

if God pulled all the strings of every kind of activity, did he not draw upon himself all the consequences? Was he not himself inextricably involved in the endless succession of existences, and everlastingly engaged in administering reward and retribution to his own person? The transmigratory world is without beginning. Merit and inequality, like seed and sprout, constitute a perpetual chain in which effects in their turn become fresh causes, and the world of experience is constantly required to give them scope. Did not God thus become the sharer of all our ills? No, the real Brahman transcends all these mutations. When the consciousness of difference is done away, and the sphere of plurality has vanished, when one Universal Subject includes all objectivity within itself, the alleged defects of creation disappear, and only Brahman's Being, Intelligence, and Bliss remain.

V

The Vedântist's defence against the Sāṅkhyan is thus conducted alternately by appeals to experience and flights into transcendental ontology. These were both rendered possible by the fact that the Upanishads accepted as authoritative presented now the Realist and now the Idealist view of existence. In the sphere of relative reality reason discerned an Infinite and Eternal Power alternately active and latent, guided in creation by supreme wisdom, and maintaining its course by the unerring requirements of impartial justice. To this Revelation again and again bears its emphatic testimony. When the second sūtra propounds the question, "The birth, etc. of this (universe) from what?" the answer is—

"That omniscient omnipotent cause from which proceed the origin, subsistence, and dissolution of this world—which world is differentiated by names and forms, contains many agents and enjoyers, is the abode of the fruits of actions, these fruits having their definite places, times, and causes, and the nature of whose arrangements cannot even be conceived by the mind—that cause, we say, is Brahman."¹

In the hidden depths of his being before creation dwell all the ideal antecedents of the objects to which his causal action

¹ i. 1, 2; xxxiv. p. 16.

will give the reality which we experience. They are in technical language "names and forms," the prior conceptions of the genera and species of our world. They are the contents of his precosmic knowledge, neither identical with him nor yet different from him; involved, as we might phrase it, and about to be evolved.¹ But as they have not yet entered the visible scene, it is even possible to describe Brahman in this condition as *asat*, "not-being," or unreal, in the sense that the world of relative reality still awaits the gift of being.² For it is the declaration of the Vedānta, renewed again and again, that Brahman is not only the efficient or operative cause of the universe, but actually its material substratum.³ True, the builder is not identical with the house which he erects; but what is not true of the operative cause is true of the material, viz. that the effect is "non-different," or identical with it. Now Scripture witnesses that there is one thing which, when duly cognised, renders everything else known though previously unknown.⁴ Given the knowledge of the material cause, the knowledge of its effects follows. But Revelation declares that "Brahman is this all";⁵ it was the natural consequence of the statement, "He wished, 'May I be many, may I grow forth.'" The hidden Self which was the subject of its purpose had itself also for its object. So we read mysterious words, "On account of making itself, by modification."⁶ This is the doctrine of *parināma*, established on an equally mysterious phrase of authoritative writ, "That made itself its Self."⁷ The Self condescended to change its mode of being, and the instrument employed for this end was

¹ In the process of evolution these become individualised, as sun, moon, lightning, kuça-grass, palaça trees, cattle, deer, men, rivers, oceans, mountains, etc.; ii. 4, 20; xxxviii. p. 97.

² i. 4, 15; xxxiv. p. 267. It will be observed that this is totally different from the "not-being" of Hegel, with which it has sometimes been confounded.

³ *Prakṛiti*. Cp. i. 4, 23 ff.; xxxiv. p. 283 ff.

⁴ *Mund. Up.*, i. 1, 3: *SBE*, xv. p. 27; *Bṛihad. Up.*, iv. 5, 6, *ibid.*, p. 183.

⁵ For example, *Chhând. Up.*, iii. 14, 1; cp. vii. 25, 2: *SBE*, i. pp. 48, 124. *Bṛihad. Up.*, ii. 4, 6: *SBE*, xv. p. 110.

⁶ *Sûtra* 134, i. 4, 26; xxxiv. p. 287. For the change in the later meaning of the word, cp. Thibaut, *ibid.*, p. xc.

⁷ *Taitt. Up.*, ii. 7: *SBE*, xv. p. 58.

parimāma, "modification," by which as cause it modified itself into the universe as its effect.¹

This omniscient and omnipotent Cause was of course itself uncaused. *Sūtra* 226 sums up the whole argument in the brief phrase, "But non-origination of the *Sat* (Brahman) on account of the impossibility."² Wherein lies the impossibility? It is presented in various forms. As Brahman is pure Being, it cannot have sprung from preceding Being, because there could not be any such relation between two identical terms that one could be prior and the other secondary, one original and one produced. It cannot have been derived from particular or differentiated being, for it is contrary to experience that the general should be derived from the particular; jars are made out of clay, not clay out of jars. Nor can it spring from *asat*, non-existence, for what does not exist is *nirātmaka*, without a Self, and consequently incapable of being a cause, for "a cause is the Self of its effects."³ Scripture, accordingly, plainly affirms that Brahman is uncaused: "How should *Sat* come from *asat*?"⁴ "He is the cause, and he has no lord and no progenitor."⁵ Were we to admit that Brahman was an effect, and seek for an antecedent cause—which might in its turn be viewed as an effect,—there would be no *mūla-prakṛiti*, no "root-nature," no *avasthā*, no "standing-ground," no stopping-place, only modification behind modification in infinite regression. Reason requires a fundamental causal substance, and Revelation provides it in Brahman.

¹ This might seem to be a sufficiently definite type of Pantheism. (On its relation to the soul, see below.) But Prof. Desai (*The Vedānta of Çaṅkara*, p. 9) objects to this designation, whether employed by Indian or British critics, on the ground that "according to Pantheism the world, including the human soul, is not real but simply illusory; it is not created by God, but is the figment of the imagination of man or the finite spirit." This description of Pantheism may enable him to lift off from his philosophy a term which he apparently deems a reproach; but it will appear very arbitrary to the Western student who finds the essential note of Pantheism in the identification of Nature with the immediate agency of God's living Will.

² ii. 3, 9; xxxviii. p. 19.

³ Thibaut, xxxviii. p. 201.

⁴ *Chhand. Up.*, vi. 22: *SBE*, i. p. 93.

⁵ *Çvet. Up.*, vi. 9: *SBE*, xv. p. 263.

But is the Brahman that we know, engaged in conducting the world-process without beginning from all eternity, the real Brahman known to the ancient sages as the "True of the True"? We contemplate the world, "Brahman by modification," as it is spread out before us. We infer his intelligence and his energy by what he does. From his effect we ascend to him as cause. His thought is revealed to us in the adaptations of the earth to our use, his equal justice in the diversity of our several lots. But all this implies a relation of difference between ourselves and him. We look out upon the scene around us as if we were the subject and he were the object of our knowledge. What, then, of the Scriptures, which abolish that distinction, cancel all duality, and present him as the sole and universal Subject, the seer who sees in our sight, hears in our hearing, and thinks in our thought?¹ Here is Brahman who is *ekam advitīyam*, "one without a second," the all-inclusive sum of all existence. The early forest teachers, as we have seen, sought to reach a conscious identity with this infinite Being in whom all difference was merged in unity. Then the vast panorama of earth and sky vanished like a dream or a mirage, and the false impression of separate individuality was lost in contact with Absolute Reality, Intelligence, and Bliss. Free from all trace of diversity, from every entangling tie in the sphere of sense-perception, this Brahman is not only above all self-limitation by the Three Strands, he is unbound by any *gunas* whatsoever (*nirguna*), wholly devoid of the attributes ascribed to him in creation (*saguna*),² changeless and eternal. To every suggested quality, to every conceivable property which might be laid upon the ultimate Unity, the reply of Scripture was always the same, "*Ncti ncti*," "Not thus, not thus." Such a negative presentation, however, was after all inadequate. Some positive content of the idea there must be. Formless and colourless, with no sound or touch, unbodied, unproduced, unconfined by space relations within or without, Brahman simply *is*, undecaying, immutable.³ Unconstrained by external

¹ Cp. Dect. IV., *ante*, p. 193.

² These terms only enter the Upanishads at a late date: *nirguna*, *Āvet.*, vi. 11; *Maitri.*, vi. 10, vii. 1. *Saguna* is later and rarer still.

³ Cp. the passages cited in iii. 2. 14; xxxviii. p. 155.

conditions, Brahman is essentially free (*mukta*); as omniscient it is *chaitanya-mātra*, all-intelligence; untouched by ignorance or error, it is perfectly pure, and freedom, truth, and purity, are the elements of bliss.¹ How, then, are these two conceptions of Brahman to be reconciled?

The thinkers in the later Upanishads were well aware of the distinction, and began to feel after its expression. Religious knowledge was of two kinds. There was a "lower knowledge" embodied in the Vedas and the various studies which had gathered round the sacred text. Above this rose the "higher knowledge," by which the Indestructible (Brahman) was apprehended.² Brahman could not be seen or grasped; it belonged to no genus or species; eternal, omnipresent, infinitesimal, the wise regarded it as the source of all beings. Similarly there was a "lower" Brahman and a "higher": the one belonging to

¹ On Brahman as bliss see the long section, 1 1, 12 ff. For an attempt to express it by an ascending scale, cp *Bṛihad. Up.*, iv 3, 32, 33, and Čankara's commentary on the passage, quoted by Desai, *Vedānta of Čankara*, part II, p. 93. It is difficult to reconcile this comparison of Brahman's bliss to the joy of a lover and his beloved during the moments of their embrace with Čankara's comment on the description of Brahman as "Truth (reality), knowledge, infinity" (*Taitt. Up.*, II 1) "The term knowledge is abstract. . . If knowledge meant here a subject knowing, the epithet would be incompatible with the other two. If Brahman were a knowing subject, it would be modified in its cognitions, and how then could it be the truth? A thing is infinite when it cannot be limited at any point. If the Self were a knowing subject, it would be limited by the *cognita* and the cognitions. . . The knowledge of Brahman is nothing else than the essence of the Self, like the light of the sun or the heat of fire." *Nityam nirvishayaṃ jñānam*, "eternal, objectless knowledge," says Rāmātīrtha. Gough, in the *Calcutta Review*, lxxvi. (1878), p. 18 f.; cp. his *Philosophy of the Upanishads* (1882), p. 44. The modern Vedāntist, unembarrassed by these metaphysical difficulties, emphasises the aspect of "bliss" as love. "God is Infinite Existence, Infinite Knowledge, Infinite Bliss; and he regards these three as One. Existence without knowledge and love cannot be. Knowledge without love cannot be, and Love without knowledge cannot be"; *Lectures on Jñāna Yoga*, by Swami Vivekānanda (New York, 1902), p. 123.

² *Mund. Up.*, i. 1, 4-6: SEE, xv. p. 27. The distinction bears some analogy to that in the Fourth Gospel between the eternal life sought in the Scriptures and that realised by knowledge of the only true God and his messenger Jesus Christ.

the world of men, of earth and sun; the other above the sphere of change, "at rest, free from decay, from death, from fear—the Highest."¹ These terms do not occur in the earlier Upanishads, but the idea was already entering into clearer thought, for Brahman could be designated "supreme," transcendent, "unmanifest."² This last term might imply the capacity of some kind of appearance in the world of our experience. As *Īṣvara*, accordingly, he creates, upholds, and destroys the universe. He pervades all things as their *antaryāmin*, their "Inner Ruler," controller, director, guide. He ordains the courses of Time, and determines the conditions of souls from birth to birth in accordance with the Law of the Deed. He is everywhere present, all-knowing and almighty. Presiding over all human destinies, he is the object of men's worship, and he bestows rewards and metes out punishments. His attributes of omniscience and omnipotence are not indeed essential, like his absolute Being, Intelligence, and Bliss. They are relative to the vast periods of productive activity in the perpetual world-rhythm from origin to dissolution, and in the intervals of silence they are still.³ For the scene we know, in spite of all its relative reality, is but an appearance; we are the dupes of ignorance; one famous line, of unknown authorship (though sometimes ascribed to Çankara), summed up our state:—

"Brahma satyaṃ jagat mithyā, ātmā Brahma eva na aparāḥ."

"Brahman is true, the world is false, the soul is Brahman and nothing else."

How, then, could Brahman have two such forms at once? The answer is found in one single word, *Māyā*.⁴

Çankara, as we have seen, inherited this term from a long line of previous thinkers, and in the verses of Gaudapāda it had been applied to the explanation of Brahman's relation to our common life. By its side stands another conception, closely associated with it, viz. *avidyā*, ignorance or nescience. Prof.

¹ *Prasna Up.*, v. 2-7; *ib.*, p. 281.

² *Uttama, avyakta*; cp. *Kaṭha Up.*, vi. 8: *SBE*, xv. p. 22.

³ Cp. the long discussion in ii. 1, 14; xxxiv. 320 ff.

⁴ On the question whether this idea is present in Bādarāyaṇa's *Sūtras*, cp. Thibaut, *SBE*, xxxiv. p. xci ff.

Thibaut completely identifies them,¹ but Col. Jacob has shown good reason for a different view.² *Māyā* is not, it would seem, the cause of the world-illusion, it is the world-illusion itself. The Supreme Self (we are told) is unaffected by the *samsāra-māyā*, the illusion of the world-process.³ The omniscient *Īvara* is declared to be the cause of the world's origin in the same way as clay is the material cause of jars; and in this capacity he is the cause of its subsistence when created, as the magician is the cause of the subsistence of the magical illusion.⁴ But the illusion is not all unreal. The world of our knowledge is not like the horns of a hare, one of the stock illustrations of the non-existent. It is no dream or mirage.⁵ It is *asat* before creation or in the interval after dissolution, when it has returned to the "undeveloped";⁶ yet even there Name and Form, the germs of the entire expanse of the phenomenal world,⁷ belong to the omniscient Lord, and are called both in *Çruti* and *Smṛiti* his *māyā-śakti* or *prakṛti*. Here *Māyā* is an energy which in some way materialises itself in Nature; and this world of space and all its contents is not, it is true, absolutely real, but "it remains fixed and distinct up to the moment when the soul cognises that Brahman is the self of all."⁸

Māyā is thus identified with Names and Forms, which in their unevolved condition inhere in *Īvara*, and in their developed state constitute our world. But what is their source or cause? On the one hand they resemble what we should call ideas in the divine mind. On the other hand they are said to be "presented by Ignorance."⁹ Whence these presentations arise is obscure. They belong to the Self of the omniscient Lord, "fashioned by Nescience."¹⁰ That "highest Lord" (the

¹ xxxiv. p. xxv.

