

SECTION III. (*Continued.*)

CHAPTER IX.

THE BRĀHMANAS.

The reasons for the name *Brāhmaṇa*, common to a portion of the scriptures and to a caste.—The general nature and scheme of the contents and the authorship of the *Brāhmaṇas*.—The mystery of being, the endlessness of details, and their synthesis and unification in the scriptures.—The relation of the various parts of the scriptures, as principle and concrete detail, aphorism and commentary.—The *Brāhmaṇas* of the *R̥g-Veḍa*.—Those of the *Yajuh*.—Those of the *Sāma*.—Those of the *Aṭharva*.—Opening root-sentences of each of the four.—Recapitulation.—The significance of hymns and prayers.—The allegory of Mahā-Viṣṇu sleeping in the ocean of milk.

The *Mahā-vākya* is the seed-thought; the *Veḍas* are the expansion and development of that seed; and the *Brāhmaṇas* are the further expansion of the *Veḍas*, that is to say, of the *Samhitā* proper. There are four *Brāhmaṇas* to each *Veḍa*, corresponding severally with cognition, desire, action and the summation.

It is true that the word *Brāhmaṇa* is applied to a caste. It is applied to this part of scripture

also for the same etymological reasons. He who knows Brahman is a brāhmaṇa; that which imparts the knowledge of Brahman, reveals it and makes it known, is also *Brāhmaṇa*.

Further details of the four factors of the World-process, cognition, etc., are expounded in these *Brāhmaṇas*. The four sub-hierarchs of Viṣṇu write the jñāna-portions; the four sub-hierarchs of Brahmā, the kriyā-portions; and those of Shiva the ichchhā-portions. The summation-portions are also similarly dealt with by four sub-hierarchs, niyāmakas. These divisions within divisions arise in consequence of the endless variations, modifications and correlations which each factor undergoes; and separate office-bearers have to be deputed to deal with each main type of work arising out of these variations. It is admitted on all hands that a whole world-system exists in each atom, that in every world-system again are innumerable atoms, and that every atom performs such an incalculable number of movements that those of even a single day cannot be accurately counted by the whole science of *Jyotiṣha*. The result is that only the general principles of the co-ordination of all the multifarious things of the World-process can be mastered, even with the help of these many *Brāhmaṇas*; and this is the whole fruit of knowledge.

Therefore is it that to know the Unity is to become Brahman. Otherwise indeed the world is endless and beyond the knowledge of any. As is written :

The knower knoweth not ; who doth not know
He only knoweth, knoweth he the all.

Ask not of others, look within Thyself.

Such is the mystery of Being, such the wonder of the world. Thou thyself art all. Dost thou not recognise thyself within thyself? Art thou, or art thou not? Dost thou know or dost thou not know? Dost thou act or dost thou not act? If thou knowest not thine own work, is it not wonderful that thou shouldst seek to know the world? That which to thee seems marvellous is only that which does not enter into thy intelligence, either because of the narrowness of that intelligence, or from inattention, or lack of relevant and careful consideration. In truth, there is naught marvellous; for everywhere, everything exists.

Hence the teaching, to be heedfully grasped and followed: attend first to thy duty to wife and children; then, to thy duty to thy country, the larger home; and then, to thy duty to the whole earth; then, to thy duty to the world-system, the brahmāṇḍa. Thus, stage by stage, will the unity of the whole be realised. And as there are many stages in the life-work of a man, so may it be inferred that

there are likewise many in the life-work of Mahā-Viṣṇu. What is in the root, that only appears in the branch. The highest truth, the law according to which the worlds are created, that same law manifests in every atom. To that law, smallness and greatness are both alike, or may even be said not to exist, for that which is manifest in the small, that only is manifest in the great, and *vice versa*. The knowledge of the truth is not necessarily attained by the study of only the so-called large or great. It is attained equally by the full and free study of a single atom.

And, indeed, thus only can all sciences, all teachings, be saved from futility. There is no knowledge worthy of the name until all sciences, all teachings, can be deduced from and applied to a single atom. In the absence of such insight and comprehensive grasp, to say 'I have learnt this,' 'I have learnt that,' is mere vanity. This co-ordination, synthesis, unification, equality or sameness of all should be realised by the study of the atom, and then—for the elimination of all suspicion of separateness and the establishment of a complete co-ordination in detail—all the sciences, all the *śāstras*, should be studied.

