

now to Çiva, to Vishnu, or Bhagavat. King Dhruvasena of Palitānā (Kathiāwār, Bombay Presidency) is a worshipper of Bhagavat (525-6); his elder brother is devoted to Çiva and follows the Laws of Manu; and King Dhārasena II. (571) professes the same faith.<sup>1</sup> On the other side of India the Pallava monarch, Kumāravishnu II., at Kāñchipura (Conjevaram) "meditates at the feet of Bhagavat."<sup>2</sup> In the Central Provinces at Sārangarh King Mahā-Sudeva is a devout adherent of the same cult,<sup>3</sup> and so was Vishnuvardhana I. at Timmapuram (Vizagapatam district, N. Madras Presidency), in grateful recognition of protection by the "Mothers of the Three Worlds."<sup>4</sup> At Khajurāho (Chhatarpur State, Central Provinces) the temple inscription in honour of Vishnu opens with "Adoration to Vāsudeva," and after a rare excursion into philosophy describing the evolution of the world along Sāṅkhyān lines, winds up with celebrating the greatness of "the Mighty Creator, the First Sage of all knowledge, the Divine Witness on high" (953-54).<sup>5</sup> And far away in Assam, Vallabhadeva, establishing an almshouse with distribution of food near a Çiva temple for the spiritual welfare of his mother (1184-5), invokes Bhagavat, Vāsudeva, Ganēṣa (son of Çiva), and the Boar-incarnation of Vishnu.

It was, however, among the Tamil-speaking peoples of South India that in the early Middle Ages the religion of Vishnu-Vāsudeva found most significant expression. Forced like its contemporary (and to some extent its rival) Çaivism into opposition to the Buddhists and the Jains, it developed a copious literature of its own. The Vaishṇava *Āgamas* were said to be 108 in number,<sup>6</sup> but many seem to have been already lost by the fourteenth century. The conflict of faiths and philosophies in the midst of general toleration begot constant debate. In the *Manimekhalai*, one of the five famous Epic poems of the Tamil classic period, the Buddhist heroine was advised to assume the form of a young monk and study at Kāñchipura the religions of

<sup>1</sup> Hultzsch in *Epigr. Ind.*, xi. pp. 80, 105.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, viii. p. 233.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, ix. p. 284.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, ix. p. 319.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, i. p. 130.

<sup>6</sup> P. T. Srinivāsa Iyengar, *Outlines of Indian Philos.* (Benares, 1909), p. 174.

the Veda, Īva, Vishnu, the Ājīvikas, the Jains, the Sāṅkhyas, Vaiṣeṣikas, and Lokāyatikas.<sup>1</sup> Out of such discussions arose summaries of doctrine, expositions, and—parallel with the Īva hymns—a large collection of religious poetry. The dependence of the Āgama philosophy on the *advaita* teaching of the Upanishads may be partly inferred from the occurrence of the *Sach-Chid-Ānanda* formula ("Being, Intelligence, and Bliss), so often used by the followers of Ćankara, in the *Pādma Samhitā*, one of the old Vaishnava Āgamas.<sup>2</sup> This is Vāsudeva's first or undivided form. Between his eternal and unchanging nature, beyond the Three Strands, yet capable of evolving the world, and the actual scene of our existence, is Prakriti. She is conceived as a woman, with the Three Strands for her essence. The universe is of her making, and she sustains it by Īṣvara's command. Mythologically she is identified with Vishnu's consort, Lakshmī. Philosophically she is Vāsudeva's *Ćakti*, the everlasting cause of all effects, his *Ahantā*,<sup>3</sup> the consciousness all-knowing and all-seeing of all beings, without which the "ego" is unknowable. To desire to create is her nature. Of her own free will she manifests the world, and she becomes, at once the knower and the known.<sup>4</sup> This type of doctrine approximates more closely to the older *advaita* than the later "Qualified Advaita" of Rāmānujā, and Lakshmī shrinks afterwards into obscurity.

More significant for the future of Vaishnavism were the hymns of the Ālvārs, the saints who were "deep in wisdom." Of these poets twelve finally obtained a kind of canonical recognition.<sup>5</sup> Their lives are embellished with legends and

<sup>1</sup> *Indian Antiq.*, xlv. (1915), p. 127. The Ājīvikas come into view in the days of the Buddha, *ante*, p. 17<sup>1</sup>. Tradition affirmed that Ćankara had disputed with the Buddhists and driven them out of Kānchi. Mr T. A. Gopinātha Rao recently discovered five images of the Buddha there in twelve hours' search, one of them in the interior of the temple of Kāmākshī Devī.

<sup>2</sup> Srinivāsa Iyengar, *op. cit.*, p. 177. The writer points out that it is not to be found in Ćankara's commentary on the Vedānta Sūtras.

<sup>3</sup> An abstraction from the pronoun *aḥam*, I, like "egoity."

<sup>4</sup> See the quotations from the *Lakshmī Tantra* ("decidedly very old"), Iyengar, *op. cit.*, p. 178 ff.