² See his discussion in the preface to his edition of the *Vedānta-Sāra* (Bombay, 1894).

³ ii. 1, 9; xxxiv. p. 312.

⁴ ii. 1, 1; *ibid.*, p. 290.

⁵ Cp. ii. 2, 31, 37, 28.

⁶ ii. 1, 17; xxxiv. p. 333.

⁷ *Saṃsāra-prapañcha-bīja*, ii. 1, 4; xxxiv. p. 328.

⁸ iii. 2, 4; xxxviii. p. 138. In the *Çvet. Up.*, iv. 10, *Prakṛiti* was declared to be *Māyā*, and the great Lord is he who is affected with *Māyā* (*SBE*, xv. p. 252; *ante*, p. 302).

⁹ ii. 2, 2, *avidyā-pratyupasthāpita-nāmarūpa-māyā*.

¹⁰ ii. 1, 14; xxxiv. p. 328.

term is noteworthy), ever unchanging, whose substance is cognition, manifests himself in various ways, and the result is the world-illusion. Māyā is thus not identical with Avidyā, but its product; and Avidyā appears as a kind of craft or power. How, then, does it operate and call forth Māyā's *çakti*? It is, of course, a mystery, yet through the obscurities of speech some gleams of light fall on it. It is that by which the absolute Unity without any difference whatever is apprehended as incessant diversity. It is also that by which the Self perceives all kinds of divisions, distinctions, and forms, where in ultimate truth there are none. It thus becomes a kind of cosmic principle, for Māyā is its product.¹ The whole Samsāra is rooted in it; and as it is itself *asat*, the entire universe with its omniscient and omnipotent Lord is involved in the same unreality. These are indeed riddles, for the Samsāra has no beginning, and Ignorance is thus invested with an eternal activity. To seek its cause is vain; the question has no meaning. The category of causality, remarks Dr V. S. Ghate, ascends no higher than the Samsāra; beyond its everlasting process we know nothing.²

But though the origin of Ignorance is beyond our reach, the conditions of its operation are not wholly indistinguishable. The means through which it acts are technically known as *Upādhis*,³ rendered by Thibaut "limiting adjuncts," which are its products. In the human being, for instance, the Self is limited in the broad sense by the whole apparatus of the body, in the narrower sense by the five organs of sensation and the controlling *manas*. Similarly on the cosmic scale the Lord is limited by Names and Forms, which constitute the world of matter, and the space and time in which alone we know them.⁴ Çankara attempted no Kantian analysis of the conditions of cognition; he simply swept the whole of human sense-experience

¹ Later speculation supposed it to be constituted out of the Three Strands, *triguṇātma*, cp. *Vedānta-Sūtra*, vi. In the *Panchadasi*, i. 15, Māyā issues from Prakṛiti when "Goodness" predominates; Avidyā is the product of the increased proportion of the other two. Cp. *ante*, p. 206.

² *Le Vedānta* (Paris, 1918), p. xxix.

³ Literally, "on-layings," impositions, conditions. The root *dha* is the same as that of *τιθημι*, with the meaning "put" or "place."

⁴ Cp. ii. 1, 14; xxxiv. p. 329.

into the sphere of Nescience, and the stamp of unreality was impressed on all its contents and elements alike. Here was a conception by which, if problems must remain unsolved, difficulties might sometimes be evaded. When it was asked how, if Brahman was Lord, omnipotent and omniscient creator, he had produced a world full of suffering, the Law of the Deed might provide an explanation under the shadow of *Avidyā*, but for the higher knowledge the true answer was a simple re-affirmation that the Brahman, whose essence is eternal pure intelligence and freedom, is raised above what is beneficial or hurtful. To meet the allegations that the universal and the particularised Brahman could not coexist together, that he could not be simultaneously devoid of qualities and possessed of them, that synchronous conditions of non-difference and difference were contradictory, an analogy was found in the infinite extension of space which was unimpaired by the enclosure of limited portions of it in jars of varying shape and size.¹ But, continues Çankara, "as soon as the consciousness of non-difference arises in us, the transmigratory state of the individual soul and the creative quality of Brahman vanish at once, the whole phenomenon of plurality which springs from wrong knowledge being sublated by perfect knowledge; and what becomes then of the creation and the faults of not doing what is beneficial and the like?"²

In all systems which bring in the Absolute it is always possible to ask questions which cannot be answered. Brahman is essentially free, and there is consequently no compulsion on him to create. Yet within the Samsāra successive worlds are needed in order to provide for the proper fulfilment of the demands of Karma in the great balance-sheet of souls. The intervals between dissolution and reproduction are timeless, for the universe—always intrinsically unreal—has lapsed from its relative reality into nothingness; yet Hindu calculators were

¹ ii. 1, 22; xxxiv. p. 345.

² Col. Jacob, *Vedānta Sāra* (1894), p. vii f., gives various instances of Çankara's confusion or inconsistency in the treatment of the two modes of Brahman, lower and higher, and expresses the belief that "his system was a departure from the then existing one, from which he found it difficult to free himself."

busy with schemes of cosmic chronology and vast multiples of years.¹ The Samsāra had no beginning, but imagination insisted on knowing why the perfect Intelligence had veiled itself in Nescience and produced the world-illusion. The universal Subject bathed in bliss could have no wants. No unsatisfied desires could frame themselves into purposes and incite activity. No impulse of self-communication could call for new beings to be the sharers of its joy. Still, fancy suggested that princes must have their recreations. They build themselves places of amusement; why should not the Lord do the same? The world might be the sport of Īṣvara,² the cosmic game which he for ever plays. No Providence guides it towards any goal, or ensures it any end. It is at best, a kind of automatic action like the inhalation and exhalation³ of a breather, the aimless issue of a hidden nature. What bankruptcy of reason and religion is here!³

Moreover, the whole scheme was founded on the authority of the Veda, which was itself involved in the fundamental unreality of the phenomenal scene. The critics of the Vedānta did not fail to point out that Revelation was thus reduced to Ignorance.⁴ The reply was that Scripture itself recognised the fact. Did it not describe a condition when a father is not a father, the worlds not worlds, the Vedas not Vedas?⁵ When they ceased to provide a rule of faith and life, what would take their place? Nescience was done away by Knowledge.⁶ The lower lore of Scripture texts, of a world of plurality, of earth and air and

¹ Cp. *ante*, p. 143.

² ii. 1, 33; xxxiv. p. 357. Cp. in the Great Epic, *ante*, p. 145¹. On the other hand, cf. the view of the teacher Audulomi, iv. 4, 6; xxxviii. p. 410.

³ On the other hand, a modern Vedāntist can write: "Being the inmost and truest Self of all, whatever it does at any time, it does it not for its own sake (in the narrow sense), but wholly and exclusively for the sake of the All whose Self it is. In other words, its *sarva-ātmava* includes utter selflessness or infinite goodness or perfect love." Desai, *Vedānta of Çank.*, pt. ii. p. 99, quoting Çankara's commentary on *Bṛihad. Up.*, iii. 7, 3, to the effect that the Inner Ruler, eternally liberated through the absence of any "Karma" for himself, was bound by his own nature to work for the highest interest of all.

⁴ Cp. *The Panchadasi* (Bombay, 1912), iv. 43-45.

⁵ *Bṛihad. Up.*, iv. 3, 22: *SBE*, xv. p. 169.

⁶ iv. 1, 3; xxxviii. p. 340.

sky, of body and soul, creations of the Lord, must be replaced by immediate insight, direct intuition, the higher consciousness of the illusion of appearance and the sole reality of the universal Self. That is deliverance from the false, emancipation into the True. He who can say *Aham Brahmasmi*, "I am Brahman," is alone inly free. How was this liberty to be attained? And what was the nature of the vision?

VI

The proposal of Bādarāyana's first Sūtra to investigate the Brahman begot the question whether previous to the inquiry the Brahman was known or not known. If it was known, no inquiry was necessary; if it was not known, none was possible. The answer is first that the Brahman is known both from the Veda and the meaning of its own name;¹ but Çankara hastens to add that "the existence of Brahman is known from its being everyone's Self. For everyone is conscious of the existence of (his) Self, and never thinks 'I am not.' . . . And this Self (of whose existence all are conscious) is Brahman." Of this ontological dogma no proof is here vouchsafed. It is laid down at the outset as an irrefutable truth with which to silence an army of opponents, materialists of various types, Buddhists, adherents of the Sāṅkhya and Yoga. A little later it is admitted that so stupendous a fact cannot be grasped without the aid of the Scripture text, "That art thou";² but it is enough to reiterate again and again that Brahman as the cause of the whole world is the Self of everything. Is it true, however, that the Brahman is the Self of the soul in the same sense as it is the Self of earth and sky?

Consider the testimony of consciousness. What does the Self tell us of its own nature? "Just because it is the Self, it is not possible to doubt the Self."³ It is not in any case something adventitious or contingent; it has not come in from the outside. It needs no external authority to establish it; it is known at first hand. It may employ various means of right

¹ i. 1, 1; xxxiv. p. 14. By its derivation from a root meaning "to be great," we "at once understand that eternal purity, etc. (its chief attributes), belong to it."

² i. 1, 4; xxxiv. p. 23.

³ ii. 3, 7; xxxviii. p. 14.

knowledge (*pramāṇas*) to establish what would be otherwise unknown, but as the seat of such employment ¹ its own existence is self-established.² We cannot call our own being in question any more than fire can doubt its own heat. The Self can say, "I know the present, I knew the past, I shall know the future." The object of knowledge changes, but the knower does not change; his nature is perpetual present.³ The body may be reduced to ashes, but its destruction cannot destroy the Self, which, truly understood, is an unceasing Here, a kind of eternal Now. So steadfast is it that it is not for a moment conceivable that it should ever become different from what it is. We have travelled a long way from the Self's own report of its existence, and Ćankara has called in the help of Revelation to explain it. The Self is not an effect like the clod or the star; it is, under the conditions of time and space and the whole internal organs of feeling, thought, and action, no other than Brahman itself.

The material world, on the other hand, does not in all its parts show the same direct dependence upon Brahman. There, indeed, is the source of all causality, but in the course of the cosmic evolution that causality is perpetually modified by the successive creations which become (so to speak) co-operators in the series of subsequent products. Each step derives its ultimate being from Brahman, but its proximate cause is Brahman as already modified by each member of the ever-lengthening chain. Scripture might not be perfectly self-consistent in its representations of the order of production; but these variations of detail had no bearing on human welfare. What was essential was the recognition of a fixed law that as the subtlety of Brahman's causality was diminished by the entry of grosser elements into the field, so at the great dissolution the path of causation must be precisely retraversed. When the period arrived for the return of the universe into its ultimate constituents, no sudden collapse overwhelmed everything in disorderly and indiscriminate confusion. Each particular product passed back into its immediate predecessor in the causal line. The gradations of Brahman's energy one after another resumed their

¹ *Pramāṇādīvyavahārāprayatvāt.*

² *Svayam siddhā.*

³ *Sarvadā-vartamāna-svabhāvatva.*

freedom from the modifications to which they had been subjected, and returned by regular retrogression to their primal fount.¹ But the soul, which so passionately cherished its own individuality, was in very different case. It was no temporal product. It had no origin, it was eternal, it was not divided; it was no other than Brahman itself; not in the modified form of Brahman in creation, but the actual Most High Self, with the same Intelligence for its essential nature, as light and heat belong to fire.² In figurative language it might be described as a "part" of the Lord, just as sparks might be called parts of fire. The poets of Scripture did not shrink from identifying youth and maid, the old man tottering on his staff, the fisherman, the gambler, the slave, with the Supreme.³ In the great moral order, under the Law of the Deed, environed by the "limiting adjuncts" conditioned by the primeval Ignorance, they played their part as separate Selves. Only let them realise the truth, and in the sublime Unity all this diversity would disappear. To the trained eye of impartial comprehension the Brāhman endowed with knowledge and courtesy, the cow, the elephant, the dog, the outcaste, were all alike.⁴ Diverse in the fruits of the past, and in the characters which were built up out of their labours and sufferings in the *samsāra*, they yet belonged essentially to the Infinite Spirit of eternal Purity and Joy. True, in the world of relative reality they are of varying worth; and under the administration of human life by the Lord he stands to them as the real juggler who remains upon the ground stands to the illusive juggler, armed with sword and shield, who climbs up into the sky upon a rope.⁵ When the world-illusion is surmounted, and Ignorance has been conquered by Knowledge, the union of the soul with the Supreme will be complete.

Meantime, like the space enclosed in jars in the midst of the boundlessness around, souls are temporarily severed from their

¹ Cp. the argument in i. 1, 26-29, and ii. 3, 13.

² ii. 3, 17-18; xxxviii. pp. 31, 34.

³ The soul of the Ādra, therefore, was Brahman; but as he was not permitted to study the Veda, and might not receive initiation from a teacher, he was not eligible for the instruction needful for obtaining ultimate Release. Cp. i. 3, 34-38; xxxiv. p. 223 ff. The Vedānta was essentially aristocratic.

⁴ *Bhagavad Gītā*, v. 18.

⁵ i. 1, 17; xxxiv. p. 70.

true being.¹ Hidden within the wood are the light and heat of fire; and within the bodily organs lies the soul's capacity for knowledge and power. The Brahman is, of course, lifted above the vicissitudes of the mortal lot. No evil can touch its supernal calm. It is the transmigrating soul which acts and enjoys and suffers. The fruits attach themselves to it alone. Space does not catch fire when something in it is burning; and Brahman is in like manner unaffected by the consequences of wrong thought or word or deed. Above the physiology of the body and the psychology of its mental processes rises the moral life, which belongs in one sense to the sphere of Ignorance, yet in another has regulated the fortunes of the soul from all eternity. "Having created the world," says Çankara in the introduction to his commentary on the Gītā, "the Bhagavat, with a view to its maintenance and well-being, first caused the form of religion known as *pravritti* to be established among men."² It was the religion of works, of ritual duty and ceremonial observance, and of right conduct in the personal and social relations of human life.³ The commands and prohibitions of the sacred law all implied that the soul was itself an agent, it had the power of self-direction, it could obey or transgress the divine commands. But if its outward lot and its inward dispositions, its caste and circumstances on the one hand and its powers of thought and its temper and affections on the other, were all determined for it under the Law of the Deed—nay, if the whole sphere of its causal activity was assigned to the Lord,⁴—what place was left for human responsibility? The Scripture scheme of rewards and punishments lost its meaning unless merit and guilt attached to the soul as the doer. Otherwise "the soul has to undergo the consequences of what it has not done."⁵ To this difficulty Çankara replies by generalising the divine causality. He raises it above the crude particularism of the Scripture statement, "He makes him whom he wishes to lead down from these worlds do a bad deed," and views it as a

¹ i. 2, 6; xxxiv. p. 115, a figure often repeated.

