

SECTION III. (*Continued.*)

## CHAPTER III.

## THE COMPONENTS OF THE VEDAS.

A résumé—Preliminary remarks about the nature and mutual relations of the *Pranava*, the *Gāyatrī*, the *Mahā-vākyas* and the *Vedas*.—The fruit of the study of these.

Whatever works are undertaken by *jīvas*, as we see in daily life around us, the methods of carrying them through are all first planned out in thought, and then only is action commenced. The case is the same with Mahā-Viṣṇu. He who is the ruler of this *samśāra*<sup>1</sup> first ideates all the laws, methods, means and ends of its procession and then commences actual work. This very ideation of Mahā-Viṣṇu, which is the method of the process of this world-system and which is also the operation or work of procession itself, is also the *Veḍa*, as said before. It is also Mahā-Viṣṇu himself, for although the

<sup>1</sup> This word is used in this work in two senses, (i) the metaphysical, that of the World-process, the totality of all possible world-systems of all time and all space, and (ii) the empirical, that of a particular world-system, presided over by a particular Mahā-Viṣṇu. When used in the former sense, it is spelt with a capital S.

matter that is thought about is, in one sense, different from the thinker, still, the latter, at the time of thinking, regards it as *within* himself and then thinks about it; and in that time there is no separateness between the thinker, the object thought about, and the thought; they are all three included in one. Yet, also, we distinguish between the three as separate things. The thinker is not the thought; and the object of thought, again, is different from both.<sup>1</sup> Thus paradoxical must always be the illustration of the whole by a part. And yet, although the fact illustrated is not exactly like the illustration, the latter may enable us to infer correctly what is the fact.

<sup>1</sup> The meaning of this and similar statements will become more and more clear to the reader as he proceeds further and realises more and more fully within himself the two aspects, with their corresponding standpoints, of (i) the universal, simultaneous and all-inclusive One and (ii) the individual and successive Many, dealing with the limited, the particular, the concrete, with one part at a time, in succession. The two aspects and standpoints are more or less clearly recognised in later German philosophy, though it seems to fall short of the final explanation, even as *current* Indian *Veḍānta* also just falls short of it. Whosoever has come to realise that the 'transcendental or metaphysical' point of view, as distinguished from the 'empirical

From Mahā-Viṣṇu the subordinate three gods receive the necessary instruction in the or experiential point of view, is not mere verbiage but the very centre of reality, will find that for him the ordinary dark problems, paradoxes and perplexities of psychology, of life and the world, vanish in clear sunlight.

But in order that this realisation may be attained, the intensity of the sense of egoistic personality, of the separateness of *jīva* and *jīva*, of me and thee and he, must have been made at least milder and weaker if not wholly abolished by *vairāgya*. So only can it become possible to see and feel that 'persons' are only parts, limbs, organs, tissues of larger 'persons'; that the sense of 'personality' of the *devas* differs very much in degree from that of fifth-race humans; that it is possible for the trinity of Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Shiva to exist side by side like three persons as well as within one another, or even each other, like the physical, astral and mental sheaths of one *jīva*. (See *The Science of the Emotions*, 2nd ed. p. 245.)

The corresponding Samskr̥t names for the two points of view are *paramārthadṛṣhti* and *vyavahāradṛṣhti*. The importance of this distinction cannot be reiterated too often. (i) This principle of two different standpoints; (ii) The law of analogy, that nature repeats herself, on all possible scales, in space and time; (iii) The principle of reflexion, which is but another form of the law

*Vedas*; and they in their turn pass them on to their own special subordinates. Because Brahmā of analogy, that *a* whole endeavors to reproduce *the* Whole, but can only achieve a 'comparative' and never a complete perfection, at any point of space or moment of time; (iv) That nature or Prakṛti works by extremes, and the Truth ever lies in the mean—these are keys to all possible problems.

To illustrate: It has been said in Section. III. Chapter II above that 'thought and thing are one only from the standpoint of Brahman,' the Whole. But it is said here for a particular Mahā-Viṣṇu also, that his ideation is the work of procession of his world-system and also his *Veda*. This should be understood only in a 'comparative' sense. Brahman is identical with the World-process in its Totality, and therefore is its material cause, as well as its efficient cause, as well as its instrumental cause, as well as its final cause etc. In imitation of this fact, a Mahā-Viṣṇu also endeavors to become identical with his world-system; a 'small portion' of his vast body becomes the 'material cause' of all 'creatures' within his system; his will is the efficient cause of all processes within it; his imagination or ideation the instrumental cause of all forms in it; his self-realisation in and by means of the first individualised, and then 'universalised,' or, strictly, 'generalised' consciousnesses of all his 'creatures,' is the final cause, and so

is pre-eminently concerned with the action of promulgating them, hence, while Mahā-Viṣṇu is the primary author of the *Veḍas*, Brahmā is said to be their revealer, and each one of the three gods is also said to be the author of that *Veḍa* which he specially carries into effect.