Thus, then, in their respective lines of succession and official gradation, in the department of work of each, Mahā-Viṣṇu, Viṣṇu, Brahmā and Shiva, and of Shakti, the consort or

energy, of each also, there are four chief subordinates and four main laws of cognition etc., worked by them. This quaternary (of office-bearers or sub-hierarchs, or laws of nature, or modes of life and consciousness) manifests throughout the world. And under each of these again are other four, and under them still others and so on endlessly.¹ This endlessness is

¹A familiar illustration may bring these statements home to the reader and justify at the same time the law of analogy, 'as above so below,' 'as the small so the great'. Roughly, the life of a nation may be divided into (a) educational, (b) industrial, (c) administrative, which binds the other two together, and (d) 'policy,' 'government,' 'national life' as a whole in an all-comprehensive sense, corresponding respectively to cognition, action, desire and summation. 'The welfare of the nation' is the root-principle, the watchword, the motto, the 'logion,' which sums up its whole life. The expansion of this logion is the statute-book which governs in more detail the departments above-mentioned. But under each of these we may discern others. Under (a) educational, we may note the further division of (i) Tutorial and professorial function, literary and scientific research, or educational work proper, (ii) ecclesiastical, theological, religious, philosophical and literary activity and ministration, (iii) inspectorial, supervisory or disciplinary work which connects the other two and makes their working possible, and (iv) 'Pedagogics,' dealing with educational

the endlessness of the ways of individual manifestation, whereas Unity constantly resides unbroken in the Necessity of the Three-in-One. For necessity is ever one, unique, partless, non-comparative, ungraded and ungradable. If a thing is necessary, no question arises of its being

policy, the bearing on the national life of the growth of knowledge of this and the other world—again corresponding to cognition, action, desire and summation. Under (b) industrial, we have (i) scientific knowledge and art, (ii) factories, trades, industries, commerce and all appliances for travel, (iii) the organisation of labor and capital which makes the utilisation of (i) for (ii) possible, and (iv) economics as a whole. Under (c) we have (i) the financial, (ii) the civil, and (iii) the military, or force proper, which makes the two others possible, and (iv) office and legislation generally. Under (d) we may distinguish (i) the science and scheme of government, politics in the widest sense, (ii) the functions of the ruler, whether monarchical, parliamentary or republican, (iii) the sovereign will, and finally (iv) the national organisation as a whole.

Each of these sub-divisions again has its own (1) bye-laws, rules etc., (2) the applications or workings out of those rules and bye-laws, (3) disciplinary or police provisions which make the other two possible, and (4) the scheme rationalising the whole. The illustration may be worked out to an indefinite length. Thus (c.iii) military, may be sub-divided into (1) the science and art of offensive and defensive con-

small or great; it is simply indispensable. When we say of a thing that it is more necessary and of another that it is less necessary, what we mean really is that in the particular circumstances only the one is truly and indispensably necessary, and that the other can be dispensed

structions, forts, men-of-war, weapons, the theories of tactics, strategy, manœuvres, drill and discipline etc., (2) actual defence and offence operations, (3) the commissariat and (4) general domestic and foreign military policy. And any one of these, say the commissariat, may again be broken up into (1) the theory of the hygiene, sanitation and housing and harboring of armies and navies, (2) actual supply of requirements, food, clothes, ammunition, stores in general, (3) discipline and policing, and (4) the war department as a whole. Or take (a.i) educational; here, say, in the department of the microscopist out of innumerable possible lines of study and research, we may distinguish (1) the finding of the specimen, showing desire, (2) the preparation of it by multifarious processes, mechanical and chemical, section-cutting with microtoms, immersion in various solutions, affixing to glass-slides etc., all showing activity, (3) the observation and examination, corresponding to cognition, and (4) the publication of the results. And so on. A little careful consideration will show how cognition, desire, action and summation are always interlacing in endless complication, so that each in every manifestation involves corresponding manifestations of the other two.

with and is therefore not necessary in truth. But from the universal standpoint all and each is equally necessary, for it is all equally present in the I-This-Not, and there is no more reason for any one than for any other in the view of the Whole.

Accepting this absence of finality, *anavas-tṛhā*, 'no-stopping-short, no-standing-still,' as prevailing everywhere, the *Veḍas* and all subservient sciences endeavour to co-ordinate this endless multiplicity of the World-process into a unity. Otherwise, that is to say, if we did not recognise such an endlessness of particulars, and insisted on a mere unity, then no speech at all would be possible; in fact there would be no distinction of knower, knowledge and known, and much less of speaker, speech and spoken about. Speech, the *Veḍas*, are made possible by the fact of the existence of these endless

Finally books embodying *knowledge* may be and are written on any and every one of these heads and sub-heads and by appropriate *workers*; and even so are we to understand the compilation of the various parts of Scripture. It may be objected that these divisions and sub-divisions often appear artificial; but this is support instead of refutation. When everything is inextricably mixed up with other things, no hard and fast division is possible. Do not regard these divisions as hard and fast and their artificiality disappears.