² Quoted by Desai, *The Vedānta of Çankara*, ii. "The Vaidic Religion," p. 36.

³ Cp. *ante*, p. 160.

Ante, p. 32

⁵ ii. 3, 41; xxxviii. p. 59.

pervading element in the conduct of affairs based on the adjustment of conditions and deserts. "As rain constitutes the common occasional cause for shrubs, bushes, corn, and so on, belonging to different species and springing each from its particular seed . . . so we must assume that the Lord arranges favourable or unfavourable circumstances for the souls with a view to their former efforts."¹ The soul's own activity is thus evoked by the divine provision of an appropriate field. Were the soul absolutely dependent, the precepts would be laid upon the Lord himself, but the consequences would fall on human beings, and the authority of the Veda would be undermined. Yet did not the Gītā declare that everyone, even the man of knowledge, acts according to his nature (*prakṛiti*), and hence ask, "What can restraint do?"² If there is no room, answered Çankara, for the possibility of effort, the teaching of the Scriptures would be useless; and the Gītā itself pointed to the true line of action in the verse which followed; to all the sense-organs certain attractions and repulsions are attached towards their corresponding objects: a man should not come under their sway, they are his foes. Like a storm which drives a vessel over the waters, the passions of sense sweep away wisdom; therefore hold back your senses from their objects, that wisdom may be established.³ Here, says Çankara triumphantly, is the reconciliation of free-will (*puruṣa-kāra*) and Scripture.⁴

But the goal of all religion, release from the Samsāra, the realisation of the vision of the Most High, is not to be reached by the path of action. It depends on knowledge, and knowledge is founded on the teaching of Revelation. For the apprehension of this teaching a preparatory discipline is needed. No sudden conversion opens the eye long blinded by selfishness and sin to the perception of the heavenly vision. He who seeks to know the Brahman must first tread the appointed way of duty without any desire to "lay up treasure in heaven." The demands of household piety must be fulfilled; the Brāhman's daily obligations, study of the Veda, sacrifice, alms, must be dis-

¹ ii. 3, 42; xxxviii. p. 60.

² Bhag. Gītā, iii. 33; cp. v. 14, *svabhāva*; xviii. 59, *prakṛiti*.

³ *Id.*, ii. 67, 68.

⁴ On *puruṣa*, contrasted with *daiva* in the Great Epic, cp. *ante*, p. 155.

charged with penances and fasts.¹ Here are "means for the origination of knowledge."² But the selection of particular objects as symbols through which the Self might be apprehended, did not lead to the higher insight. They belonged to the sphere of Ignorance, and could not serve for meditations on the Self.³ As the light of knowledge dawned the seeker must aim at "calmness, self-restraint, resignation, patience, collectedness."⁴ This was the method of devout meditation.⁵ Under the guidance of a wise teacher the meaning of the sublime truth "That art thou" would be slowly apprehended. Rare spirits, indeed, might grasp it at once, but time and effort were needed to disperse false views which lingered round the old associations of the Self with its "limiting adjuncts" in the body, its senses and perceptions. An attack of pain might baffle advance by its false reference to the Self as the sufferer. "The notion that when my body is cut or burnt I myself am cut or burnt is a delusion." Only when the seer can say, "My Self is pure intelligence, free from all pain," is the true vision of the Self secured.⁶ In its final form, however, this was not so much the attainment of the believer as the gift of the Most High. Çankara does not quote the words of ancient piety:

"That Self cannot be gained by the Veda, nor by understanding, nor by much learning. He whom the Self chooses, by him can the Self be gained. The Self chooses him as his own"⁷

Here is a frank doctrine of election, such as has again and again supplied the interpretation of the common fact that some

¹ *Bṛihad-Ār. Up.*, iv. 4, 22 *SBE*, xv. p. 179

² iii. 4, 26, xxxviii p. 307 These are known collectively as *sādhana*, "effecting," "accomplishing."

³ iv. 1, 4; xxxviii. p. 341 Later writers, however, overlooked this difficulty. The author of the *Panchadāsī*, while recognising that the whole creation belonged to the *vyavahāra* condition, nevertheless laid it down that from Brahman, Vishnu, etc., down to the meanest blade of grass, stones, wood, cutting and digging instruments, "all these are themselves *Īvara*, and, if worshipped, will yield adequate return," vi. 206-9. Compare the illustrations of Sir Herbert Risley, *ante*, Lect. III., p. 127².

⁴ *Bṛihad-Ār. Up.*, iv. 4, 23. Cp. Thibaut, xxxiv p. 121.

⁵ *Upāsana*, iv. 1, 1-12, xxxviii. p. 331 ff.

⁶ iv. 1, 2; xxxviii. p. 337.

⁷ *Kātha Up.*, i. 2, 23; *Mund. Up.*, iii. 2, 3. *SBE*, xv. pp. 11, 40.

possess an experience which others do not realise. Çankara makes no claim on his own behalf. He is not a missionary with a commission from on high; he is the exponent of a mode of philosophic thought as the preparation for a mystic vision. His appeal is to a past Revelation, not to a living community of believers, still less to a special knowledge vouchsafed to himself. But he is not unaware that the embodied soul cannot, after all, achieve its own liberation. That light of knowledge by which it apprehends the Brahman is not self-enkindled. It has a transcendent character as the Lord condescends to shine upon it. It is through his "grace" (*prasāda*) that higher powers and clearer insight dispel the last remains of ignorance, and by the revelation of community of nature bondage is broken and release is won.¹

The Vedāntic theory of perception assumed an actual contact between the percipient and the object of his sight. When the eye was fixed upon a jar, a stone, a tree, the "internal organ," a complex founded on physical processes resting on sensation and resulting in thought, was supposed to go out towards it, to illuminate it by its own light, assume its shape, and so cognise it.² It thus identified itself with the object, and this identification might spread over the whole surrounding scene. The knowledge of Brahman was, of course, different in kind. It was not inferential; it had the character of direct perception; but it was embarrassed by no space relations; and it produced the lofty conviction of identity. "He who knows Brahman becomes Brahman," said the ancient text.³ So "I am Brahman" became the august claim of the delivered soul, and Brahman was "the ever pure, intelligent, and free." There was the secret of peace, the end of conflict, the victory over the world. Many were its privileges and powers. Emancipation from the Samsāra lifted the soul above the sway of the Law of the Deed, and conferred upon it a mysterious "lordship." The body and its

¹ iii. 2, 5; xxxviii. 139, cp. p. 44. Similarly, ii. 3, 41, the Lord's *anugraha*, "favour," is the agency of deliverance by the gift of saving knowledge, xxxviii. p. 59, cp. xxxiv. p. 218. On "grace" in the *Gītā*, cp. Lect. V., p. 253².

² Jacob, *Manual of Hindu Pantheism* (1881), p. 99.

³ *Mund. Up.*, iii. 2, 9: *SBE*, xv. p. 41.

needs, of course, continued till death. But in the complete occupation of consciousness by the direct vision of the Most High all ordinary obligations ceased. In the higher stages of advanced meditation ritual practice had been gradually discarded, and on the entry into the freedom of union with Brahman all moral distinctions were transcended. Such teaching was already exposed to vulgar misrepresentation. "Obligations," says Çankara, "are imposed with reference to things to be avoided or desired. How, then, should he who sees nothing to be wished or avoided beyond the Universal Self, stand under any obligation? Nor does it result from the absence of obligation that he who has arrived at perfect knowledge can act as he likes, for in all cases it is only the wrong imagination (as to the Self's connection with a body) that impels to action, and that imagination is absent in the case of him who has reached perfect knowledge."¹ In the eternal state of freedom from the succession of existences, merit and demerit with their consequences disappeared; threefold time, past, present, future, vanished; it was the glory (*ālamkāra*) of the Vedānta that as soon as Brahman was comprehended all obligation ceased and duties ended.²

The consciousness of union with Brahman, once realised, could never be lost. But it might, apparently, have different degrees of intensity or completeness. The bodily life might still continue, in virtue of a previous aggregate of works, just as a potter's wheel went on revolving, when the jar had been completed, till its energy was spent. Whatever was the explanation, the fact was beyond dispute. The appeal to experience was irrefutable. Who could contest another's claim to possess the sacred knowledge "vouched for by his heart's conviction?"³ For a season, then, the liberated soul was still exposed to human ills, but without the risk of conceiving itself

¹ ii. 3, 48; xxxviii. p. 67. Later Vedāntist writers have sometimes, it would seem, expressed themselves less cautiously. Mr K. M. Banerjea, in his well-known *Dialogues on the Hindu Philosophy* (1861), asserts that "Vedantic authors have boldly asserted that they are subject to no law, no rule, and that there is no such thing as virtue or vice, injunction or prohibition," p. 381. Such language can be reconciled with Çankara's principles, but may easily be perverted to other meanings.

² i. 1, 4; xxxiv. p. 36.

³ iv. 1, 15; xxxviii. p. 358.

hurt.¹ Death released it from the body; what, then, happened to it? The ancient teachers had sketched out different paths for souls of various merit, by moon and sun, among the Fathers, the Devas, and, loftiest of all, an ascension into the world of Brahman himself, whence there was no return.² These schemes, embodied in Revelation, demanded accommodation to the newer thought, and the distinction between the lower and the higher Brahman supplied the means of adjustment. For those who had only learned to know Brahman under the veil of qualities (*saguna*), the way lay upwards through the deva-worlds to his lofty realm. It was a partial or progressive release.³ There they were united to the Lord in such a way that they possessed mysterious powers of satisfying every wish. The omnipotence and omniscience by which the universe was created and upheld they did not share. With "world-business" (*jagad-vyāpāra*) they were not concerned. But Scripture told how their mere desire would produce for them food and drink, perfumes and song, kindred and friends.⁴ Philosophy could only interpret such promises in the light of general absence of all pain or symbolic glorification; and, dexterously noting that the "mind" was the instrument of realising them, Çankara argued that neither body nor senses would be needed in "release." Yet among these powers was that of remaining disembodied or creating new bodies—even several simultaneously—at will, and then the objects of such wishes might have real existence, as in the waking state.⁵ With resolute persistency in exploring every alternative, it is even discussed whether such plural bodies were soulless like wooden figures, or were animated like men's;⁶ and with the help of the Sūtra it is decided that just as one

¹ This condition came to be known as "liberation during life," *jīvan-mukti*. Deussen thinks it an expression of later origin, as he did not find it in Çankara. But Desai states that he employed the term *jīvan-muktatva*. Cp. Deussen, *System of the Vedānta*, p. 425; Desai, *Vedānta of Çankara*, part i. p. 58.

² Cp. *ante*, pp. 164, 176. For a description of Brahman's heaven, cp. Lect. III., p. 170.

³ *Krama-mukti*, "step-release."

⁴ iv. 4, 8, quoting *Chhāndog. Up.*, viii. 2; xxxviii. p. 411.

⁵ iv. 4, 11-15; xxxviii. p. 412 f.

⁶ They might be only of atomic size, iv. 4, 17.

flame might light several others, so one soul endued with knowledge might multiply itself by its lordly power (*aicvarya*). The believer was enjoined to remember that this was an "altogether different condition." There was some reason for the comment of Purushottama Miçra: "In this system, which maintains that everything transcends explanation, unreasonableness is no objection."¹ It may be surmised, however, that these curious speculations had more than a mere textual basis. They were designed to meet the case of teachers to whom some function or mission (*adhikāra*) was entrusted for the welfare of the world, such as the promulgation of the Vedas.² Those who had been eminent in knowledge were empowered, even when it was complete, to preserve the sense of individuality without laying up fresh "fruit," and when their service was fulfilled would enter into absolute deliverance. It sounds like a distant echo of the Buddhist doctrine of the Bodhisat.³

Released from all the conditions of the bodily life by death, those who had won the "perfect vision" were indivisibly united with the Supreme Brahman. "Pure water poured into pure water," said the poet, "remains the same";⁴ such was the union of the Self of the thinker who knows with the Infinite Intelligence, ever pure and free. Filled with the wondrous consciousness of the Eternal, the soul ceased to cling to its former individuality. In the immensity of Being and the boundlessness of Joy its "name and form" vanished, for its true nature had put off its trappings, and stood revealed as of the same substance with the Most High. Had it been only a modification of the true Self by some change or transformation such as produced the universe, the great Dissolution would have refunded it into the elements of Nature whence it sprang. Then, indeed, it would have been liable to lose its being. But it was the Supreme Self—so Kāçakritsna taught—which condescended to become the individual soul, and submit to the darkness of Ignorance till it discovered its true character.

¹ Quoted by Goreh, *Rational Refutation*, p. 260.

² iii. 3, 32; xxxviii. p. 236.

³ Cp. Lect. II., p. 65.

⁴ *Kaṭha Up.*, ii. 4, 15: *SBE*, xv. p. 17.