Mahā-Viṣṇu's ideation, for the creation of his own world-system, begins after he has himself obtained the AUM, the *Mahā-gāyaṭrī*, appurtenant *Mahā-vākya*s, and the *Mahā-Veḍa* from a still higher deity. The *Praṇava*, however, is ultimate<sup>1</sup> and exists everywhere, before, behind and above Mahā-Viṣṇu; it includes everything. In each, world-system, the Mahā-Viṣṇu thereof corresponds to the totality of the *Praṇava*, and Viṣṇu Brahmā and Shiva to A, U, and M, respectively.

on. In a certain sense, because all effects pre-exist in the cause, Mahā-Viṣṇu *may* be regarded as wholly identical with his world-system; and so his ideation and the processes thereof *may* be regarded as one. But, again, because we are dealing with the limited here, and *not* the Unlimited, time and space cannot be really discounted, the identity is only *comparative* and not complete, and 'ideation' and 'realisation,' 'thought' and 'thing,' are not truly and wholly the same in any particular world-system.

<sup>1</sup>Not as a particular sound, but as the Thought, I-This-Not.

Of words, the sound AUM is the first, as of letters A is the first. Then comes the *Gāyaṭrī*<sup>1</sup>; and simultaneously with it the *Mahā-vākya*s. From these two arise the *Veḍas*. As all works, small and great, are first thought of in the mind, and then their methods of performance are planned out, and finally orders are given to the subordinate executors and the workers in detail—such is the mutual relation of the *Gāyaṭrī* the *Mahā-vākya*s and the *Veḍās*. The 'word' which embodies the proper time and season of the *avaḍhāraṇa*, ideation, which embodies the knowledge that this-and-this fact arises from such-and-such a principle or seed or source, and that this is the appropriate method of bringing about this result and for this reason—this 'word' is the *Gāyaṭrī*. As the ordinary man carries the largest schemes in the mind by means of very small words, signs, symbols—even such is the case with Mahā-Viṣṇu. The thought of Mahā-Viṣṇu as to each principal method or law of the world-system is embodied in a *Mahā-Vākya*. Hence is it said that the *Gāyaṭrī* is the mother of the *Veḍa*, the *Mahā-vākya* the father, and AUM, the root of all, the grandfather of the *Veḍas*, wherein

<sup>1</sup>The *Gāyaṭrī* is the 'chant,' the sacred *manṭra* or prayer and invocation, addressed to the Sun daily by every twice-born man. *Mahā-vākya* is 'great sentence,' *logion*.

the Trinity dwells and whence succession flows forth.

The non-separateness of the *Gāyatrī* and the *Mahā-vākyas* has been insisted on everywhere, because of their simultaneity. The distinction between them is the distinction between whole and part. The whole of all thinking is the *Gāyatrī*.<sup>1</sup> A *Mahā-vākya* is one portion thereof. The detailed expansion and working out of all these is the *Veḍa*. The *Gāyatrī* corresponds to cognition, the *Mahā-vākyas* to desire, the *Veḍas* to action, *i. e.*, to A, M, and U, respectively. Finally, the student obtains the true knowledge of the *Mahā-vākyas* and of the *Gāyatrī* only after having studied the *Āṅgas* and the *Upāṅgas*, the 'limbs' and the 'sub-limbs,' which bring out the truths of the *Veḍas*. The six *Āṅgas* are derived by the sub-division of cognition, and action into three each, *i. e.*, by cognition, desire and action; and the six *Upāṅgas* or *Ḍarshanas*, conversely, by the sub-division of cognition, desire and action, by the two, *viz.*, cognition and action. (?)

<sup>1</sup> All this chapter must be more or less hard to follow for the reader who has not had an opportunity of learning what the *Gāyatrī* or the *Mahā-vākyas* are. The chapters immediately following after this will help to explain. It may perhaps repay trouble if the reader returns to this chapter after having perused the next one or two.

