Eternal originates, all he supports, all he takes back to himself is a denial or contradiction of his being which, though in itself a negative of that which alone is, has yet in some way become a positive. The two could not coexist in consciousness; if he allowed the world to know him, it would disappear from being.

But the Eternal is knowable, He defines himself so that we may seize him, and man can become, even while he exists as man and in this world and in this body, a knower of the Brahman.

The knowledge of the Brahman is not a thing luminous but otiose, informing to the intellectual view of things but without consequence to the soul of the individual or his living; it is a knowledge that is a power and a

divine compulsion to change; by it his existence gains something that now he does not possess in consciousness. What is this gain? it is this that he is conscious now of a lower state only of his being, but by knowledge he gains his highest being.

The highest state of our being is not a denial, contradiction and annihilation of all that we now are; it is a supreme accomplishment of all things that our present existence means and aims at, but in their highest sense and in the eternal values.

* * *

To live in our present state of self-consciousness is to live and to act in ignorance. We are ignorant of ourselves, because we know as yet only that in us which changes always, from moment to moment, from hour to hour, from period to period, from life to life, and not that in us which is eternal. We are ignorant of the world because we do not know God; we are aware of the law of appearances, but not of the law and truth of being.

Our highest wisdom, our minutest most accurate science, our most effective application of knowledge can be at most a thinning of the veil of ignorance, but not a going beyond it, so long as we do not get at the fundamental knowledge and the consciousness to which that is native. The rest are effective for their own temporal purposes, but prove ineffective in the end, because they do not bring to the highest good; they lead to no permanent solution of the problem of existence.

The ignorance in which we live is not a baseless and wholesale falsehood, but at its lowest the misrepresentation of a Truth, at its highest an imperfect representation and translation into inferior and to that extent misleading values. It is a knowledge of the superficial only and therefore a missing of the secret essential which is the key to all that the superficial is striving for; a knowledge of the finite and apparent, but a missing of all that the apparent symbolises and the finite suggests; a knowledge of inferior forms, but a missing of all that our inferior life and being has above it and to which it must aspire if it is to fulfil its greatest possibilities. The true knowledge is that of the highest, the inmost, the infinite. The knower of the Brahman sees all these lower things in the light of the Highest, the external and superficial as a translation of the internal and essential, the finite from the view of the Infinite. He begins to see and

know existence no longer as the thinking animal, but as the Eternal sees and knows it. Therefore he is glad and rich in being, luminous in joy, satisfied of existence.

* * *

Knowledge does not end with knowing, nor is it pursued and found for the sake of knowing alone. It has its full value only when it leads to some greater gain than itself, some gain of being. Simply to know the eternal and to remain in the pain, struggle and inferiority of our present way of being, would be a poor and lame advantage.

A greater knowledge opens the possibility and, if really possessed, brings the actuality of a greater being. To be is the first verb which contains all the others; knowledge, action, creation, enjoyment are only a fulfilment of being. Since we are incomplete in being, to grow is our aim, and that knowledge, action, creation, enjoyment are the best which most help us to expand, grow, feel our existence.

Mere existence is not fullness of being. Being knows itself as power, consciousness, delight; a greater being means a greater power, consciousness and delight.

If by greater being we incurred only a greater pain and suffering, this good would not be worth having. Those who say that it is, mean simply that we get by it a greater sense of fulfilment which brings of itself a greater joy of the power of existence, and an extension of suffering or a loss of other enjoyment is worth having as a price for this greater sense of wideness, height and power. But this could not be the perfection of being or the highest height of its fulfilment; suffering is the seal of a lower status. The highest consciousness is integrally fulfilled in wideness and power of its existence, but also it is integrally fulfilled in delight.

The knower of Brahman has not only the joy of light, but gains something immense as the result of his knowledge, *brahmavid āpnoti*.

What he gains is that highest, that which is supreme; he gains the highest being, the highest consciousness, the highest wideness and power of being, the highest delight; *brahmavid āpnoti param*.

* * *

The Supreme is not something aloof and shut up in itself. It is not a mere indefinable, prisoner of its own featureless absoluteness, impotent to define, create, know itself variously, eternally buried in a sleep or a swoon of self-absorption. The Highest is the Infinite and the Infinite contains the All. Whoever attains the highest consciousness, becomes infinite in being and embraces the All.

To make this clear the Upanishad has defined the Brahman as the Truth, Knowledge, Infinity and has defined the result of the knowledge of Him in the secrecy, in the cave of being, in the supreme ether as the enjoyment of all its desires by the soul of the individual in the attainment of its highest self-existence.