This is the interpretation which Çankara adopts. At death it re-entered the highest Light; all perception of difference was at an end; and, so far from being annihilated, the soul realised itself in freedom, in purity, and bliss for evermore.¹

¹ i. 4, 22; xxxviii. p. 279. The doctrine of annihilation (*uccheda*) is here expressly repudiated.—The language of Çankara finds interesting analogies in contemporary mysticism in the West. In the writings of John the Scot, commonly known as Erigena, the Neoplatonic theology is boldly combined with Christian doctrine. There is, of course, no parallel to the Indian scheme of the unbeginning *Saṃsāra*, nor has Erigena any equivalent for *Māyā*. He lays out but one cycle instead of an endless series; and in treating it he must accommodate his teaching to the Bible and the Church. But his metaphysic is neither scriptural nor ecclesiastical, though it is piously adapted to the Trinitarian creed. The world of sense is interpreted pantheistically; creation exists only in God, and all the kinds or classes of visible things, and the invisible ideas according to which they are produced, are so many "theophanies." The objects of our experience have no independent being. God alone has true *ousia*, all-containing and therefore above our comprehension. With the help of the preposition *super* he is raised into complete transcendence as the Super-wise, the Super-good, the Super-true, the *Supersentialis* (cp. the *Adhībhūta*, Lect. V., ante, p. 258). As he thus passes out of the range of space and time his inaccessible Light surpasses all our intelligence, and he can be known only by negatives (cp. the Upanishad formula, *neti neti*, so often quoted by Çankara). Above all predicates his essence is the absolute *nihilum*. The Father thus corresponds to the *nirguṇa* Brahman; the Son or Word, the sphere of ideas (the "undeveloped" *nāma-rūpa*), finds a counterpart in *Īçvara*, and the world-process is a scheme of emanation and reabsorption. In man the divine Light appears in the darkness of reason just as the sun illumines the atmosphere, and man's apprehension of God is in reality God's apprehension of himself by the Spirit. *Non vos estis qui intelligitis me sed ego ipse in vobis per Spiritum meum me ipsum intelligo* (Hom. in Joh., p. 291, ed. Migne, cxxii.; Stöckl, *Gesch. der Philos. des Mittelalters*, 1864, i. p. 42). When God is found, he has been himself the seeker. *Nam si invenitur, non ipse qui quærit, sed ipse qui quæritur, et qui est lux mentium, invenit* (De Div. Nat., ii. 23, p. 572, Stöckl, *ibid.*). The whole universe slowly moves back to its source, and in the great restoration all material forms will return to their hidden causes (the generic ideas). The whole human nature (saved in Christ) will be reinstated in the dignity of the divine image of which Paradise was the symbol (cp. the elevation to the world of Brahman in *sayujyātā*, *sarūpatā*, *śātmātā*); while for some, apparently, a yet higher destiny is reserved. Through the abundance of divine grace the elect in Christ will be raised above all the laws and limits of nature, and will pass supersentially into God himself, and will be one in and with him, *Supersentialiter in ipsum Deum transituri sunt, unumque*

The philosophy of life which issued from this teaching was summed up in some brief verses traditionally ascribed to Çankara, and still to be heard on the lips of educated Hindus in the South, sometimes with a sigh, sometimes with a smile.¹

"Think truly, this life is but a dream.

With mind fixed on truth one becomes free from attachment ;
To one freed from attachment there is no delusion ,
Undeluded, the soul springs to clear light, free from all bondage.
When youth goes, who is moved by love ?

When wealth goes, who then follows ?

When the great truth that the soul and Brahman are One, is known,

What then is this passing show ?

Day and night, morning and evening, spring and winter, come and go ;

Time plays, and age goes, yet desire for life passeth not.

Take no pride in youth, friends, or riches,

They all pass away in the twinkling of an eye.

Give up this Mâyâ-made world, gain true knowledge,

And enter on the path to Brahman."

VII

The philosophy of the Vedânta in the form given to it by Çankara did not present Brahman as an object of worship. It was elaborated on the scriptural language of the Upanishads, but personal devotion had long been concentrated on one or other of the two great deities, Çiva or Vishnu. Medieval piety, therefore, only rarely alluded to Brahman's metaphysical elevation in its temple-dedications, though the creative activity of Brahmâ as he emerges from the lotus springing from Vishnu's navel is a very frequent theme of praise in the sanctuary. Occasionally, however, mythology gives place to philosophy. Under Nandivarman, one of the Pallava kings, according to a plate from Pondicherry,² the praises of the Deity began : "Victorious is the Most High Brahman, the cause of the pro-

in ipso et cum ipso futuri (*ibid.*, v. 39, p. 1020 ; Stockl, p. 112). This is the blessed life, *pax eterna in contemplatione veritatis quæ proprie dicitur deificatio* (*ibid.*, v. 36, p. 979 ; Stockl, p. 113). Elsewhere this process is called *adunatio*, "at-one-ment."

¹ R. W. Frazer, *A Literary History of India* (1898), p. 327 f.

² A French colony, south of Madras. The plate is dated about the eighth century. *South Indian Inscr.*, II. iii. (1895), p. 353.

duction, stability, and destruction of the three worlds, the True, without end and without beginning, who consists of Knowledge alone, who is One, the Abode of Immortality." A stone from Tewar (six miles from Jabbalpur, in the Central Provinces), under date 1177, exhorts the reader to "adore him who is Knowledge and Bliss, the Most High Brahman, waited upon by Brahmā and the other gods, the Great God, the God of gods, the Parent of the world."¹ Elsewhere Brahman without qualities (*nirguna*), all-pervading and eternal, is identified with Çiva.² As early as 553-4 Brahman *Svayambhū* ("self-existent") is employed by Çiva, according to a stone from West Mālwa (Central India) in effecting the continuance, destruction, and production of all things, and is thus brought to *pitṛitva*, the Fatherhood of the world.³ Çiva may employ Brahman to create, but he is himself also Creator;⁴ he is the Maker of the visible and the invisible worlds, "compassionate to his worshippers, the destroyer of all sorrows."⁵ Here, as elsewhere in medieval devotion, he is assimilated with the sun.⁶ On the other hand, at the temple of Ganeça (Çiva's son), at Māvalihara,⁷ Çiva is exalted as "the Cause of production, existence, and destruction, Himself without cause; both without *māyā* and *chitra-māyā* (possessed of manifold illusion), without qualities and endowed with qualities, self-existent and the Most High Lord."⁸ Thus from time to time does philosophy appeal to the public eye, or at least to the Sanskrit reader. So the court-poet Çṛipāla sings to Çiva in honour of the Chalukyan

¹ *Epigraphia Indica*, ii. p. 19. So Kielhorn, but *guru* might also mean "Teacher."

² *Ibid.*, ii. 300, Benares, 1042; xi. 140, Allahabad, 1047; *Indian Antiq.*, xvii. 228, Rewari (Central India), 1175.

³ Fleet, *The Gupta Inscriptions*, in *Corp. Inscriptions Indicarum*, iii. (1888), p. 155.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 155.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 290. From a copper plate of the seventh century belonging to a temple of Paraçurāma (cp. below, Lect. VIII.), in the Kāngra district, Punjab.

⁶ Cp. *Epigr. Ind.*, xii. 265, Bombay, 1026; ix. 10, Rājputāna, 1042; iv. 55, Central India, 1167. Cp. W. Jahn, the *Saura Purāṇa*, 1908, Strasburg (about 1200), p. v. Çiva is the sun and inner guide, i. 11.

⁷ Or "the Seven Pagodas," about thirty miles south of Madras.

⁸ A.D. 650-700, *Epigr. Ind.*, x. p. 8. Cp. *South Indian Inscriptions*, i. p. 5, seventh century.

king Kumārapāla: "I will praise that will-power of the Lord of the worlds on whom the silent seekers after salvation meditate as on the *Advaita*-Brahman, which, playing with new mundane eggs—producing and destroying them at their times,—ever amuses itself according to its desire."¹

The Monism of Çankara, with its admission of the Relative Reality of the Samsāra and its recognition of an Almighty and All-wise Creator, was not, however, the only form of Theistic philosophy associated with the worship of Çiva. After many years of residence in Southern India, the late Dr G. U. Pope recorded his deliberate opinion that the system known as "the *Çaiva-Siddhānta* is the most elaborate, influential, and undoubtedly the most valuable of all the religions of India."² Popular Çaivism, on the other hand, whether in South India or North, has its ritual puerilities and idolatries, and (until the last century) its cruelties in the shape of occasional human sacrifices offered to the dread goddess Durgā, one of the mythological consorts of the Deity. But even popular Çaivism rests upon a Theism which expresses itself in philosophical form, while claiming a scriptural foundation. "What are the attributes of Çiva?" asks the Catechist.³ "He is eternal," runs the answer; "without outward form; without passions; without external marks of existence; whose fulness fills all worlds; without any divine superior; unchangeable both in thought and word; without carnal desire; without enmity; and the life of all living beings. He is, moreover, immeasurably great, and spotlessly pure." The Unity of the Godhead is then based upon the unity of the world, and the necessity of an Omnipotent Creator to produce it. And that he may accomplish the three divine functions of creation, preservation, and final destruction, he exists in the three forms of Brahman, Vishnu, and Rudra. But how was it possible for the Supreme Being, himself immaterial, to create this material world? "In order that we might be able to serve and praise him," runs the reply, "he con-

¹ *Epigr. Ind.*, i. p. 301, from Gujarāt, 1151.

² *Tiruvāçagam* (1900), p. lxxiv. *Siddhānta* = "established end," the conclusion of an argument, a system of truth.

³ *A Catechism of the Çaiva Religion*, tr. from the Tamil, by Rev. T. Foulkes (Madras, 1863), p. 1. The date of the original is not specified.

centrated all his divine grace in the supreme Çakti,¹ who constitutes his left side." The transcendent God, immutable and eternal, could only project himself into the universe, and exercise the activity of production, through the manifestation of some potentiality. Çankara had identified the *mâyā-çakti* with the *prakṛiti* of the Lord, the inner stuff of the phenomenal world.² Mythologically this was interpreted as a female element in the divine nature, and was presented as Çiva's consort under the names of Mahādevī, Durgā, Kālī, or Ūmā. In the sphere of philosophy it supplied the agency by which God was viewed as Immanent in the universe and the Saviour of souls. Two types of this philosophy come down from the Middle Ages, and have recently been brought into historic light: one from the valley of Kashmir, the other from the peoples of Dravidian stock in South India speaking the Kanarese and Tamil languages.³ In spite of marked differences alike from each other and from Çankara's Vedānta, they are nevertheless closely related, though it is no longer possible to trace in detail the links of their connection.

The Çaiva religion and philosophy of Kashmir rest upon three groups of documents whose existence was first made known by the late Prof. Bühler in his "Report on the Search for Sanskrit Manuscripts" in the famous valley.⁴ More than a generation elapsed before their study was seriously attempted; the Research Department of the State has recently begun the publication of a series of Texts and Studies, and with the help of Mr J. G. Chatterji the main facts may be summarised as follows.⁵ The first division bears the name of *Āgama-Çāstra*.⁶ Many of the works which it contains are of much older date than the special Kashmir type of monistic doctrine, and represent a dualism nearer to that of the Çvetâçvatara Upanishad.

¹ Cp. *ante*, Lect. V., p. 278.

² Cp. *ante*, p. 328.

³ On the Dravidian languages and their area, cp. Dr Sten Konow in the *Linguistic Survey of India* (ed. Grierson, 1906), iv. p. 277 f.

⁴ *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Bombay* (1877), extra number. Cp. Bhandarkar, *Vaiṣṇavism, Çaivism, etc.*, p. 129.

⁵ *Kashmir Shaivism* (1914), Srinagar.

⁶ *Āgama* signifies literally "coming-to" or "arrival," and so that which arrives authoritatively from previous generations, a body of teaching with a religious guarantee.

For their literary origin no clues are at hand. But the collection contains certain Çiva Sūtras, ascribed to the God himself as their author, and made known by revelation to a holy sage Vasugupta, who lived about A.D. 800 near Srinagar, the capital of Kashmir. He was a contemporary—older or younger—of Çankara. Did he receive any impulse of thought from the teacher who is said to have travelled from the far-distant South? Among Vasugupta's disciples was Kallata, the reputed author of certain verses based on the Çiva Sūtras, which with Kallata's own exposition form practically the sole remains of what was known as the *Spanda Çāstra*. Another disciple, Somānanda, and his own pupil Utpala, are credited with the composition of the principal work lying at the base of the third division, the *Pratyabhijñā Çāstra*. Here are the documentary sources of the philosophy of Kashmir Çaivism, which thus arose in the ninth century A.D. In the native literature it is known as the "Triple Instruction" (*Trika Çāsana*), for it deals with three main themes: Çiva, his energy (*çakti*), and the Soul (*anu*); or, otherwise expressed, with *Pati*, the "Lord," *Pāça*, the "bond" (the snares or fetters of the world), and *Paçu*, "cattle" (i.e. the herd of souls).¹ What, then, are the relations of God, the soul, and the world?

The general scheme presented by the commentators to connect the visible scene with the ultimate Reality, the Supreme Çiva, has an emanational character.² Dwelling in the Infinite Intelligence is the Supreme Word (*Parā Vāk*), the mysterious source of all the types and relations of the world that is to be. When the hour for manifestation arrives, this wondrous Word puts forth a mighty Vision. It embraces the whole universe, in its most elementary condition, undistributed into groups or classes, yet withal comprising the germinal forms of future existence. The Vision-Word³ then gradually discriminates between them,

¹ These three terms will be met again in Southern Çaivism. Cp. an inscription from the Kāngra district, Punjab (probable date, 804), to Paçupati, who cuts the *pāças* of his worshippers; *Epigr. Ind.*, i. p. 108.

² Cp. Chatterji, quoting Jayaratha's commentary on the *Tantrāloka*. Bühler, *Report*, ascribes the *Tantrāloka* to Abhinava-Gupta (A.D. 1000), and places Jayaratha about 1200, p. 81 f.

³ *Pagyantī Vāk*, literally "seeing."

and after passing through an intermediate stage becomes the Spoken Word, flowing forth from the fivefold energy of the Deity.¹ Çiva himself is the All-transcending, sublimely beyond all limits of space and time and form, eternal, infinite. But he is also the underlying reality of the actual world, immanent in the scene of our experience, and this immanence is expressed by the term *Çakti*.² It is a creative energy, operating in a boundless variety of modes, among which five are reckoned as primary: his absolute intelligence; his pure bliss in freedom, self-dependence, peace; his will, endowed with irresistible energy to accomplish his resolves; his knowledge, whereby his intelligence in prior elevation above all relations is applied to the order of the universe; his action, enabling him to assume every form, to enter every shape, and manifest himself in the infinite variety of all creation. Such, in the briefest terms, is the ontological scheme of *Advaya*, "non-duality," or *Bhedābheda*, "diversity in non-diversity" (i.e. unity). Confronted with the usual difficulty of explaining how the Infinite and Eternal, needing nothing, in unchanging bliss, undertook the process, itself eternal, of producing, maintaining, and destroying the endless succession of universes, the Kashmir theologians suggested a kind of drama within the Godhead. The Çakti in union with it was permitted to take on "the form of the practice of negation."³ Under this influence the ideal universe disappeared from view, and the Supreme allowed himself to feel a want. He shone as a pure light of Intelligence, but there was nothing for it to illuminate. A movement towards an object was consequently set up. Out of this kind of rhythmic action the cosmogonic process was conducted through the twenty-five *tattvas* of the Sāṅkhyan evolutionary scheme (eleven others being added) till the world of our experience was reached, so completely pervaded by the divine energy that even the clods upon the ground possess some share, however faint, in the infinite consciousness.

In the *Paramārtha-Sāra* or "Essence of Supreme Truth," a

¹ Chatterji, *Kashmir Śaivism*, p. 4. The scheme, like its Buddhist parallels, has a Gnostic air.