particulars; and, therefore, the actuality of these particulars is proved by the possibility of speaking about them. For to impose even the possibility of 'becoming' on what does not really 'become' at some time or other is not right. In the contrary case, it is right and proper to speak of those things as possible (at one time) which do actually 'become' (at some other time).¹ Now the possibility of all things what-

¹ In this argument we may discern the metaphysical reason of the statement in the footnote at page 282 of vol. i of *The Secret Doctrine* that nothing can possibly come into any human consciousness, however weird, fanciful, monstrous, the conception may be, which does not actually exist in the world in some plane of matter or other. And when we further realise that every such conception is itself a 'formulation' a picturing, a copy, in matter of the mental or astral plane, the argument becomes clearer. Herein also we see what element of truth there is in the view of those philosophers who make conceivability a test of truth; also, in the view that every idea or opinion, however erroneous-seeming, which has entered into any human consciousness at all, must because of that fact have some element of truth in it, otherwise it could not have appeared in that consciousness—a view, which, if held more commonly, would bring about the amicable settlement of many controversies that now seem hopeless of adjustment. The analogy between the small human author of a little story and the divine author

soever is implied in the triad of the Self, the Not-Self and the Not-Not-Self, that is to say, in the affirmation of the I, its denial, and the denial of that denial; and we accordingly find that all these *bhāvas*, possibilities, 'becomings,' which are so implied in these three are actually manifested and are also described in the *Veḍas*, etc., by Mahā Viṣṇu, Viṣṇu, Brahmā, Shiva, Shakti, etc.

In this description, as indicated before, the root and essence of the whole World-process naturally comes first, and that is the transcendental fact indicated by the *Praṇava*. Then of a great world-drama is very close. See *Bhagavad-Gītā*, ii. 16, Vyāsa's *Yoga-Bhāṣya*, iii. 14, and *The Science of Peace*, p. 123. In most of the Purāṇas, the 'universal' facts, materials or contents of the World-process are described in the terms of *Sāṅkhya*, and are designated as *अबुद्धिपूर्वःसर्गोऽयम्*, the 'automatic or mechanical' evolution, that is to say dependent only on the All-consciousness, and independent of the consciousness of any particular individual Īshvara, whose particular world-system, world-egg, *brahmāṇḍa*, becomes his *बुद्धिपूर्वःसर्गः* conscious or deliberate formation.

As the Arabian doctors taught, all that is conceivable already *is*, in the All, whether or not it be in manifestation at any time and place. That which is not always existent, has no possible nor conceivable existence, cannot be imagined or

comes the subtle seed-ideation of Mahā-Viṣṇu embodied in the *Gāyatrī* and the *Mahā-vākyas*. Thereafter we have, as embodied in the *Veḍas*, the expansion of that ideation, still in the way of universal principles, by the ideations of Viṣṇu, Brahmā and Shiva, in pursuance of the instructions of Mahā-Viṣṇu. Then follow the varieties of *prakāra*, method, law, that is to say, a further descent into details; and these are intended to be explained by the sixteen *Brāhmaṇas*.

In the first *Brāhmaṇa* of the *Rg-veḍa* is contained the ideation of Viṣṇu relating to *jñāna*,

thought of. Every conceivable thing exists in eternity, and appears and disappears in time and space, becomes and vanishes; but has always Being. Out of the all any Īshvara chooses the materials, for his system, and within that system there can only appear such of the contents of the All as he has selected for possible manifestation in a particular time and place, his *aṁsha*, portion. Thus looked at the 'reason' for the existence of any particular phenomenon—an elephant, an octopus, a gnat, a planet—is exactly the same as the 'reason' for the existence of any other; each one *is*, and it 'becomes' when selected for manifestation by an Īshvara, or, within his selection, by any self-conscious being in his world-system. A genius is only a man who draws more largely than his fellows on the ever-existing store. (A.B.)

cognition or knowledge. 'Viṣṇu instructed his subordinate departmental officers thus: There are four *Brāhmaṇas*, and there are four subdivisions of knowledge too. First, cognition proper, the connecting of everything with or in or by means of knowledge; this is the aham-buddhi, the I-consciousness. Second, cognition within or succeeded by action; the projection of the self into an act. Third, cognition concerned with desire; the consciousness that the I should be known and that the This should also be known; in other words, the 'making' or feeling of desire between the I and the This. Fourth, cognition relating to summation; after having known the I, and felt desire, enter on action; for where else can the desire of the I reside, exist, become manifest, find free play, than in action and cognition; after having known the I, known desire, and known action are the three summed up in life-work.' Because of all this is the work of Viṣṇu and of his sub-hierarchs said to be the work of preservation, *pālana*; the fulfilling of the desire for anything that appears anywhere in the I, as may be necessary, is *pālana*. This is also the reason for the public tradition that Viṣṇu is pervasive of all creatures and ever abides with each. It is true that every *jīva* constantly makes seemingly independent efforts; 'I have done this, not you; I am so-and-so while you are not; I am a chief,

