SECTION III. (Continued.)
CHAPTER V.
THE RG-VEDA.

The Vedas.—The Rg-Veda.—The nature of its contents.

The World-process is said to be tri-guna in its nature; the three guṇas or attributes being saṭṭva, rajas, and tamas. Saṭṭva is cognition; rajas, action; tamas, desire; the summation of the three is the fourth (viz., life or consciousness). The birth, maintenance, and death of saṭṭvyikas, i.e., all things or objects in which the saṭṭva-attribute predominates, and their fruits are described in the Rk; the origin and activities etc., of the rajas, in the Yajuk; of the tamas, in the Sāma; the summation of the three, the accomplishment of their conjunction, theconnexion of cause and effect, and the relation of all things whatsoever to each other—all this is explained in the Ṛgveda.

It is said sometimes that the Rk is for the accomplishment of k arma or action, and the Yajuk and the Sāma for that of jñāna or knowledge. But the main interest of the Rk is jñāna, and it is ‘for the accomplishment of k arma’ only because jñāna is necessary to
karma. So the Yajuk and the Sāma, dealing with karma (and ichchha) mainly, give to jñāna its proper scope and purpose by such treatment of karma, action being the very fruition of knowledge (through desire).

Brahmacharya is realised by means of the Rk; gṛhaśṭhya of the Yajuk; vānanapatra of the Sāma; and sannyāsa of the Atharva. Thus do the four āshramas correspond to the four Vedas.

Within each Veda there is again a similar subdivision according to this law of four. In the Rk, jñāna is prevalingly combined with each of the four. Hence it has sixteen mandalas, ‘circles,’ chapters or sections. Strictly, indeed, there are known to be twenty-four mandalas by rule (?); but eight are included in the saṃāhāra, summation, as connected with ichchhā (?); and so only sixteen are mentioned. All knowledge whatsoever in respect of earth, water, air, fire, and ākāsha, and time, space, and motion, is to be found in the Rk. It is true that sacrifices, etc., are possible with the mantras of the Rk; but this does not disprove the fact that their main purpose is cognitional. Otherwise indeed specification were impossible, for cognition exists everywhere, and action exists everywhere, and desire exists everywhere and always also; and there is no cognition without action, and no action without it either, and neither of the two others without the other two, for the aggregate of three is samsāra.

The name tri-bhuvanaṁ, the triple-world, follows the ātri, the triple-Veda.

The ordinary teaching is that tva vidyā, viz., aparā and parā, lower and higher, nearer and farther, concrete and abstract, should be acquired. But from one point of view the two make but one. Parā is knowledge merely; aparā is that knowledge combined with, put into, action or practice. In terms of the Logos, ‘I’ is the parā-vidyā; ‘I-This’ is the aparā; ‘I-This-Not’ is beyond both, it is the maḥā-vidyā, ‘the great science.’ The three correspond respectively to A, U and M. The totality of them all is the parāma or supreme vidyā, which is the bestower of mukti, and indeed is itself mukti, ‘ever intent on the good of all.’

The whole of this vidyā is expounded in the sixteen mandalas of the Rk, and therefore it is called the maḥā-mandalā, etc. These sixteen mandalas expound the Āham while the other eight deal with the samāhāra which is included in krīṣya (?) as said before. The Rk is therefore also called the Viṣṇu-samhitā. The first mantra of the first mandala thereof indicates its concern with cognition:
Agni, Indra, Purohitam, etc. In Agni, A means Aharn, g is the Bata, and ni the Negation. The form of that Agni is light, luminosity. It is true that light is not possible without darkness; but darkness is also inclusively declared here by the word light. Darkness is nothing different or apart from light. As between I and This, so between light and darkness, there is no separateness, nor any precedence and succession. 'Agni whose nature is light, the Truth of Brahman, that we would know'—such is the meaning of the mantra. It indicates enquiry after Brahman, knowledge of which is necessary, for without that knowledge no karma is possible. Having learnt the luminous nature of Agni we shall gain 'the Immortal God of sacrifice,' yajnasya-devantvajam. This is the chief object or motive, ratna-adhatamam. The whole work of this Agni, viz., all knowledge, is declared in the Rk, whereby the jiva obtains 'the first,' purohitam, i.e., the truth of Brahman.