² For its mythological application, cp. *ante*, p. 279.

³ Chatterji, *op. cit.*, p. 62, *nisheda-vyāpāra-rūpa*.

poem in 105 verses composed by Abhinava-Gupta, a Kashmir saint who flourished about A.D. 1000,¹ the universe is concretely presented in four spheres (literally "eggs"). The first and highest, that of God (Īvara), potentially contains the three lower. The second, ruled by Rudra, is the world of Māyā. It is no mere illusion; mythologically it is a goddess (*devī*); practically it belongs to the material world, and it consists of three *Malas*, "dirts" or stains. There is the defilement of being an *aṇu* (an atom), an individual soul claiming separate existence through unconsciousness of its real nature. There is a group of Māyā's "cloaks" or "coats of mail," which enclose the soul in various forms of limitation, such as time, necessity, passion, ignorance.² Last is the defilement of Karma, which determines the form of the material body in accordance with prior merit or demerit. The third sphere is controlled by Vishnu, and includes the whole scene of Nature (*Prakṛiti*) wrought out of the Three Strands, involving souls in all the delusive experiences of pleasure and pain. Fourth is the Earth-sphere, over which Brahman presides, where knowledge and power are fettered by the bonds of flesh, though Yogins may extend them to more distant objects. Our souls are at first in the grip of falsehood. They do not know their true being. Existence is the "sport" of the Supreme, for the real dweller within the body is no other than Īva, who is said of his own free will to enter the stage of sense-perception like an actor, that he may realise the joys and sorrows created by himself to be his objects.

The influence of the Monistic Vedānta is seen in the familiar analogies of the limpid crystal which assumes various hues to match the colours of different environments, or the images of the moon in broken reflections on the wavelets of the lake, or the coil of rope which a chance observer mistakes for a snake. These are the stock-in-trade of all thorough-going idealist interpreters. So is the figure of the Self when it is cut off from the Infinite Intelligence, like the space enclosed by a jar out of the universal ether. In this state the Self belongs to

¹ The text and translation were published by Dr L. D. Barnett in the *JRAS* (1910), p. 707 ff.

² Cp. Chatterji, *op. cit.*, p. 75 ff.

the herd (*paçu*), in the bonds (*pāça*) of the Three Defilements, which are the Çaivan equivalents of Original Sin. The aim of religion is to secure Release; and its method is to disperse the imagination of duality. Destroy the sense of ownership which prompts the phrase "my body"; cease to identify corporeal states with the soul as though it could be hungry or lean; abandon the notion of personal merit gained by good works—this is the way to conquer the clinging to individuality, the craving for satisfaction, the claim to happiness. The Yogin's discipline is naturally laid out along familiar lines. But two elements receive unusual emphasis, the need of a Guru or teacher, and the action of Çiva's revealing Grace. As it was his "sport" to conceal his own nature and enter the realm of finite intelligence, so it is the wonder of his free will to liberate the prisoners of sense-experience. Among his mysterious energies is his Grace-Power (*Anugraha-Çakti*), by which he imparts the knowledge of reality. To the struggling soul he comes with revealing splendour. In his presence the false identifications with the body, the breath, the finite intelligence, fall away. The poor fettered soul (*paçu*) breaks its bonds (*pāça*), realises its true nature, and becomes one with the Lord (*pati*). When the illusion of differentiation is dispelled, the passions, wrath, lust, avarice, conceit, and all their crew, vanish for ever. The external duties of religion, ritual and oblations, cease; all food is clean, all dress indifferent. The utmost extravagances of piety or crime produce neither merit nor guilt for one who knows the Supreme Reality.¹ The alternatives are, of course, intentionally grotesque. But there is no exaggeration in the withdrawal of all caste-restrictions on the attainment of the blessed life. The ascent on the Good Way is open to all, however lowly. It may not always be achieved in a single life. The work of Grace might operate only by degrees, and the path to final deliverance might have its pauses of progress.² But perseverance would carry the aspirant to the goal. He would reach the realm of the Deathless, from which there is no return.

¹ The offering of hundreds of thousands of the great Horse-Sacrifice, or the slaughter of hundreds of thousands of Brāhmanas, involves no fruit when such acts are performed without personal concern; ver. 70, p. 738.

² The method of *krama-mukti*, cp. *ants*, p. 340³.

"Made of light," he would become "consubstantial with Çiva,"¹ he would attain to Çivahood, and in communion with the Supreme Truth the limitations of the Self would pass away. Such was the freedom conferred by Divine Grace.

VIII

Meanwhile the most remarkable product of Çaiva religion presents itself among the Tamils of South India. By what means and at what date the Brahman culture was carried among the Dravidian peoples it is no longer possible to determine.² Legend has its own version, and the Tamil chroniclers boldly assigned an enormous antiquity to the famous Academies which were supposed to have developed the art of literary composition after the Brāhman Agastya had provided the language with an alphabet and grammar.³ There are, unfortunately, no clear historical data, in spite of very active poetical production, until about the sixth century of our era. The early forms of the cults of Çiva and Vishnu beside the Buddhists and the Jains are shrouded in obscurity.⁴ But it is recognised by the best Tamil scholarship that "as late as the third or fourth century A.D. there was no Çivaism or Vishnuism as understood now."⁵ Yet in the sixth century Çaivism is firmly established in

¹ *Çiva-maya*, ver. 97, p. 746.

² Mr V. A. Smith, *Early History of India* (1904), proposes 500 B.C. as a mean date. Cp. the *Lectures on the Ancient History of India*, by Prof. D. R. Bhandarkar (Calcutta, 1919), p. 13 ff.

³ A learned lawyer and judge, editor also of important Tamil texts, recently assigned a period of ten thousand years (10,150-150 B.C.) to the three traditional Academies. Mr M. S. Aiyangar, M.A., in his interesting volume of *Tamil Studies* (Madras, 1914), conceived the first and second "to have existed occasionally some time between 500 B.C. and A.D. 200," p. 244. The really distinctive work seems to have been done at Madura, the capital of the Pāndyan kings, by the so-called Third Academy.

⁴ In an important article on the Dravidians of S. India, *ERE*, v. p. 22, Mr R. W. Frazer suggests that as Çiva in Tamil means "red," an original Dravidian deity of that name may have been amalgamated with the Rudra-Çiva of the Vedic hymns, Rudra having often the same meaning. Cp. *ante*, *Lect. V.*, p. 226², and *Linguistic Survey*, lv. p. 279. Cp. Pope, *Tiruvāçagam*, p. lxiv,² on a probable S. Indian demonic element in the Çaiva cult.

⁵ *Tamil Studies*, p. 251.

Dravidian countries with its characteristic piety.¹ An inscription from Mysore (500-550) celebrates him as the Eternal *Sthānu* (the "Steadfast") "whose one body is formed by the coalescence of all the gods, and whose grace (*prasāda*) constantly guards the three worlds from the fear of evil."² Plates from the Nāsik district (Bombay) in the year 595 commemorate the military success, the learning, the charities, the aids to the afflicted, the blind, and the poor, of King Çankaragana, a worshipper of Çiva under the name of *Paçupati*, "the Lord of Souls."³ A little later the Gurjaras of Broach (Bombay), who were originally sun-worshippers, all became Çaivas.⁴ When Yuan Chwang in 640 made his way down the eastern coast to the Pallava kingdom, and stayed at its capital Kāñchipura,⁵ he found ten thousand Buddhists in the country, with a hundred monasteries and eighty Deva temples, of which the majority were Jain. The Çaivas, therefore, were not yet powerful. But the Tamil poets of Çaivism were already at work. The struggle with the dominant Jains was severe, and the religion which was established in conflict generated a new energy of emotion. Bands of Brāhman theologians came down from Upper India.⁶ The air was full of debates and disputations. In the seventh century Tīru-Ñānasambandhar converted the Pāndyan king from Jainism, and later tradition affirmed that with the fierce wrath of an Elijah he celebrated his victory in controversy by the massacre of eight thousand Jains. Like his earlier contemporary Appar, he was a copious hymn-writer, 384 compositions

¹ See the poems of Appar (or St Vāgiça), 573, below; Venkayya in *Epigr. Ind.*, iii. p. 277. Mr J. M. Nallaswāmi Pillai claims Narkīrar, chief of the Academy poets, as the earliest exponent of the Çaiva-Siddhānta, but he does not venture to fix his date. *Siddh. Dip.*, xii. 10 (April 1912), p. 407.

² *Epigr. Ind.*, viii. p. 33.

³ This title already appears in the Gupta inscriptions about A.D. 350 at Allahabad, *Corpus Inscr. Ind.*, iii. p. 1. Dr Fleet translates it simply "Lord of Animals," following the mythological description of the Ganges flowing through his braided hair. On its religious meaning in Kashmir Çaivism, cp. p. 347.

⁴ *Epigr. Ind.*, xii. p. 201.

⁵ Commonly identified with Conjeveram, but see Watters, *On Yuan Chwang*, ii. p. 226 f.

⁶ *Tamil Studies*, p. 217.

being ascribed to him. So powerful was the impress of his work and character, that "there is scarcely a Ćiva temple in the Tamil country where his image is not daily worshipped."¹ From this time an impassioned stream of sacred verse flows on for centuries. The power of Ćaivism—and of Vaiṣṇavism by its side—continually grows. Hundreds of temples rise through South India to the two great Gods.² Each can boast its line of saints, its poets, its teachers. The first collection of Ćaiva hymns, the *Devarām*, is made about 1025, and others follow.³ By the year 1100 sixty-three Ćaiva saints are commemorated in the *Periya Purāna*.⁴ Here is no systematic theology, but a record of vivid personal experience. Its fundamental motive is most briefly expressed by one of the later poets, Tiru-Mūlar, in a single verse :

"The ignorant say that Love and God are different ;
None know that Love and God are the same.
When they know that Love and God are the same,
They rest in God's Love."

And the further lesson ran :

"They have no love for God who have no love for all mankind." ⁵

The Ćaiva hymns are one long series of variations on these themes. Mingled sometimes with strange mythological allusions and unexpected metaphors, they tell of raptures and ecstasies, of fears and falls. There are periods of gloom when

¹ P. Sundaram Pillai, *Some Milestones in the Hist. of Tamil Lit.* (1895), p. 9. Annual feasts are held in his name, with dramatic representations of events in his life. As an illustration of the chronological difficulties attending literary investigation, it may be mentioned that while one English scholar (Taylor) placed him about 1320 B.C., another (Bishop Caldwell) assigned him to A.D. 1292! Cp. S. Purnalingam Pillai, *Primer of Tamil Literature* (1904), p. 83.

² On the Ćiva temples at Pattadakal (Bijapur district of Bombay) and Ellora (Hyderabad), see Havell, *Ancient and Mediæval Architecture in India* (1915), pp. 177 ff., 193 ff.

³ *Tamil Studies*, p. 220; Frazer, *ERE*, v. p. 23. The Vaishnavites about the same time gathered a "Book of Four Thousand Psalms." See Lect. VII., p. 383.

⁴ *South Indian Inserr.*, II. ii. p. 152.

⁵ *Siddhiar*, xii. 2, quoted in *Siddhanta Dīpikā*, xiii. 5 (Nov. 1912), p. 239.

the heavens are shrouded and the face of God is hid. There are splendours of light when the world is transfigured in the radiance of love. At the outset of the great chorus the first voices are calm and gentle; and even Appar, who tells how he had been bound by heretics to a granite pillar and flung into the sea, and was saved by repeating the sacred name,¹ can muse tranquilly on the "fellowship of the Spirit" in contrast with conventional practice or even ethical endeavour.

"The grace of God is as pacifying as the soft music of the lute,
 Or the tender moon in the evening sky.
 All learning and wisdom are for doing reverence to God.
 God should be worshipped out of pure love as the Great Benefactor,
 Who gave us the instruments of knowledge, speech, and action,
 For escape from destructive desires.
 Such desires are hard to conquer without the grace of God.
 God rescues from the onsets of sensuous desires those whose hearts melt for him;
 He reveals himself to those who love him above all things,
 When the [churn of the] heart is moved hard by [the staff of] love,
 Rolled on the cord of pure intelligence.
 They who would be free from sin and corruption,
 Should think of God deeply and continuously with joy.
 Then he will be at one with them and grant them his grace.

Freedom from sin and corruption is to those only who see him in all things,
 And not to those who see him only in particular places,
 Nor to those who merely chant the Vedas or hear the Çāstras expounded.
 It is to those only who crave for at-one-ment
 With the omnipresent and all-powerful Lord,
 And not to those who bathe at dawn,
 Nor to those who have at all times striven to be just,
 Nor to those who make daily offerings to the Devas.
 It is to those only who know the Lord to be boundless in love and light,
 And not to those who roam in search of holy shrines,
 Nor to those who practise severe austerities, or abstain from meat.

¹ *Siddhānta Dipikā*, xiii. 2 (Aug. 1912), p. 61. The five sacred letters of "Nama Çivāya," or "Praise to Çiva," were believed to possess a certain sacred or mystical power.

No gain of spiritual freedom is there to those who display the robes

And other insignia of Yogins and Sannyāsins, or who mortify the flesh.

That gain is only for those who glorify him as the Being
Who vibrates throughout the universe and in every soul."¹

Very different are the confessions of Mānikka Vāṇagar² in the ninth century, whose fifty-one hymns depict the progress of a soul out of the bondage of ignorance and passion into the liberty of light and love.³ Their devotional idiom may often sound strange to Western ears; their mythological allusions will sometimes repel readers accustomed to a different imaginative outlook. But their sincerity is indisputable. The poet's theme is the wonder of divine Grace shown forth in his own life, and he tells without reserve the marvel of his first conversion, his joy and exaltation, his subsequent waywardness, his despondencies, his falls, his shame, and his final recovery and triumph. Dr Pope compares the influence of these verses in shaping the religious life of the Tamils of South India to that of the Psalms in the Christian Church. They are daily sung throughout the country with tears of rapture.⁴

The story of the poet's life is enveloped in legend. Born in a Brāhman family on the river Vaigai near to Madura, he attracted the notice of the king, and was early called to the royal service. A student of the Vedas, he sought wisdom from many masters, but was satisfied with none.⁵ The world had woven its bonds around him. Court favour, wealth, dignity, the charms of women—all were at his command, he was "caught in the circling sea of joyous life."⁶ The ancient Scriptures failed to hold him; "busied in earth, I acted many a lie"; he

¹ *Siddhānta Dipikā*, xi. 1 (July 1910), p. 15, tr. P. Rāmanāthan. I have taken the liberty to print the successive sentences so as to show a certain rhythm of thought where verse is unattainable

² Sanskr. Māṇikya Vāṇaka, "he whose utterances are rubies."