a king, a learned man, an artist, etc.' But all this is the utterance of the illusory consciousness of aham-kāra, I-ness, individuality, egoism. In reality Viṣṇu is the mover, inspirer and propeller of this *jīva*, (i.e., of all *jīvas* within his world-system. 'All this is by the *amsha*, portion, of Viṣṇu,' i.e., all this consciousness of self-effort in *jīvas* is but participation in the life of Viṣṇu.¹ The work of preservation that takes place in every atom takes place because of his presence there. Viṣṇu first cognises himself: I am the ruler, and rules ought to be made by me. This may be said to be knowledge within knowledge, knowledge about knowledge, cognition inclusive of other cognitions. Having thus ideated, or formulated

¹ This will be clear to the reader when he has mastered the significance of individualities within individualities, cells within tissues, tissues within organs, organs within persons and so on. (See *The Science of Peace*, p. 216.) He will then see that Viṣṇu's consciousness of self-effort, 'initiative,' is also illusory with reference to the consciousness of Mahā-Viṣṇu and so on, endlessly. From the transcendental or *paramārtha* standpoint the World-process is mechanical, automatic, carried on by one Autos, the One Will of the Universal Self; from the empirical or *vyavahāra* standpoint, each of the endless movements of any world-system is initiated by the individual will of some one self or another. Etymologically Viṣṇu means the pervador.

his laws, he cognises the aṇu, the 'small' or the atom: This atom is subordinate to me. Such is the consciousness of the This; it is knowledge as regards the element of action, eṭaṭ; it is active or actional cognition. Thirdly, he cognises the desire of the atom: This atom has such and such a need or necessity. This is knowledge with respect to the element of Negation, desire; it is volitional cognition. Lastly, even when the thought is of the nature of affirmation, 'is,' even then the negation 'is not' is also present; for the question has been 'is it or is it not necessary,' and after having determined this question in the affirmative he satisfies the desire. And this is knowledge with respect to the summation, summative or summational cognition.

We see the same processes in daily human life. Every man first cognises, acquires knowledge about, his work or business, what he wants to do; then about his 'necessary cause' or the necessary means that only will enable him to carry out his work; then of the relation of the things or objects involved in that work with himself, *i.e.*, he finds out how he stands in respect of those things and how or in what way his business will be helped or hindered¹ by them. And so on.

¹ To take a concrete case: I first determine that I would like to go to such and such a place; then I

Knowledge of these various kinds, all the element of cognition, in all its varieties, is thus expounded in the *Brāhmaṇas*. For instance, it is shown there that there is a triplicity in ākāśha, the cognition-element being called chiḍ-ākāśha, the action-element mahākāśha, the desire-element ākāśha proper; the summation being the paṛ-ākāśha.¹ Further, each sub-division has its own corresponding sub-division of the property of sound which belongs to this element, *viz.*, parā, paśhyantī, maḍhyamā and vaikharī; more details on which subject are to be sought in the science of language. The element of cognition in this triad of ākāśhas and their summation, what the use or purpose and application of cognition is in this aspect of ākāśha, by what law it is cognition—all this is determined and made clear by the *Rg-Veda-Brāhmaṇa*. The other elements, two

find out whether road, rail, ship or other is the best means; then, what things will be requisite or useful on the journey; then I take into consideration the whole of these and, if everything is satisfactory, I decide to entertain the wish and finally proceed to carry it out.

¹ In extant Samskr̥t literature, many of the so-called minor Upaniṣats and also the *Yoga-Vāsiṣṭha* mention different kinds of ākāśha. In some, five kinds are distinguished, and the names vary also.

preceding and four succeeding ākāsha, are similarly treated.

There are seven elements, on the general principle (which, as said before, governs the number of the *Āngas* and the *Upāṅgas*) of the sub-division of the triad of cognition, etc., by two. These two elements, *mahaṭ* and *buddhi*, that are not commonly known, are matter of *yoga*, not for daily life, and are dealt with in the *Vedas* only for the use of those who have to carry on the processes of the world by means of archetypes, *samsāra-rūpa-taṭṭva* (?). The cognitive element in each of these, in its subtle as well as gross aspects is described in the *Brāhmaṇa*: What is the work of *chid-ākāsha* in the element of *vāyu*, what is *chid-vāyu*, what is the relation between the three *vāyus*, what effects are produced on or in *tejas* by *chid-vāyu* and *chid-ākāsha*, what is *chit-tejas*, what is the relation between its three sub-divisions, and so on with regard to the other successive elements.