1 The agni-tatva is predominant on the mental or Swah plane; also the etymological explanation of the word, according to Nirmukta agragryam nayati, that (viz., intelligence, which leads on, in front, the good or high-aspiring jiva to That which is before all, the Best.' It is for this reason that the prevailing 'deity' of the Aryan Race i.e.,

Thus is the whole of the Rg-Veda concerned with cognition. "This is born from this; this is destroyed by this; this stands here; this is the time for this; this the place; this is the sub-division of that; the unity and not separateness of the parts in the whole; the cause of the appearance of separateness; considerations of manyness and non-manyness; the necessity of the two; that from which all beings have and shall come forth, that 'becoming' which is the basis of and is the World-process; that from which or on or because of which the Self stands forth or manifests; the laws under which it is converted and perverted, "all this knowledge is and is in the Rg-Veda. Whatever element of cognition exists in action or desire or summation, and the manner in which it intertwines with the other elements, of desire and action; also all that is needed for the understanding of the Aharn and the Bata and whatever is included in both and in the Negation, and also in the legion Not-This-I—all this knowledge, contained in the Mahavakyas which are the ideation of Mahavishnu, is expounded here with its motives, necessity and contingency.

The fifth root-race and sub-races, (whose main purpose is to develop the 'fifth principle' or intelligence, manas) is agni in some form or other, light, fire, the Sun, glory, radiance, lightning, etc.
(In other words: the causes of the origins and
destructions of all things; the proper place of
each in the World-process; the spatial and
temporal extents of all cycles; the growth of
individuals out of species and genera, i.e.,
differentiation, the gradual multiplication of
objects by sub-divisions, or embodiment of
archetypes and types into concrete individuals;
the growth of the heterogeneous out of the
homogeneous; and, again, involution, the return
of the heterogeneous into the homogeneous, the
constant unification of many-seeming things;
b Briefly, the whole of 'becoming' wherein the
Self appears to undergo transformations of all
possible kinds, to become changed into its very
opposite and then to return to its own primal
form, to now follow the path of pursuit and now
of renunciation—the whole of this is described
in the Rg-Veda, and the element of cognition is
particularly traced and described in all its
ramifications through all desires and actions.)

(It may be asked why jāna is thus put
first by identifying it with the Rg-Veda, the first-
mentioned of the Vedas.) Ordinarily, kriyā
is mentioned everywhere as first; Brahmā,
Viṣṇu and Shiva—such is the usual order of
mention? The answer is that this is so merely
because kriyā only is first seen; only action
appears visibly everywhere. Indeed, appear-
ance is kriyā. Therefore is Brahmā mentioned
first. Otherwise, indeed, Mahā-Viṣṇu, Viṣṇu,
Brahmā, Shiva, is the proper order. (But,
from the transcendental standpoint, the order
really does not matter). The AUM includes all
simultaneously and all permutations of all also,
and priority and posteriority are verily nothing.
In order that there may be priority and posteri-
ority, there must be separateness; and cognition,
desire and action are truly not separate but
always coexistent and correlated in a constant
summation. The appearance of separateness
gives rise to the appearance of succession, hence
the mention of cognition as first, etc.

1 Taking the order in consciousness, viz., cognition,
desire and action, one would say that the order
should be (Mahā-Viṣṇu), Viṣṇu, Shiva, Brahmā,
which, being rotated, will give the current order also,
thus: (Viṣṇu, Shiva) Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Shiva,
(Brahmā) etc. But as the reader proceeds further
he will see, as has been already stated in a previous
note, that from different standpoints different orders
appear to prevail, each having its own significance,
though it is not always easy to see that significance.
Thus, from the standpoint of manifestation as
embodied in the three facts of creation, preservation,
and destruction, or birth, life and death, it is obvious
that the proper order is Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Shiva
or sāt, chit and ānanda. Again from the
standpoint of the working of consciousness in the
individual as shown in the three facts of cognition,
Thus, then, is the Truth of Brahman expounded in the Rg-Veda. This is the maha-vidya. By the I, the This; by the This, the I; the I in the This; the This in the I; such is the nature of knowledge or cognition. Indeed it is only the conjunction of Aham and Eta that is spoken of as cognition. Hence it is said that the Rg-Veda guides memory, forgetfulness and expectation. Therefore also it is said: Behold the Atmā by the Rg-Veda; the Atmā.

desire and action, the proper order becomes Vishnu, Shiva and Brahma. From a third standpoint, that of the 'object' of conscious life, we note that it is first cognised, then grasped and then yields pleasure or pain as the case may be, and this gives us the order of the attributes of the Not-Self, satva, rajas, and tamas or Vishnu, Brahma and Shiva, i.e., the order followed in the Puranic statement that Brahma was born from Vishnu, and Rudra or Shiva from Brahma. To a fourth view, that of a concrete portion of the Not-Self, regarded more as an independent something having an existence of its own and less as an object of enjoyment, the substantiality of the thing is most and first apparent, then its qualities in detail, then its movements, and so we have dvarya, guha and karna, or Shiva, Vishnu and Brahma. The why of each particular order is matter for further metaphysical cogitation; the rule of reversal in reflexion will probably explain much.