³ See *The Tiruvāṇṇam*, or "Sacred Utterances," tr. G. U. Pope (Oxford, 1900).

⁴ Pp. xxxii-xxxiv.

⁵ iv. ll. 42-51, p. 33.

⁶ xli. 1, p. 309.

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gave no thought to birth and death, sunk in the flood of lust and the illusion of "I" and "mine." Suddenly, as he was on a mission for the king,¹ he was arrested in mid-career by a power that he could not resist, "He laid his hand on me." The experience could only be described by saying that "the One most precious Infinite to earth came down"; but what he saw could not be told.

"My inmost self in strong desire dissolved, I yearned;
Love's river overflowed its banks;
My senses all in him were centred; 'Lord,' I cried,
With stammering speech and quivering frame
I clasped adoring hands; my heart expanding like a flower."²

All sorts of emotions struggled within him, loathing for past sin, amazement at the divine condescension, a bounding sense of assurance and freedom:

"I know thee, I, lowest of men that live,
I know, and see myself a very cur,
Yet, Lord, I'll say I am thy loving one!
Though such I was, thou took'st me for thine own.
The wonder this! Say, is there aught like this?
He made me servant of his loving saints;
Dispelled my fear; ambrosia pouring forth, he came,
And while my soul dissolved in love made me his own.
Henceforth I'm no one's vassal, none I fear,
We've reached the goal!"³

But his triumph was premature. He will hide nothing, he will confess all:

"Faithless I strayed, I left
Thy saints, a reprobate was I. How did I watch the one
beloved,
The quiverings of the lip, the folds of circling robe, the timid
bashful look,
To read love's symptoms there."⁴

It is a familiar story, but rarely told with such truthfulness. Out of his falls he is once more lifted into "mystic union." With a tender familiarity he explains it, "There was in thee

¹ This may be the historical nucleus of the romantic legend, p. xx ff.

² iv. ll. 80-84, p. 35.

³ v. 23, 29, 30 (condensed), p. 53 ff. Cp. xxxi. 1, p. 264.

⁴ v. 57.

desire for me, in me for thee." He was, then, worth something even to God. It suggests a still profounder thought :

"The tongue itself that cries to thee—all other powers
Of my whole being that cry out—all are Thyself.
Thou art my way of strength ! the trembling thrill that runs
Through me is Thee ! Thyself the whole of ill and weal."¹

So through the storms of emotion he makes his way to peace, to a security so profound that he can truthfully exclaim—

"Though hell's abyss
I enter, I unmurmuring go, if grace divine appoint my lot."²

From the tranquillity of the sage's path, as he withdraws from the world and wanders from shrine to shrine (tradition tells of his encounters with Buddhists from Ceylon), he looks back over his life in the world :

"Glory I ask not, nor desire I wealth ; not earth or heaven I
crave ;
I seek no birth nor death ; those that desire not Çiva nevermore
I touch ; I've reached the foot of sacred Perun-turrai's king,
And crown'd myself ; I go not forth ; I know no going hence
again."³

In a quieter mood Tiru Mûlar summed up a less varied experience :—

"I learnt the object of my union with the body,
I learnt of my union with the God of gods.
He entered my heart without leaving me,
I learnt the knowledge that knows no sin.

Seek ye the true support, hold to the Supreme,
Your desires will be satisfied when his Grace is gained ;
With humility of heart the learned will secure
The bliss enjoyed by the bright immortals."⁴

Among the strange legends of the saints in the Periya Purāna is the story of Kāraikāl Ammaiyaṛ, a merchant's wife, whose

¹ xxxiii. 5, p. 275.

² v. 2, p. 45.

³ xxxiv. 7, p. 280. Cp. xxii. 2, 3, 7, p. 218 ; and for general retrospect, li. p. 351. Perun-turrai is "great harbour," now called Avudaiyaṛ Kōyil (p. xx). It was on his way thither that the saint's conversion took place, and he is still worshipped there.

⁴ From the *Siddhānta Dipikā*, xi. 7 (Jan. 1911), p. 289. His *Tirumantra* is translated by J. M. Nallaswami Pillai in vol. vii.

beauty so distressed her that she prayed for the form of a demoness who could stand by God for ever in prayer. Amid a shower of divine flowers and applauding music from the skies she shed her flesh, and after wandering through the world in her bones approached the dwelling of Çiva upon Mount Kailāsa. There, as she humbly drew nigh to the God upon her head, it was vouchsafed to her to behold him. She loved to sing afterwards of the "God of gods with throat of shining blue,"¹ to tell of his braided hair and necklace of skulls. These were the accepted conventions of mythology. As she entered the Presence, the Lord called out to her "Mother," and she fell prostrate at his feet murmuring "Father." That one good word was uttered by the Lord, says the poet St Sekkilar, "so that the whole world may be saved"; for the mother's love that would free from all harm and redeem from all sin is indeed divine. And Kāraikāl sang:

"If one desires the path that leads to God
And wishes to deserve his grace, and asks
Where he dwells sure—Even in the heart of those
Like my poor self, it easy is to find."²

Here are significant forms of religious experience. What could philosophy make of them?

IX

The *Çaiva Siddhānta*, the "Accomplished End," the fixed or established truth, is but one among several branches of Tamil Çaivism, and itself includes as many as sixteen different schools.³

¹ This dark-blue colour was the result of his self-sacrificing act in swallowing the poison which issued from the churning of the ocean of milk to produce the drink of immortality, cp. *Mbh.*, i. 18, 43 f., *ante*, p. 147.

² *Siddhānta Dipikā*, xiii. 4 (Oct. 1912), p. 152 ff.

³ Cp. Schomerus, *Der Çaiva Siddhānta* (1912), Leipzig, p. 3. Besides this comprehensive exposition, the subject may be studied in the light of modern Tamil scholarship in the pages of the *Siddhānta Dipikā* (extinct some years ago), and in the essays of Mr J. M. Nallaswāmi, *Studies in Çaiva Siddhānta* (1911), Madras. Among the principal documents available for English readers are the following: Nīlakantha's *Commentary* on the Sūtras of Bādarāyaṇa in the early vols. of *Siddh. Dip.*; the *Çiva-Jñāna-Boṭha* of Meykanda (1223), tr. Hoisington, in the *Journal of the American Oriental Soc.*, iv. (1864);

It rests upon a twofold Scriptural authority, the Vedas and the Āgamas, "both of them true, both being the Word of the Lord,"¹ but not of equal value. The Vedas are the more general, a common basis provided by Çiva for all religions; the Āgamas are the more special, suitable for advanced believers and maturer experience. Revelation is thus recognised as progressive. The Āgamas are twenty-eight in number, ten of which are reckoned as "Root-Āgamas," and as such are "God-taught"; the rest, though divine in origin, are only "man-realised."² Composed in Sanskrit, they were already regarded as products of grey antiquity by the author of the Sūta Samhitā (in the Skanda Purāna of the fifth or sixth century A.D.).³ They supplied the material for Tiru Mūlar's treatise *Tirumantira*,⁴ and their main teachings were afterwards expounded on the basis of twelve Sanskrit verses in the *Çiva-Jñāna-Botha* ("Enlightenment in Çiva-Knowledge") by Meykanda Deva ("the Divine Seer of the Truth") in 1223.⁵ This brief work was the foundation of Çaiva scholasticism, and acquired a canonical character as a revelation from above, Paranjoti-Muni having been sent down from heaven to instruct Meykanda on

and Nallaswāmi (1895); the *Tiru Arul Payan* ("Fruit of Divine Grace"), by Umāpati, tr. Pope in his *Tiruvāṇṇam*, and the *Çiva-Prakāṣa* ("Light of Çiva"), tr. Hoisington, *JAOS*, iv. (1854), and assigned by him to the seventeenth century, but now attributed to Umāpati, 1313. For a summary of five leading forms of present-day Çāivism, cp. an Address by Mr K. P. Puttanna Chettiyār (Senior Counsellor to H.H. the Mahārājā of Mysore), *Siddh. Dip.*, xi. 6 (Dec. 1910), p. 256. On the significance of Çaivic religion in Nepal, Kashmir, and Mysore, "to this day the head centres of Āgamic lore," cp. V. V. Ramana, *ibid.*, p. 246. For the special significance of Vīra-Çaivism, *ibid.*, p. 269, and xi. 7 (Jan. 1911), p. 315. "The entire religion is a vindication of the principle of the brotherhood of man, and its necessary concomitant, universal love." Cp. Bhandarkar, *Vaiṣṇavism*, etc., p. 131.

¹ Tiru Mūlar, in *Siddh. Dip.*, xii. 5 (Nov. 1911), p. 205.

² V. V. Ramana in *Siddh. Dip.*, xi. 5 (Nov. 1901), p. 210. In x. 12 (June 1910), p. 476, the same writer places them before the first Buddhist Council, 480 B.C.; cp. x. 4 (Oct. 1909), p. 119.

³ Schomerus, *op. cit.*, p. 10.

⁴ The Tamil equivalent of *Çri-Mantra*, "the Sacred Word" (Frazer). Tamil writers place Tiru Mūlar in the first century A.D.; Western scholars bring him down much later.

⁵ A few years before the birth of Thomas Aquinas, 1225 or 1227.

the bank of the Lower Pennār in the South Arcot district.¹ The work was designed to supply answers to such questions as inquiring disciples might be expected to ask, such as—"Is the world eternal, or had it a beginning? Is it self-existent or produced? If produced, was the cause Time, or Karma, or intelligent? If intelligent, what was Nature?"—and so on through a series of cosmological and ontological puzzles, many of them of venerable descent.² The earlier Çāivism had its own solutions of such problems, supplied by Nīlakantha in the first extant commentary on the Vedānta Sūtras. Çāṅkara had not yet given its definite form to the *Advaita* doctrine, but its advocates were already in the field with their passages from Revelation. Nīlakantha parries objections by citing others which proved the superiority of Brahman (Çiva) alike to the universe and to the soul. He would admit neither an absolute identity nor an absolute distinction, and he called in the conception of Çakti to assist him in explaining their relation.³ To this Çāṅkara does not refer, though he criticises the doctrine of the Çāivas, who regarded the Lord as only the operative and not also the material cause of the world.⁴ The later scholastics marshalled a row of arguments against the monistic Vedānta, which they regarded as their most dangerous foe. St Arulnandi wound up a long series with the plea that "if

¹ Schomerus, *op. cit.*, p. 24. For the view of Dr Barnett, that this development was due to the infiltration of Kashmir Çāivism by a southward movement through the Kanarese country into the Tamil lands about the twelfth century, see his note in *Le Muséon* (1909), p. 271, and *Siddh. Dip.*, xi. 3 (Sept. 1910), p. 103. On Kanarese Vira-Çāivism in the twelfth century, cp. E. P. Rice, *A History of Kanarese Literature* (1915), chap. iv. It must not be forgotten that Tamil Çāivism had a long religious and literary development before the appearance of the schools of Kashmir, and much common terminology may be traced for centuries before Meykanda wrote. Çāṅkara argued against Çāivism, with which he must have been acquainted in South India; and his visit to Kashmir (if tradition may be trusted) apparently coincides with the first beginnings of the northern scholastic philosophy. Cp. *ante*, p. 309.

² Cp. the opening of the *Çvetāçvat. Up.*, *ante*, p. 228.

³ Cp. the long passage quoted by Nallaswāmi Pillai in *Studies in Çaiva Siddhānta*, p. 260 ff. This doctrine was known technically as *bhedbheda*, "distinction-nondistinction."

⁴ i. 2, 37: *SBE*, xxxiv. p. 435.

you say that all knowledge is Illusion, what you call Brahman is Illusion; and if Brahman is Illusion, the assumption of intelligence falls to the ground."¹

Like other philosophies of religion, the Çaiva-Siddhānta sought to determine the relations of three orders of beings, God, the world, and the soul. In agreement with the Vedānta of Çankara, it viewed the Samsāra as without beginning, but instead of attributing to it only a relative reality, it declared that matter and souls were, like God, eternal. But the world as we know it passes through a series of phases. It is for ever undergoing a process of evolution, of maintenance, and dissolution. Its form continually changes but its substance remains the same. Its material cause is Māyā, the primeval stuff whence the universe is organised, like the clay converted into the shapely jar. And it requires an efficient cause; it cannot have produced itself spontaneously. How should the undifferentiated mass in silence and darkness set about to change? The elements have no intelligence, and cannot be the agents of the great development. Time, Karma, Atoms, all are without mind. Time is in reality changeless in its nature, except (says Meykanda shrewdly) to the observer who views it as past, present, or future;² but it is no energy, it can produce no effects. It supplies a condition for God's action, it is impotent to take its place. The efficient cause must be eternal, like Māyā itself; it must be intelligent, for the universe is an ordered whole. True, God's immutability preserves the divine nature in sublime independence of vicissitude. "All things are to him one eternal consentaneous whole." He operates through his Çakti as the instrumental cause, as the potter uses his wheel and moulding-stick.

The cosmologic argument is reinforced from the moral side by the necessity of providing for the action of Karma. This also is eternal, but its sphere was in matter, and was lodged in the soul's bodily environment. It could not itself originate the distinction between good and evil, it could only register their

¹ See Schomerus' translation from the *Çiva-Jñāna-Siddhiyār*, p. 37. A leading modern Çaiva is said to have declared that he would rather see India Christian than Monist.