There are similarly four *Brāhmaṇas* in the *Yajur-veda* dealing with the factor of *kriyā* or action.

Brahmā plans out all action and instructs his subordinate hierarchs therein thus: 'The first sub-division of action is that which bases on cognition; the second is devoted to desire; the

third is action proper; and the fourth is of the nature of summation. All the office-bearers of our department of work are followers of Viṣṇu; you should obtain the necessary knowledge from him or his department and carry out your actions accordingly'. And the sub-hierarchs of Brahman obtain their information from the sub-hierarchs of Viṣṇu of the corresponding grades, even as in daily human life people establish relationships with their equals in respect of knowledge, activity, wishes and inclinations, and condition in life as a whole.¹

The first sub-division or cognitional action is the recognition of oneself as an actor; this is the element of Viṣṇu, mere cognition; also the cognition of the truth about the performance and the instruments of performance of action, *viz.*, such and such are the methods and such the successive steps of the performance of such an action, such the rules and conditions under which the action can be undertaken and the methods followed, etc.; all this is action in the aspect of cognition. Then, in the second place, we have the desire-aspect of action, 'I have obtained knowledge of the matter, I should now take

¹ Compare the significance of modern administrative terms and things corresponding to these terms: 'bureau of information', 'despatching office,' 'weeding department', 'public works department,' etc.

action'; this is the activity of desire, desire-action. Thirdly, there is the action proper, the active conduct after feeling the desire and ascertaining the necessity for the action. In the action, again, all these are summed up, and so we have the fourth aspect, that of summation. Actual action, action proper, stands between the desire and the summation and implies the latter, that is to say, all four aspects, thus: 'I am Brahman, the actor; this is the present need or necessity; to fulfil it I do this; this is done by me'.

All this is taught in the *Brāhmaṇa* of the *Yajur-veda*. And therein are also described and set forth the actional sub-divisions of the mahat and buddhi elements, and of ākāśha, viz., the mahākāśha, and also of the other elements, and their respective functions, their mutual relations, their fields of activity, and the results produced by that activity in gross and subtle aspects, with all their permutations and combinations.

The four sub-divisions of desire should be studied in the *Brāhmaṇa* of the *Sāma-veda*. (1) The desire to know; whence (2) the desire to possess; thereafter (3) the desire to secure possession, i.e., to take the necessary steps, the action, that will bring possession; and finally (4) the attainment—these respectively are the four

sub-divisions, cognitive-desire, desire-proper, active-desire and summation-desire.

The ruler of desire is Shiva and his instruction to his sub-hierarchs takes this shape: Behold, our work is the work of destruction. The order and the way thereof are these. This should be destroyed first, this afterwards; and such and such work of the nature of negation should be performed. First, make enquiry, entertain the 'desire to know,' and thoroughly and fully understand the nature of the I and the This. Then entertain the desire to possess, 'I shall obtain the This and the I'. Having obtained them, you will pass on to the Negation, to the declaration, 'no (I want them no more)'. In the Negation is the summation, sam-ā-hāra, 'bringing all together' and it is the sam-hāra also, the 'taking all in,' re-absorption, destruction.

All these sub-divisions should be studied in the subtle and the gross, (the psychical or subjective and the material or objective aspects), with reference to the desire-sub-divisions of the various root-elements, as in the case of the cognitional and actional sub-divisions thereof.

After all these have been learnt (and study of them completed and experience exhausted, for the time being,) the Negation is entered upon. Pralaya begins with the desire-sub-division of

pr̥thvī and all the others are destroyed successively in order. This process is universal and may be observed in each atom, *viz.*, first the working of desire qualified by knowledge, then attainment, then destruction.¹ Psychologically, contempt, insult, disrespect, hostility, altercation, detraction, slander, anger, etc., (the negative or destructive sides of the emotional life), are all included in desire.

All these matters are made plain in the *Brāhmaṇa* of the *Sāma-Veda*.

Finally we have the same four sub-divisions under the summation, and with respect to them Mahā-Viṣṇu instructs his sub-hierarchs:² 'First

¹ Cf. anabolism, optimum, and katabolism, all included in metabolism.