Our highest state of being is indeed a becoming one with Brahman in his eternity and infinity, but it is also an association with him in delight of self-fulfilment, *aśnute saha brahmaṇā*. And that principle of the Eternal by which this association is possible, is the principle of his knowledge, his self-discernment and all-discernment, the wisdom by which he knows himself perfectly in all the world and all beings, *brahmaṇā vipaścitā*.

Delight of being is the continent of all the fulfilled values of existence which we now seek after in the forms of desire. To know its conditions and possess it purely and perfectly is the infinite privilege of the eternal Wisdom.

Truth, Knowledge, Infinity

Truth, Knowledge, Infinity, not as three separate things, but in their inseparable unity, are the supernal conscious being of the Eternal. It is an infinite being, an infinite truth of being, an infinite self-knowledge of self-being. Take one of these away and the idea of the Eternal fails us; we land ourselves in half-lights, in dark or shining paradoxes without issue or in a vain exaggeration and apotheosis of isolated intellectual conceptions.

Infinity is the timeless and spaceless and causeless infinity of the eternal containing all the infinities of space and time and the endless succession which humanly we call causality. But in fact causality is only an inferior aspect and translation into mental and vital terms of something which is not mechanical causality, but the harmonies of a free self-determination of the being of the Eternal.

Truth is truth of the infinite and eternal, truth of being, and truth of becoming only as a self-expression of the being. The circumstances of the self-expression appear to the mind as the finite, but nothing is really finite except the way the mind has of experiencing all that appears to its view. All things are, each thing is the Brahman.

Knowledge is the Eternal's inalienable self-knowledge of his infinite self-existence and of all its truth and reality and, in that truth, of all things as seen not by the mind, but by the self-view of the Spirit. This knowledge is not possible to the mind; it can only be reflected inadequately by it when it is touched by a ray from the secret luminous cavern of our superconscious being; yet of that ray we can make a shining ladder to climb into the source of this supreme self-viewing wisdom.

To know the eternal Truth, Knowledge, Infinity is to know the Brahman.

Note on the Texts

The translations and commentaries published here represent Sri Aurobindo's Upanishadic interpretation in its most mature and finished form. They include the final versions of his translations of the Isha, Kena, Mundaka and Katha Upanishads, complete commentaries on the Isha and Kena Upanishads, and a commentary on part of the Taittiriya Upanishad. Sri Aurobindo wrote all these texts after he settled in Pondicherry in 1910. Translations and commentaries written before that date or left incomplete have been omitted. Such texts, which are of considerable value to students of Sri Aurobindo's thought, are available in other publications.

Sri Aurobindo began his work on the Upanishads in Baroda around 1900. Between then and 1910 he wrote complete translations of eight Upanishads, incomplete commentaries on the Isha, Kena and others, and several incomplete expository works on the philosophy of the Upanishads. After settling in Pondicherry he continued this work, concentrating as before mostly on the Isha Upanishad. Between 1914 and 1920 he published his final versions of his translations of the Isha, Kena and Mundaka, and the "Readings in the Taittiriya Upanishad". Somewhat earlier, he had revised most of his translation of the Katha Upanishad. Further information on these works is given below.

Introduction. This is not an independent work, but Chapter XVII of *A Defence of Indian Culture*, first published in the monthly review *Arya* in June 1920. It has been included here by the editors to serve as an introduction to the translations and commentaries.

Isha Upanishad. Translation and analysis published in the *Arya* between August 1914 and May 1915. Published as a book by the Arya Publishing House, Calcutta, in 1921. A second, slightly revised edition, brought out in 1924 and reprinted in 1941 and 1945 by the same publishers. The same text reprinted many of times since then, both separately and in other books, notably *Eight Upanishads* (1953) and *The Upanishads* (1972 and subsequently).

Kena Upanishad. Translation and commentary published in the *Arya* between June 1915 and July 1916. Lightly revised sometime between 1916 and 1920, but never reprinted during Sri Aurobindo's lifetime. Revised translation first printed in 1970; revised commentary first printed

in 1981.

Mundaka Upanishad. Translation published in the *Arya* between in November and December 1920. Revised during the late 1940s. Revised translation published in *Eight Upanishads* in 1953 and subsequently.

Katha Upanishad. Translation published in the *Karmayogin* in July and August 1909. Incompletely revised some years later in Pondicherry. The revised version published posthumously in 1952 and subsequently.

Readings in the Taittiriya Upanishad. First part published in the *Arya* in November 1918. Second part apparently written immediately afterwards but never published during Sri Aurobindo's lifetime. First part republished in *The Upanishads* in 1972; second part first published in the 1981 edition.

The Present Text

The present text of all the pieces in this publication is that of the second edition of *The Upanishads* (1981).