² *Çiva-Jñāna-Botha*, i. 4, in *JAOS*, iv. p. 55.

issues. None but an omniscient Mind could have ordained the principles of morality, and none but omnipotent Power could have so arranged the world that the proper "fruit" should be attached to every act, and souls should everywhere and always get the rightful deserts of their virtue or their guilt. Once more the aid of the Çakti (which has various modes of activity) is invoked. The "sport" theory of the production of the world is vigorously repudiated.¹ There is a purpose in its endless successions. Metaphysically the Absolute has no emotions; it is unaffected, that is to say, by pleasure and pain; it derives no profit from its operations.² But with such an abstraction religion is not content. Through its "Grace-form" it is for ever engaged in the rescue of souls from the bondage of matter and the three "Stains" (*malas*) which defile their purity. This is the meaning of the unceasing rhythm of origin, existence, and destruction; and this is the explanation of the experiences of the soul which bring the transcendent God into relation with man as an object of intellectual recognition and adoring love. Over against the Monist "Universal Subject," the Çaiva philosophers placed a real pair, Divine and human. "If there is no other object but God," asks a modern interpreter, "how could we maintain that God is Good, that he is Love, and that he is Beneficent? To whom does he do good, whom does he love? Can we say that his goodness benefits the illusory forms for which he is himself responsible?"³

Whatever Metaphysic may require in the theory of God as Being, Religion is frankly dualist. Accepting the formula *Sat-Chit-Ānanda*, the Siddhānta enumerates eight divine attributes as the expression of these three characters—self-existence, essential purity, intuitive wisdom, infinite intelligence, essential freedom from all bonds, infinite grace or love, omnipotence, infinite enjoyment or bliss.⁴ Such a Being is "neither male, female, nor neuter," says the sage Çivavākiyar, "neither Brah-

¹ Schomerus, p. 151, quoting Arulnandi's *Siddhiyār*. Cp. *ante*, p. 331.

² *Çiva-Jñāna-Boṭha*, i. 4, in *JAOS*, iv. p. 55.

³ Ġ. Sabhāratnam in *Siddh. Dip.*, xii. 9 (March 1912), p. 396.

⁴ R. B. Gunaratnam in *Siddh. Dip.*, xii. 7 (Jan. 1912), p. 321. Cp. Nallaswāmi Pillai, *Studies*, p. 233, where "omnipotence" is accidentally omitted.

man, nor Vishnu, nor Rudra, but is spirit"; and the Swāmi Tāyumanāvar (eighteenth century) could exclaim—

"All space is thine, O thou far and near, immanent thou art,
And thou well'st up as a honied fountain of bliss in my
heart."¹

This dual presence in the world and in the soul was expressed by the doctrine of "distinction without distinction" (*bhedābheda*). The old Upanishad formula, "One without a second," must be in some way received and explained. "God is not different (*abheda*) from the world," argued Meykanda, "but as the world is not spiritual, and God is a spiritual form, he is different" (*bheda*). Similarly, "the soul is not God, for if it were not distinct it would have no power of motion or action."² All kinds of analogies were pressed into the service of illustration. Just as sound filled all the notes of a tune, or flavour pervaded a fruit, so did God by his Çakti pervade the world so intimately that they do not appear to be two, yet this divine energy is essentially different from unconscious matter. The Sanskrit letters were all regarded as containing the short vowel *ā*. *Ka* could not be resolved into *k+a*. So, pleads Meykanda, is it with the soul. Without its vowel the letter would be mute; without God's Grace the soul would be helpless. As body and mind together form a unity, so God is the soul whose body is the universe of nature and of man. He is not identical with either, he is not their substance, but he dwells in them and they in him. *Advaita* is not oneness but inseparability. To realise this union in diversity is the high calling of the soul. So Arulnandi Çivāchārya wrote :—

"Say 'I am not the world, and separate from it,'
Say also, 'I am not the unknowable Supreme One.'
Then unite with him indissolubly by loving him in all humility,
and practise *so'ham* ('I am he'),
Then he will appear to you as your Self, your *mala* will all cease,
and you will become pure.
So it is the old Vedas teach us to practise this mantra, *Aham
Brahmāsmi* ('I am Brahma')."³

¹ *Siddh. Dip.*, xii. 4 (Oct. 1911), pp. 155, 161.

² *Çiva-Jñāna-Bōtha*, ii., *JAOS*, iv. p. 57 f.

³ *Siddh. Dip.*, viii. 12 (March 1908), p. 45.

How was this consummation to be reached?

The doctrine of the soul was elaborated on the one hand against the materialists who only recognised the body and its organs, and on the other against the Vedântist identification of it with Brahman. The materialist was asked how the action of the five organs of sense, each independent and ignorant of the others, could be combined in acts of cognition without a knowing subject. Accepting much of the traditional physiological psychology, Meykanda presented the soul in the midst of the senses, the *manas* and other faculties that rose above them, as a king attended by his prime minister and councillors.¹ But that was not its primeval condition. In the unbeginning eternity it was plunged in a strange stupor due to the defilement known as *Āṇava*.² It is a condition of ignorance and darkness, with many dangerous powers, for it leads souls unwittingly into action.³ It is not, indeed, a constituent of their being, but it is for the time inseparably connected with them, like salt in the sea or the husk enveloping the rice. But it does not exclude the action of God's grace, which is present even in this antecedent and unexplained mystery of "original sin." The story of creation and the endless succession of universes is the story of God's purpose to give the infinite number of uncreated souls the opportunity of extrication from this unhappy blindness. The process involves them in the influence of two additional "defilements," *māyā*, or the material world and its attractions, and *karma*, the power which registers the moral issue of every activity and determines the character of successive births.⁴ This is indeed independent of Çiva. Its operation is in a sense conditioned by him, for it works through the entry of the soul into creation, and these time-periods are

¹ Meykanda, iv., *JAOS*, iv. p. 71.

² From *anu* (atom), applied to the soul as conditioned by space; Schomerus, p. 104. Dr Pope, *Tiruvāṇṇam*, p. lxxxvi, defines it as "the state or character of the atom," and points to the use of *anu* by the Jains.

³ Umāpati, in "The Fruit of Divine Grace," iii. 26, personifies it as "My Lady Darkness" with an infinity of lovers. Pope, *Tiruvāṇṇam*, p. lxxxv.

⁴ These three "defilements" constitute the "bonds" of the soul, according to the formula *Paṇi, pāpa, paṇu*. Cp. *ante*, p. 347.

started at Çiva's good pleasure. But its eternal law was not willed by him. It is an august coadjutor beside his sovereignty, whose authority even Çiva himself cannot set aside, and he provides the means of the recompense for good and the requital for evil which Karma demands.

But as the soul starts on its long pilgrimage, the Grace of Çiva, operating in many modes, is its unfailing companion. Even in the human frame God's agency is needed to give power to the soul in union with the perceptive organs, as the sun's light is needed to enable the observer to perceive objects in a mirror.¹ The divine beneficence is like a field which yields its stores to those who cultivate it; without partiality, unmoved by desire or hatred, he carries out the results of Karma, "having no will or power to do otherwise."² Like flowers which shut or open while the sun shines unclouded, God remains unchanged, while his Çakti assumes different forms to meet the varying needs of the soul's discipline. For the soul is no puppet in the grip of fate. The effect of past Karma does not destroy moral responsibility for the future, nor does the action of Grace override the soul's own choice. Beside the sphere of external act there is the internal sphere of feeling. The act is done, and its issue for good or ill cannot be altered. But the feeling may remain, and good dispositions may carry the soul forward, morally and religiously, to a point at which—though at first belonging to Karma—they ultimately transcend it.³ So the soul is prepared to make the right choice when Grace is offered to it. As the light arises in darkness will you put it before you or behind you? There are those who say, "No need for Grace to effect these results, the soul can do its own work."⁴ Twice

¹ *Meykanda*, iii. 1; *JAOS*, iv. p. 67.

² *Ibid.*, ii. 5, p. 60.

³ Technically the soul's progress is laid out in three stages of successive deliverance from the three Defilements. The process of moral advance is always conceived as an increasing enlightenment of intelligence, which brings Çiva ever more and more clearly into view. On the classes of occupants in the several conditions as one after another of the Impurities is discarded, cp. *Adiçesha Naidu*, in *Siddh. Dip.*, xii. 4 (Oct. 1911), p. 149. The lowest order involved in all three *malas* ranges from the tiniest insect up to *Brahmā*, *Vishṇu*, and *Rudra* in "the most exalted Trinity."

⁴ *Umāpati*, viii. 71; iv. 33.

does Umāpati in his cento of verses fling himself in scorn against such self-confidence.

"May I not say, 'I need not Grace to see by, I will see myself'?
Easy the way of vision, but twixt eye and object light must be.
Without the light of Grace 'twixt soul and known, soul sees
not."¹

It is for the Guru or Teacher to let in the light. He is in reality a manifestation of Çiva himself, even when he comes in human form to souls in the lowest rank.² "The thinking man," says a modern Çaiva writer, "who has learned to worship the ideal he lives [*sic*] in spirit and in truth, finds it clothed in the form he thinks, and meeting and greeting him in person, to give him the helping hand that he so much needs and longs after. The Guru appears now and here, it may be in vision, or it may be in name and form and flesh as the thinker has been longing after to see, and seconds his efforts, describing to him the glory of the ideal that he has been vaguely thinking after. Hitherto he has been hazily building only with Hope and Faith. He has yet to learn that Love which endures to the end, and transcends time and space and the limits of causation. For this purpose the Guru describes to him in the clear light of reason the glory of the Promised Land, and prepares him therefor by testing his powers, his constancy, and his moral stamina, by a series of disciplinary exercises."³ This is a form of *yoga* practice, rising above the common duties of ritual and charity, demanding severe concentration, and sometimes generating ecstatic raptures of song and dance. It is, therefore, only in this life for the few. It requires the suppression of all personal regards. "Set not thyself in the foreground," sings Umāpati. "What thou beholdest, let it be That." But however long be the way, the Çaiva believes that the goal will be reached at last. The divine Love can be satisfied with nothing less. "Çiva desires that all should know him," says Meykanda emphatically.⁴ It is an infinite process, and we are more conscious of the process than of the goal, as we see the strange

¹ Umāpati, vi. 56.

² Meykanda, viii. 3; *JAOS*, iv. p. 87.

³ C. V. Svāminātha, in *Siddh. Dip.*, xi. 2 (Aug. 1910), p. 70.

⁴ xii. 3; *JAOS*, iv. p. 101.

varieties of human character and conduct. "It is God's prerogative," says the great medieval theologian, "to encourage and save those who resort to him, therefore he will surely save such as come to him; and while he will not save those who do not resort to him, yet he bears no ill-will towards them. Those servants who resort to him he will clothe in his own image, but others who do not come to him he will cause to eat of their own doings."¹ That diet will at last be found unsatisfying, and the divine Grace which has accompanied the soul through all its wanderings will lead it home.

Such at least is the disciple's faith. The theologians do not, indeed, describe an age of complete attainment when universes for recompense or retribution are needed no more. They concentrate their view on the blessedness of the individuals saved. "Did the soul perish," says Meykanda, "on becoming united with Çiva, there would be no eternal being to be associated with Deity."² If it does not perish, but remains a dissociated being, then there would be no union with God. But the *malas* will cease to affect the soul, and then the soul, like the union of salt with water, will become united with Çiva as his servant, and exist at his feet as one with him."³ The consummation may be far off, but faith unhesitatingly awaits it. "Will not Çiva, who is not subject to the Three Strands nor to the Three Defilements, who ever exists in his own imperishable form of happiness—will not he come as the Understanding of the soul, which, wonderful to say, will never leave it, and in a manner far transcending the rules of logic reveal himself? *He will thus reveal Himself.*"⁴ And so the deliverance of all souls is sure.

Many consequences flowed from a religion thus spiritually conceived. As the source of all enlightenment, sole Deity of intelligence and grace, Çiva was really the true object of all devout aspiration. "Let me place on my head the feet of

¹ Meykanda, x. 3; JAOS, iv. p. 97.

² The Advaita doctrine of the ultimate union of the soul with Brahman through the dispersion of the illusion of individuality was often interpreted as "annihilation." Çāṅkara repudiated this view, *ante*, 342¹.

³ xi. 5, JAOS, iv. p. 99. Cp. Umāpati, viii. 75, and Pope, *Tiruvāṇṇamam*, note iii, "The Soul's Emancipation," p. xlii.

⁴ Meykanda, ix. 3, JAOS, p. 92.

Çiva," said Arulnandi, "who stands as the goal of each of the six forms of religion, and fills one and all inseparably."¹

"Into the bosom of the one great sea
Flow streams that come from hills on every side.
Their names are various as their springs.
And thus in every land do men bow down
To one great God, though known by many names."²

The Çaiva teachers were confronted by an elaborate worship of temple and ritual, priesthood and sacrifice. The sacred images into which the Deity had been mysteriously brought by the ceremony of *āvāhana*³ must be tended and garlanded, fed and bathed and jewelled. They had been cherished for centuries; gifts and services had been lavished upon them; they were associated with reverence for saints and sages; they had become the media through which the gracious help of Çiva had been realised by the piety of generations.⁴ On the other hand, how could the Thought, the Truth, the Light, the Love, of God, be embodied in wood or stone? So protest after protest flowed forth against idolatry, and against an elaborate external cultus arose a demand for a Puritan simplicity of devotion.

"If thou wouldst worship in the noblest way,
Bring flowers in thy hand Their names are these,
Contentment, Justice, Wisdom. Offer them
To that great Essence—then thou servest God.
No stone can image God, to bow to it
Is not to worship Outward rites cannot
Avail to compass that reward of bliss
That true devotion gives to those who know."⁵

¹ Quoted by J. N. Nallaswāmi, *Studies*, p. 243. Cp. the inscr. at Khajuraho, in the Chhatarpur State, Central India, A.D. 1001-2, "Adoration to that Çarva who causes all [gods] to be comprehended in his one person, he whom those acquainted with the Vedānta call Çiva, the desire of the mind, while people of true knowledge call him the one Supreme Brahman, the indestructible, ageless, immortal, others the verily auspicious Buddha, others again the spotless Vāmana, the Jina"; *Epigr. Ind.*, i. p. 150.

² "Written before the advent of Europeans," Gover, *Folk-Songs of Southern India* (Madras, 1871), p. 165.

³ Pope, *Tiruvdçagam*, p. xxxv.

⁴ Cp. the mystical interpretations of the Linga-cultus, by A. Rangaswami Iyer, in *Siddh. Dip.*, vii. and viii.

⁵ Tr. Gover, *ibid.*, p. 133. Cp. the hymns from Çivavākya, p. 177 ff.

Such a religion was necessarily open to all. It was independent of birth, rank, or sex. From ancient times Çiva had been hospitable to all: "Even if a man is a Chandāla, if he utters the name of Çiva, converse with him, live with him, dine with him." So Nilakantha quoted from an Upanishad, but the passage cannot now be found.¹ Tiru Mūlar laid it down that "there is only one caste, and there is only one God";² and a thousand years ago the poet Pattakiriyar appealed to an earlier sage Kapila to justify his aspiration:

"When shall our race be one great brotherhood
Unbroken by the tyranny of caste,
Which Kapila in early days withstood
And taught that men once were in times now passed?"³

Will India be more ready under the influences of the twentieth century to respond to an appeal which she was unable to answer in the tenth?