² One would have thought that the sub-hierarchs of Mahā-Viṣṇu were only Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Shiva; but it seems that just as (looking from the *vyavahāra* or empirical standpoint) consciousness is something more than its three aspects, an organism more than all the organs, so the summation is not merely the simple total of the other three, but something over and above, and the *Aṭharva* not a mere binding together into one volume of the three other *Vedas* but something which includes them and further explains and schematises them. Accordingly, for the working of the *Aṭharva*, Mahā-Viṣṇu takes a place as it were by the side of the three gods and has separate sub-hierarchs also. See the statements as to the Tetractys, in *The Secret Doctrine*, vol. iii.

comes the securing of knowledge with its four sub-divisions of (a) the wish to know, corresponding with desire, (b) the intimation of this wish to some one else able to fulfil it, corresponding to action, (c) the development within oneself of the necessary qualification, *aḍhikāra*, authority, right, title, for the obtaining of the needed knowledge, corresponding to cognition, and (d) the attainment of the knowledge, corresponding to the summation. Secondly, we have desire with its four sub-divisions of (a) knowledge of the pleasantness of a thing, (b) the desire to obtain it because of the pleasantness, (c) the search for the means of acquisition, and (d) the acquisition. Thirdly, there is action, (a) the desire to do, (b) the desire to find out the means of action, (c) the action and (d) the wish to give up, to cease from action, renunciation.

In the commonest compound, the compound shows attributes unmanifest in its constituent factors. Oxygen and hydrogen yield, as compound, water, and water has properties which are not found in its constituent gases. Nitrogen, most inert of elements, united with chlorine, quiet enough by itself, gives compounds that explode with a tremor, or with the touch of a feather. Innumerable instances might be given to show that a summation is more than its parts, the reason therefor apparently being that the 'organism' is inhabited by a *jīva* of a higher grade in manifestation than those which inhabit the 'organs' which make it up.—A. B.

Finally we have the summation with its (a) wish to know, (b) wish to acquire, (c) wish to act, and (d) the act.

All these matters, the desire to know, to acquire, to do, to abandon, the doing, the results, one's own condition, the significance of own, another, this, thou, I, which, him, all, if, then, because, therefore, wherefore, from all, mine, thine, his, before, after, earlier, later, etc.—all this should be studied in the *Aṭharva-Veḍa* (*Brāhmaṇa*).

Without the *Brāhmaṇas* it is impossible to understand the *Veḍas*. They have been specially formulated for the separate enunciation of all the main laws of the World-process. And so long as the convergence and divergence, the separate effects as well as the interworking of these laws is not understood, so long will the formation of new worlds remain impossible.

The following are the opening sentences of the four *Brāhmaṇas* of the four *Veḍas* respectively; each is also the root-aphorism which indicates the principal or predominant subject-matter of its *Brāhmaṇa* and also the nature of its connexion with its *Veḍa*.

(a) Aham ṭaṭṭvam aparam.

(b) Prasthitaṃ pūrvāparam kṛtaṃ
akṛtaṃ kāraṇa-kaṛṭṭkam.

(c) Na evam na cha eṭaṭ pratyāśhā
samāḍhyastham cha ananvayam
brahma-ṭaṭṭvam akhilam.

(d) Kriyā-guṇa-dharma-sampatti-
sāḍhana-lakṣaṇam alakṣaṇam
cha samāhṛtaṃ.¹

The principle embodied in each of these mūla-vākya-s, root-sentences, governs the rest of the work; and throughout the *Brāhmaṇas* every successive minor or subordinate logion is formulated in genetic consonance with the root-logion, and each word of each such minor logion also conforms to the same rule of consonance.

To recapitulate a little. Mahā-Viṣṇu first obtains or receives the AUM. He ideates it and finds that there is a succession within the successionless, the transcendent. To discover the details of that succession he studies the *Mahā-veḍas* which, again, are the ideation of some one else, for the series and succession of

¹ These sentences are wholly unintelligible without commentary, which the *Praṇava-Vāda* does not supply; hence they have been left untranslated. At the time of the dictation of the work, in the hurry of it, I unfortunately omitted (so far as I can now remember) to ask him to supply the needed interpretation from some of the other works which he said he had by heart, e. g., Gobbili's *Tīkā* on the *Praṇava-Vāda* itself.

rulers is endless. After having mastered the essence of the *Mahā-veḍas* and so become Brahman, he enters on the construction of this samsāra in a series of brahmāṇḍas. For this purpose there arises within him further ideation in accordance with the *Mahā-veḍas*. The steps and stages thereof are somewhat as follows: 'In what manner is this possible? It has been made clear to us that the formation of a samsāra is our duty. These are the various ways of doing it. In which one of these ways or orders is it fit for me to engage in this work?' All this deliberation is symbolised as sleeping in the kṣhīra-sāgara, the 'ocean of milk'. The condition of reflectiveness is the 'ocean of milk'. Kṣhīra signifies the stainless. Mahā-Viṣṇu is stainless relatively, by comparison with us. This relativity must never be lost sight of. As has been said before, as an atom of our world-system is to the Mahā-Viṣṇu thereof, so is Mahā-Viṣṇu in turn to a greater being; and as an atom is to our world-system so is that whole world-system to a larger one, so that literally worlds are hidden in atoms and atoms in worlds again endlessly. And even so is the condition of Mahā-Viṣṇu's stainlessness comparative. In this condition, this sāgara or ocean of stainlessness, the thought about the creation of a new world arises. Hence is it also called the bhava-sāgara; bhavana means becoming,

coming into existence, and pertains to a vaśṭhā or condition; 'a thing becomes' means 'comes out of one condition into another condition'.