<sup>5</sup> Cp. Srinivāsa Aiyangar, *Tamil Studies*, xi. "The Vishṇuvite Saints."

provided with an impossible chronology, beginning with 4203 B.C. and ending at the modest antiquity of 2706. Their real age appears to be contemporary with the Āiva poets between the sixth and tenth centuries A.D. They show the same hostility to the Buddhists and the Jains, and often regard the Āivas themselves as enemies rather than as allies. The earlier hymns are largely concerned with Vishnu's incarnations and his miraculous "sports," and seem deficient in that impassioned personal experience which gave such poignancy to their rivals' utterance.<sup>1</sup> But their poems, collected by Nātha-Muni (1000-1050), a disciple of the last of the Ālvārs, and himself the first of a new line of Āchāryas or Teachers, gradually acquired a high sanctity, and are said to rank in modern estimation with the Vedas.<sup>2</sup> Their authors were of very various origin and rank. Tirumalisai, who was well acquainted (apparently in the seventh century) with the two great Epics and the Vishnu-Purāna, had been brought up by a man of the hunting tribe. For him Vishnu, the "Pervader," according to a traditional explanation of his name, was the Only God, present in the whole universe, and Brahman and Āiva were created by him. Invisible to mortal eye, how should he be known? Tirumalisai answered:

"Vishnu, who wields the sacred disc,  
Will be cognisable only by those  
Who, after having closed the narrow paths  
Of the five senses, and sealed their doors,  
Opened the broad way of intelligence,  
Lighting the lamp of wisdom and mellowing their bones  
With a heart melted by the intense heat of piety."<sup>3</sup>

Tiruppanālvār belonged to an inferior caste of minstrels, and though a devout worshipper of Vishnu was not permitted to enter the temple at Ārīranga.<sup>4</sup> But the Lord of the sanctuary would not have his follower excluded, and commanded a sage named Lokasaranga to carry him in on his shoulders. A strange story was told of the conversion of Tirumangai

<sup>1</sup> The few Vaishnava poems of this class in Gover's *Folk-Songs of S. India* appear to be more modern compositions.

<sup>2</sup> Especially among the Tēngalai sect, *Tamil Studies*, p. 291. On these see below, p. 416 f.

<sup>3</sup> *Tamil Studies*, p. 304.

<sup>4</sup> Near Trichinopoly.

Ālvār, "Master of the four kinds of poetry," and author of the largest number of compositions in the "Book of Four Thousand Hymns."<sup>1</sup> He is described as the feudal chieftain of a group of villages under the sovereignty of the Chola kings, and he fell in love with the daughter of a Vaishnava physician, of a caste superior to his own. She refused to marry him unless he adopted her father's faith, and further demanded in proof of his sincerity that he should feed a thousand and eight poor believers daily for a whole year. To obtain the means for this benefaction he waylaid and plundered passing travellers, "consoling himself with the idea that he was doing it in the name of [his] God." One night he thus attacked a Brāhman bridal-party. It was the arrest of his career of robbery. The Brāhman was no other than the God himself, come in human shape to fulfil his purpose, and from his lips Tirumangai received the mysterious *mantra*, the initiation of a disciple.<sup>2</sup> Victor in poetical contests, champion in religious debates, and lavish in benefactions,<sup>3</sup> on leaving the service of the Chola king whose forces he had commanded, he went on pilgrimage to the Vishnu shrines from Cape Comorin to the Himālayas. Many of his poems celebrate their glories. He, too, extols Vishnu as the sole Deity, Creator of Brahmā, Īśa, and all other gods; he, too, demands righteousness of life, subjugation of the senses, and a mind fixed on God with love and devotion.<sup>4</sup>

The Vishnu piety sometimes, however, struck a more passionate note. The *advaita* doctrine of the older type was not favourable to the conviction of sin. Its uncompromising pantheism absorbed all human action in divine causation, and rendered a deep sense of personal unworthiness impossible. How could the Deity thus sorrow for his own misdeeds? The utterance of confession and the entreaty for divine help mark

<sup>1</sup> Assigned to A.D. 750-775 by Subrahmanya Aiyar, *Epigr. Ind.*, xi. p. 156.

<sup>2</sup> Krishnaswamy Aiyangar, in *Indian Antiq.*, xxxv. (1906), p. 229.

<sup>3</sup> With means procured from alien sources, e.g. he is said to have demolished a golden image of the Buddha at Negapatam to obtain funds for building a wall at the temple at Īrīranga; *Tamil Studies*, p. 315.