¹ *Siddhānta Dīpikā*, xiii 5 (Nov. 1912), p. 238.

² *Ibid.*, p. 239, cp. xi. 10 (April 1911), p. 433.

³ Tr. Gover, *ibid.*, p. 159.

LECTURE VII

RELIGIOUS PHILOSOPHY IN VAISHNAVISM

SIDE by side with the devotion to Çiva the Brahman immigrants into the south of India carried with them the cultus of Vishnu. In due time the Epics and some of the Purānas were translated into Tamil. Among these was the Vishnu Purāna, which represents the religion of the Vaishnavas in a purer form than the Mahābhārata, where it meets again and again the claims of the rival faith on behalf of Çiva. The date of the completed document is unknown. Some of its episodes, like the churning of the ocean to produce the drink of immortality, rest upon older tales in the Great Epic. They need not on that account be later than the fifth century of our era, and may have acquired their more developed form at an earlier date. Inscriptional evidence then begins to be available. The princes of the Gupta dynasty between the years A.D. 400-464 style themselves on their coins Parama-Bhāgavatas,¹ and under the title Bhagavat two reservoirs and a house are dedicated to Vishnu at Tusam in the Panjāb about 400.² He is celebrated as "the conqueror of distress," who "became human by the exercise of his own free will"³ On a column at Eran, in the Central Provinces, he is described in 484-5 as "the cause of the production, the continuance, and the destruction of the universe";⁴ and a statue of his Boar-incarnation at the same place presented him as the "pillar of the Great House of the Three Worlds."⁵ In the seventh century after the days of Harshavardhana,

¹ Bhandarkar, *Vaiṣṇavism*, p. 43.

² Fleet, Gupta Inscr. in the *Corp. Inscr. Indicārum*, iii. (1888), p. 270.

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 61, 65, in 457-8, at Junāgaḍh, in the Kathiāwār Political Agency, Bombay Presidency.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 80.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 158.

Adityasena, one of the Guptas of Magadha, built a temple to Vishnu in the district of Gayā, and united with him the names of Hara (Çiva) and Brahman.¹ At Chiplun, in the Ratnāgiri district (between Bombay and Goa), Vishnu is invoked as the "Creator of the three worlds" (between 609-642);² and in 661, according to a stone from Rājputāna, Yaçomati, wife of General Vārasimha, seeing the vanity of fortune, youth, and wealth, built a temple to Vishnu "in order to cross the troubled sea of this worldly existence" and reared a statue to him under the name of Vāsudeva.³

I

It is under that name (which we have already learned to identify with the monotheistic Bhagavat⁴) that the devout author of the Purāna offers his opening homage to Vishnu. He is then addressed as *Viçva-bhāvana*, "Creator of the universe," and *Mahā-Purusha*, "Supreme Spirit."⁵ Existing before the world, he is identified with the Imperishable Brahman. In his active form he is *Īçvara*, endowed with the Three Strands, the cause of the production, maintenance, and destruction of all things.⁶ In these three august functions he assumes the form of Hiranyagarbha (Brahmā), Hari (Vishnu), and Çankara (Çiva);⁷ the technical term Trimūrti is not named, but Brahmā with a multitude of the attendant gods appeals to him for aid as the "One only God, whose triple energy is the same with Brahmā, Vishnu, and Çiva."⁸ The Unmanifest and the Manifest are both in him, issuing from Spirit and passing into the fourth mode of his being, Time.⁹ Such is Vishnu ontologically; but the ancient mythology could not be discarded, and beside his revealed form stands his consort Lakshmī or Çrī, whom Indra celebrates with glowing praise as the Mother

¹ *Corp. Inscr. Indic.*, iii. p. 208.

² *Epigr. Ind.*, iii. 52.

³ *Ibid.*, iv. 29.

⁴ *Cp. Lect. V., ante*, p. 245.

⁵ On this title, and its counterpart, *Purushottama*, *cp. Lect. I., ante*, p. 43.

⁶ i. 1, ver. 2; tr. Wilson, i. p. 3, ed. Fitzedward Hall.

⁷ i. 2, 2; Wilson, i. pp. 13, 41.

⁸ i. 9, 55; Wilson, i. p. 140.

⁹ Elaborate calculations are made to represent the successive series of world-ages and their several periods.

of all beings, just as Hari is their Father, Giver of prosperity, at once Welfare, Wisdom, and Faith.¹

The relation of Vishnu to the scene of our common life is presented on the *advaita* doctrine of the Upanishads. But this is by no means identical with the Illusion-philosophy of Çankara. *Māyā* is here no mysterious power conferring a relative reality on our experience. She is the daughter of Vice (*Adharma*), the wife of Fear, and mother of Death, whence comes an evil progeny of Disease and Decay, of Sorrow and Craving and Wrath.² The world of the senses is no doubt an actual world.³ When Prahlāda, son of the demon-king Hiranyakaśipu, preaches the glories of Vishnu, the angry father employs every means to destroy him. He is bitten by venomous snakes, trampled on and gored by gigantic elephants, tortured by fire, supplied with poisoned food, hurled from the palace-top on to the earth beneath, and finally bound and flung into the sea, where—with the exuberance of Indian imagination—thousands of miles of ponderous rocks are piled over him at the bottom of the deep. There he still offers his daily praise to Vāsudeva, “Glory to that Vishnu from whom this world is not distinct! . . . Glory again and again to that Being to whom all returns, from whom all proceeds, who is all and in whom all things are; to Him whom I also am!”⁴ But if Vāsudeva is “he from whom nothing is distinct,” he is also “he who is distinct from all,”⁵ in modern terms at once immanent and transcendent. The moral consequences of this union Prahlāda was not slow to draw. To the sons of the demons he pleaded that they should lay aside the angry passions of their race, and strive to obtain the perfect and eternal happiness untroubled by hatred, envy, or desire, which everyone who fixed his whole heart on Vishnu

¹ i. 9, 116, Wilson, i. p. 148 f.

² i. 7, 31; Wilson, i. p. 112.

³ Vishnu is *jagan-māya*, “consisting of the world,” “from Mēru to an atom.” So he is known through the constitution of the universe, *artha-rūpena*, “by the self-nature of things”; the objects of sense are really there.

⁴ i. 19, 82 ff.; Wilson, ii. p. 59 f. Contrast the psalm put into Jonah’s mouth, *Jon.* ii.

⁵ *Ibid.* Compare the instructions to Bhārata, ii. 16, 23; “He is I, he is though he is all, this universe is his form. Abandon the error of distinction,” Wilson, ii. p. 336.

should enjoy.¹ To his father he explained the secret of his immunity from harm: "I wish no evil to any, and do and speak no offence; for I behold Vishnu in all beings, as in my own soul. . . . Love for all creatures will be assiduously cherished by all who are wise in the knowledge that Hāri is all things."²

The worship of such a being rises above mere ceremonial obligation. True, Scripture ordains sacrifices, and they should be offered; it lays out caste duties, and they should be performed. But above these rises the temper of active goodwill:—

"Keçava (Vishnu) is most pleased with him who does good to others;

Who never utters abuse, calumny, or untruth;

Who never covets another's wife or wealth,

And who bears ill-will to none;

Who neither beats nor slays any animate or inanimate thing;

Who is ever diligent in the service of the Gods,

Of the Brāhmans, and of his spiritual preceptor,

Who is always desirous of the welfare of all creatures,

Of his children, and of his own soul;

In whose pure heart no pleasure is derived

From the imperfections of love and hatred."³

Here are no ritual demands, no sacerdotal claims, no dogmatic impositions. The essence of the Vishnu religion is declared to lie in right dispositions and personal beneficence. What, then, is the goal which it sets before human endeavour, and what are the means by which that goal can be reached? Like the Çaiva faith, it sees the *Samsāra* issuing from a past without beginning. The living on earth, in the heavens above and the hells below, have already passed through an incalculable series of existences, regulated with the exactest adjustment to each individual's deserts under the Law of the Deed. At each period of dissolution their particular forms may be destroyed; but souls are indestructible; they cannot be exempted from the consequences of their past acts; in the mysterious obscurity

¹ i. 17; Wilson, ii. p. 39 ff. The whole discourse, *mutatis mutandis*, is remarkably like a Buddhist sermon.

² i. 19, 8 ff.; Wilson, ii. p. 51. Cp. *Mahābhārata*, xii. 13, 11.

³ iii. 8, 12 ff.; Wilson, iii. p. 85.

in which all things are enveloped when Deity returns into the Unmanifest, they await in silence the hour of the new creation, when Brahmā calls them forth as the "progeny of his will." Each one then finds his appropriate lot in the fourfold ranks of gods, men, animals, or inanimate things;¹ or, as the adjoining verse affirms, apparently combining details from some other cosmic scheme, in the four orders of gods, demons, *pitris*, and men. The demons issue from the Strand of darkness (*tamas*); the gods are endowed with that of goodness (*sattva*); a partial admixture of that element is allotted to the fathers; while men are produced from the unstable *rajas*, or passion.² To provide for all these varieties the world is fitted up with appropriate heavens and hells, and the moral order of one completed dispensation is renewed with the utmost exactness at the beginning of the next. It is therefore with surprise that we suddenly find humanity in a condition of primeval innocence, where the four castes which issue from Brahmā's person are credited with "righteousness and perfect faith"; "their hearts were free from guile; Hari dwelt in their sanctified minds; with perfect wisdom they contemplated Vishnu's glory."³ This is the opening of a quite independent development, the series of Four Ages of gradual decline from pristine purity.⁴ Conceived originally as an account of a primitive creation where all men started fresh from their Maker's hand, it had no antecedents. Thrust into the midst of the Samsāra with its immense diversity of moral issues, it remains stranded like an erratic block from some distant formation. But it is in harmony with the theory of Vishnu's universal causation that Hari in his Time-form should be the first author of evil. He infuses into the human race "sin, as yet feeble, though formidable"; it is of the nature of passion, "the impediment of the soul's liberation, the seed of iniquity, sprung from darkness and desire."⁵ Once admitted into the hearts of men, sin gathered strength,

¹ i. 5, 27 f.; Wilson, i. p. 79.

² The four castes similarly receive different combinations of the Three Strands, i. 6.

³ i. 6, 13; Wilson, i. p. 90.

⁴ Cp. the *Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa*, lx f.

⁵ i. 6, 14 f.; Wilson, p. 91.

and drew after it a whole progeny of ills. To counteract them the institution of sacrifice was provided, the laws of caste were prescribed; the realms on high were established for the virtuous, and the revilers of the Vedas found their dooms in the regions below.

At this point we meet the familiar distinction between the active life and the contemplative, the path of Works and the path of Knowledge.¹ The rewards of duty, whether ritual or moral, might be sweet, but over the bliss of heaven however prolonged there brooded the shadow of impending fall.² Only in the "attainment of God" was there lasting peace.³ Prayer and meditation are its means of approach, and disciplinary stages of physical and mental concentration must be duly traversed. It is the life of the Sage (*muni*); he who is steadfast in it wins rest in Brahman and is not born again.⁴ There the whole consciousness is filled with exalted apprehension of Deity, and all sense of difference in pleasure and pain disappears. When Prahlāda, beneath his load of rocks at the bottom of the sea, reached the sublime conviction of his unity with Vishnu, he forgot his own individuality. The limits of selfhood fell away; he knew only the Eternal and Supreme; and in this apprehension of identity "the imperishable Vishnu, whose essence is wisdom, became present in his heart, which was wholly purified from sin."⁵ The spiritual power generated by this great act of *yoga* burst his bonds, the ocean heaved and the earth quaked; only when he had disburdened himself of the rocks, and come forth again beneath the sky, did he remember who he was, and recognise himself to be Prahlāda. This is the type of *Moksha*, "liberation," when the soul, freed from all liability to rebirth, finds its home in God. The wisdom of Greece, unembarrassed

¹ *Pravṛtti* and *Nivṛtti*, vi. 4, 41; Wilson, v. p. 200. Cp. *ante*, p. 160.

² vi. 5, 50; Wilson, v. p. 208.

³ *Bhagavat-prāpti*, vi. 5, 60; Wilson, v. p. 209. Cp. the subsequent explanation of the mystical significance of the letters of the holy Name, p. 212.

⁴ *Brahma-laya*, vi. 7, 27; Wilson, v. p. 226. For *sthito*, "steadfast" or "stable," cp. the "stability" of Plotinus, below. *Laya* has many meanings, and may signify liquefaction, dissolution, or place of rest, abode.

⁵ i. 20, 3; Wilson, ii. p. 61.

by the extravagances of Indian fancy, reached in Plotinus the same conclusion :—

“ Since in the vision there were not two things, but seer and seen were one, if a man could preserve the memory of what he was when he was mingled with the divine, he would have in himself an image of God. For he was then one with God, and retained no difference either in relation to himself or others. Nothing stirred within him, neither anger nor concupiscence nor even reason or spiritual perception if we may say so . . . he had become stability itself. The Soul then occupies itself no more even with beautiful things ; it is exalted above the Beautiful, it passes the choir of the virtues . . . it is above Being while in communion with the One. If then a man sees himself become one with the One, he has in himself a likeness of the One ; and if he passes out of himself, as an image to its archetype, he has reached the end of his journey.”¹

II

There was, however, another mode of attaining the blessed life. Those who could not pursue the higher paths to *samādhi* and the sacred trance, might make an offering of *bhakti* or lowly love, and repeat the holy Name. Then Vishnu like a cleansing fire would purify their hearts and burn out their sin,² and the Purāṇa concludes with the devout aspiration that the Unborn Eternal Hari would at last lift all mankind into the fellowship of Spirit above the vicissitudes of birth and decay. It is on this line of religious practice and experience that Vaishnavas and Bhāgavatas march side by side. As the “ Worshipful ” or “ Adorable ”³ the Bhagavat also was known through *bhakti*,⁴ and this common element of spiritual religion drew the groups of believers into closer accord. Already in the fifth century kings who style themselves on their coins as *parama-Vaishnavas* are described in inscriptions as “ servants of the feet of Bhagavat.”⁵ The members of royal families and the successive sovereigns in leading dynasties offer their homage

¹ See the wonderful passage in Inge, *The Philosophy of Plotinus* (1918), ii. p. 141 f.

² vi. 8, 21 ; Wilson, v. p. 247.

³ Cp. Grierson, *JRAS* (1910), p. 159.

⁴ Cp. *Lect. V.*, ante, p. 244.

⁵ Hultzsch in *Epigr. Ind.*, x. p. 53, under date A.D. 456-7.