(Another interpretation however of the word bhava-sāgara is the tumultuous ocean of birth and death and rebirth from which escape is so difficult; and hence we find such statements as these:) Beholding this most fearful bhava-sāgara, one shore of which is the endless and the other shore the transcendent, and which is studded with the rocky islands of world-systems on which the hapless jīva is flung about and bruised and battered by the overwhelming waves of karma helplessly, the terrified and despairing jīva cries out to the ruler thereof: 'Save me, save me, take me across, O Bearer of the Discus!' Yet such is the cry of only him who knows the This alone and not also the Self and the Negation. He who knows the three has no need to cry out thus. He knows and says: 'As thou art, so am I, so are all these others. There is no crossing and no saving here. By the path by which thou hast arrived at thy estate, by that same path shall I arrive there too. Such is the law, and it must be fulfilled'. Thus, indeed, to know the three is to be saved.

Under these circumstances the use and justification of hymns, prayers, etc., is but this, viz., that he who is the ruler of this world-system is

our chief, and when we say to him, 'save us,' we mean only that he should make plain to us the means of crossing over, the way by which we could go over to the place he himself occupies. For he who has trodden a path to a goal, he and he only knows all about the path, and from him only is it fitting to receive knowledge and instruction about it. It is true that the manner of treading that path is explained in the *Vedas* and the subsidiary sciences, and attainment of the goal will surely follow upon the *practice* of it; but (to study a work is also to appeal to its author for information and to receive it from him, and moreover) the practice cannot be had without making known the desire for it to those who can teach it. All kinds of knowledge are, no doubt, written down in the books, as 'this is so and this is so'. But the one so and the other so are not realised except in and by practice. The mere knowledge is fruitless. And knowledge can be put into practice only with the help of a competent guide. Thus, if an inhabitant of one country wishes to travel to another he may find out from written books in what direction from his own this other country lies, what other lands, rivers and oceans intervene, what roads and routes are available and so forth; yet it will be necessary for him to consult others who have

actually made the journey, for confirmation or correction of the information contained in the book; and, more, after he has received such confirmation, to seek for a companion and assistant to go with him to the desired place. It is true that sometimes persons start by themselves, without companions; but even so, they meet with companions on the road later on; and in any case, these are exceptional instances falling under special laws.

In this sense, then, the *jīva* may and should appeal for help to those who have trodden this path to *mukṭi* or to the ruler of the system. For all are the helpers of all, and all may appeal for help to all, and all may teach all, according to their needs and abilities, turn by turn. This is the virtue and significance of *saṭ-saṅga*, the company of the good; and such *saṭ-saṅga* only is the fruit of knowledge; for all are in essence equal and indeed the same. Otherwise, indeed, to know and not to know were the same. Knowledge is for this only that all may profit thereby, and this is rightly so and must be so, for knowledge, consciousness, is universal, and the Knower to whom it belongs is also universal.

When it is said that Mahā-Viṣṇu *sleeps* in his *nirmala-sāgara*, his 'pellucid and stainless ocean' or condition, it is not meant that he is

inactive. As said before, utter cessation of action never takes place.¹

Activity is as inseparable from all conditions as the affix ḍā, (indicative of the incessant movement of time) is inseparable from the prefixes ka, ṭa, ya, etc., (indicative of special conditions) in the words kaḍā, ṭaḍā, yaḍā, when, then, whenever, (at what time, at that time, at whichever time) etc. So, even during sleep, Mahā-Viṣṇu, preoccupied with thoughts of extensive operations, revolves in mind the various methods thereof. *Sheṣha*, (literally the 'remainder' and mythologically the thousand-headed serpent who forms the couch of Mahā-Viṣṇu) is space. Because all is endless and transcendent, space is such also. In that area of space wherever there was or is a world-system, that portion is taken up, 'bound,' occupied and unavailable. What *remains*

¹ Activity on one plane is consonant with rest on another. The *jīva* is tireless, but the vehicles tire and wear out. Hence, that the body may sleep, the *jīva*, leaving it, energises another vehicle, and is active through it on another plane. And also, Mahā-Viṣṇu, sleeping in the ocean, is active in ideation on the creative plane, and the result is the growth of the Lotus, and the appearance of Brahmā, the creator on the planes of manifestation. (A.B.)