The end and aim of all this study, which, indeed, is the highest *ṭapaś*, asceticism, aspiration, austerity, is to realise the summation of the whole of the World-process in AUM, the one partless idea Aham-Eṭaṭ-Na, I-This-Not, which is the World-process and is also the one sole law of all laws governing it; and, after such realisation, to act accordingly, *i. e.*, to create new worlds, new *brahmāṇḍas*, new households, small and large, microcosms and macrocosms. The purpose of evolution, the object of the creation of a *brahmāṇḍa* by an *Īshvara*, is the evolution of new *Īshvaras* and the creation of new *Brahmāṇḍas*, in endless succession. The father 'makes' the son, and the son another son, endlessly (from the vastest sidereal system to a gnat); and this he does only as the result of attaining the father's knowledge and power of action. In the same way should every *jīva* learn the constitution and manner of building a *brahmāṇḍa* in order to create another in turn, in endless rotation corresponding with the endlessness of the *Praṇava*.

Such is the significance of the *Mahā-vākya*, 'I that am one, may I become many'. And everything follows this law, on all scales, as in the before-mentioned instance of seed and plant, which illustrates the universal pervasiveness of the law of the trinity, too, in the fact that the seed has one sprouting point between two lobes.

And it should be remembered that the mere scale does not matter, for greatness and smallness are essentially relative. The destiny of each atom is to create a brahmāṇḍa. Brahmāṇḍas like or smaller or larger than ours, held together by a Sun, are present in every atom.<sup>1</sup> Vishvas, great world-systems, exist in an atom, and atoms again exist in these vishvas. This is the significance of 'many from one;' wherever we see the one we should recognise the many also, and conversely. After securing the ability of, and then actually, creating a brahmāṇḍa, the next step is the creation of a jagat, then a vishva, then a mahā-vishva and so on, till the status of Mahā-Viṣṇu is reached. From this progression it follows that bandha, bondage, and mokṣha, deliverance (in the sense of, i., restriction by and emancipation from certain *special, definite* kinds of *limitations*, and not of, ii., the universal limitation by the pseudo-abstract Ētat or This, and the eternal transcendence in consciousness of such universal limitation by the Negation of the This) are both equally 'contingent,' relative. The smaller, emerging from his condition of bondage (within certain narrow limitations) comes out into another condition (which is one of *comparative* absence of

<sup>1</sup> For an excellent commentary on the literal truth of this statement see Fournier's *Two New Worlds* (published in 1908.)

restraint and limitation, because giving a wider range than the previous one, in space and time, but) which has its own limitations again. Thus, then, bondage and freedom are not to be thought of as things radically different. Mahā-Viṣṇu is great and free as compared with an atom of his world-system; but he has his own pleasures and pains and bonds and limitations, in turn. It is true, he knows that all this World-process takes place because of sva-bhāva, the 'own-nature,' 'own-being,' of Brahman, and not through his personal power, and so far as he realises this he is truly mukṭa, free, in the technical sense, yet he has to work as if believing in his possession of a personal power, as such work is also a necessary part of the process of 'becoming'. And therefore, from the standpoint of a higher on-looker, he also is but an atom, and in the same plight.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This way of putting the matter, it should be noted, deals with only one aspect of the question. It shows that every condition is, *simultaneously*, one of comparative bondage as well as comparative freedom. The other aspect, not immediately relevant to the text here, is that of the mutual and endless succession of bondage and liberation in the same way and sense as, though on a much vaster scale in time and space than, that of physical birth and death.

Therefore the one Universal Self alone should be regarded as the truly Blessed, permeated with AUM; and both *bandha* and *mokṣha* are in reality naught. There should be and is no craving for *mokṣha* left when this is realised, for such realisation itself is *mokṣha*, in the universal sense.

Naught can we say is small, nor call aught great. That which now seems an atom is, in truth, the maker and container of whole worlds. Infinity streams and surges everywhere. This is the highest knowledge, deepest bliss. This is the secret of the sacred books.

No *Vidyā*, no *Veḍa*, the highest this Truth is,

No *Mantra*, no *Yantra*, no fever of strife.

No *Tantra*, no sentence, no sound, and no language,

No *Yoga*, no *Sāṅkhya*, no order or law—

Ever the Being, the Living, the Blessed,

Beyond all the reach of cognition and sense,

The song of the AUM, and the being of Worlds,

And the one single source of the cosmos around,

Beyond all the senses, yet knowledge itself,

Self-proven, Self-chosen, the Law of the whole. <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This is an attempt to reproduce, just for the information of the reader, the *metre* of the original *shlokas*; he will, it is hoped, not scrutinise too closely the merits of this and other similar versified reproductions, in this summary, of the metaphysical hymns of the original.