unoccupied is the *sheṣha*, and in that Mahā-Viṣṇu sleeps, i.e., 'works,' 'ideates,' 'dreams'. Whence the tradition that 'the Lord, sleeping in the ocean of milk, creates this world'. Sleeping with Lakṣmī by his side signifies the presence of desire. Because desire is omnipresent therefore Mahā-Viṣṇu, possessed with it, performs his ideation in this remnant of space, desiring to create. Viṣṇu is born there, that is to say, an atom by evolution attains to that condition and receives a place near Mahā-Viṣṇu, by devotion to him. To him the instruction is given: 'Do you' perform the work of cognition'. Then Brahmā arises in the same way and is directed to perform all action. Finally, Shiva is born and taught to deal with desire. For himself Mahā-Viṣṇu reserves the function of 'holding together all,' the summation. The primary ideation is the *Gāyatrī*¹; the separate special instructions,

¹ The nature and significance of the *Gāyatrī* have been attempted to be explained in previous footnotes. With reference to those it may be asked, 'When the *Gāyatrī* is the effort of the ordinary human *jīva* to put itself in rapport with the Solar Logos, what can it mean in the mouth of the Solar Logos himself; what is meant by saying that *his* first ideation is the *Gāyatrī*?'. This is only another illustration of the continuum we meet with everywhere. In the mouth or mind of our Mahā-Viṣṇu

the *Mahā-vākyas*; the detailed exposition, the *Veḍas*. After receiving the detailed exposition, Viṣṇu, Brahmā and Shiva entered on their respective functions. And when the work grew in their hands, they felt the need of and appointed subordinate workers. To these subordinates they expounded their own further ideations, and these are the *Brāhmaṇas*.

When it is said that summation is the work of Mahā-Viṣṇu it should not be understood that he has only this and no other work. He has his own special work under the instructions of his own superior Mahā-Viṣṇu, and also holds together his subordinate three gods. To his own Mahā-Viṣṇu, our Mahā-Viṣṇu is only one of many subordinates, Mahā-Shiva, Mahā-Brahmā, etc., even as Brahmā or Viṣṇu or Shiva is to him. It is not known to us whether he is specially devoted to cognition or action or desire,

the *Gāyatrī* would mean *his* effort to put himself in rapport with *his superior* Logos. The *Gāyatrī* expresses, so to say, a law, an abstraction, the concrete applications and illustrations of which are on all possible scales, infinitesimal as well as pseudo-infinite, as ought to be and is the case with all true laws of nature. The constant flow of life from parent to child along the whole endless course is the primary law of all 'creation,' and hence the *Gāyatrī* which expresses this flow is rightly the first ideation.

for our knowledge does not reach up to that stage. Because all powers appear in him, so far as our world-system is concerned, therefore we may infer that he has the office, the duty and the right of producing all three. It is declared in the *Mahā-veḍas* however that this our Mahā-Viṣṇu is the cognition-official of the superior Mahā-Viṣṇu as the lord of summation.

But all this need not be discussed here, for such discussion is useless for us. It is enough for us to know that the transcendent Brahman is embodied in the universal AUM wherein the knowledge of endless Mahā-Viṣṇus is included and lies latent. Become we first like our Mahā-Viṣṇu; then will be time to think of higher reaches. That this matter has been touched on here at all is only to further illustrate and emphasise the endlessness that prevails everywhere in the World-process, because of the infinity of the Absolute Brahman.

Note :—The names of only a few of the *Brāhmaṇas* are now current; the better known are the *Aiṭareya* or *Āshvalāyana* and the *Kaushītakī* or *Sāṅkhyāyana* of the *R̥k*; *Shatapaṭha* of the *Yajuh*; *Pañchavimsha*, *Shad-vimsha* and *Tāndya* of the *Sāma*; and *Go-paṭha* of the *Aṭharva*. The text mentions the *Go-paṭha* and the *Saṭ-paṭha*. The modern spelling, it will be noticed, is *Shatapaṭha* (the 'hundred-branched,' 'of the hundred-paths') in place of *Saṭ-paṭha* (the 'good-path').

That is not compassed by the *Brāhmaṇas*,
 With all their wealth of comment and detail ;
 No great-word and no root-word may enclose
 The ever-swelling greatness of the Self.
 Yet, in this seething ocean of the world,
 With currents of succession ordered well,
 And lawless-rushing billows of turmoil,
 Shoreless, with one long shore of endlessness,
 Another of transcendence,—our sole hope,
 Haven of rest, the Sameness of the Self !

ॐ

शुभमस्तु सर्वजगताम्
 सर्वो भद्राणि पश्यतु
 लोकाः समस्ताः सुखिनो भवन्तु

ॐ

PEACE TO ALL BEINGS.

End of Vol. I.