<sup>4</sup> Cp. Kulāṣekhara's prayer (before eleventh century) that in every birth he might possess unswerving devotion (*bhakti*) to Vishnu's lotus feet. Quoted in a Vaishnava inscr. at Pagan, Burma, thirteenth century, *Epigr. Ind.*, vii. p. 198.



the transition from the older doctrine to the later "Qualified Advaita" on the ground of an intenser sense of responsibility, a more vivid consciousness of individuality. Thus Tondaradipodi (800?), a vehement antagonist of Buddhists, Jains, and Ćaivas—"who followed Rudra's feet in poignant words"—nevertheless joins the saints of the latter faith in self-humiliation. He sings the praises of Ranga with its shady groves, the busy hum of bees, the cuckoo's song, the peacock's dance. But Ranga means the "stage"; the theatre is the world; the play is the drama of its evolution; yet Ranga is also the shrine of the radiant God

"Who gracious oped my darkened heart, and there  
Enthronéd, forced the current of my love  
To him, what time with heretics and thieves  
Of souls, and those in lusty pursuits bound,  
In snares enmeshed of women gazelle-eyed,  
I suffered, vast sunk deep in pits of vice.

. . . Thou triest to draw  
Me to thy Holy Feet against my will,  
Indeed I wonder why on earth I'm born.

. . .  
No holy city claims me as its own,  
Nor lands I own for service sole of thee,  
Relations have I none, nor loving friends.  
Nor in this iron world have I held on,  
O source of all, firm to thy Feet supreme.

. . .  
'Tis but my certain hope thy grace will save  
Which makes me bold to walk to thee and wait."<sup>1</sup>

One woman's voice is heard in the Ālvārs' choir. In the "Book of Four Thousand Hymns" one hundred and seventy-three are assigned to St Andal, who remained virgin all through her short life ministering at two of the chief southern shrines. She found her themes in the tales of Krishna, and dreamed of her marriage with Vishnu after the fashion of medieval Catholic imagination. It was the type of the union of the soul with the Supreme. Still is the hymn sung at Vaishnava Brāhman marriages; and the worship of the saint

<sup>1</sup> *The Vaisnādvaitin* (Çriranga, 1906), Nos. 10 and 11, April and May, p. 15 ff.

(as of some of the other Ālvārs) awakens an even greater devotion than that of the Deity himself.<sup>1</sup>

Among the latest (if not actually the last) of the sacred line was Nammālvār or Ṣaṭhagopan, who seems to have flourished about A.D. 1000, author of 1296 pieces among the Four Thousand Hymns. This great collection he is supposed to have taught to his disciple Nātha-Muni.<sup>2</sup> The philosophy of "Qualified Advaita" was gaining clearer expression; the influence of Buddhists and Jains was declining; the anti-caste feeling already noted in the Ṣaiva hymns was growing stronger; only the knowledge of God, said Nammālvār, could make a man high or low in the social scale.<sup>3</sup> The two great rival sects were drawing nearer together, in spite of metaphysical differences. Pious kings begin to profess themselves worshippers of both deities. Temple inscriptions open with the invocation of one sacred name and close with the other. Thus in A.D. 1142 Vaidyadeva, king of Kāmarūpa (Bengal), bestows on a learned Brāhman two villages, duly provided with water, forest tracts, gardens and enclosures for cows, to propitiate the Lord Ṣiva, and the grant opens with invocation of Vāsudeva and the praises of Hari.<sup>4</sup> Ṣiva "whose true nature even the Veda cannot fully reveal, from whom the creation, preservation, and destruction of all worlds proceeds," and Nārāyana (Vishnu) are jointly addressed on the Udayendiram plates from North Arcot (about 1150).<sup>5</sup> A grant to the temple named Kunti-Mādhava in the Godāvāri district (1186-7) was dedicated by the queen of Gonka III. to Vishnu, "whose name may be known from the Vedānta." Her son was devoted to Ṣiva, but in the presence of a great assembly of ministers and people he confirmed the gift "for burnt offerings, oblations and worship, daily and periodical rites, monthly and annual festivals, and the expenses of singing, dancing, and music."<sup>6</sup> King Vijaya-Chandra-Deva installs his son in the dignity of Crown Prince at Kanauj (1168), after bathing in the Ganges in the presence of Vishnu, on his initia-

<sup>1</sup> *Tamil Studies*, pp. 324, 294.

<sup>2</sup> The dates as usual are in confusion, for Tamil chronology gives Nātha-Muni a wondrous life from 582 to 922; *Tamil Studies*, p. 334.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 327.

<sup>4</sup> *Epigr. Ind.*, ii. p. 354.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, iii. p. 78.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, iv. p. 53.

tion as a worshipper of Krishna, and bestows a village on the Vaishnava preceptor. Five years later the prince has himself become king, and in the presence of Çiva makes a gift of his own weight in gold or valuables, and a grant of land to his own spiritual instructor and eight priests.<sup>1</sup> At Deopara in Bengal (about 1100) the two deities are invoked under the joint title Pradyumna-Īçvara (*i.e.* Hari-Hara).<sup>2</sup> An inscription from the Jhānsī district (North-West Provinces, about 1150) extols Vishnu as "the one cause of final liberation, who yet holds the world fast in the snares of Māyā"; and continues in the praise of Gautama, a holy sage, who first defeated Çiva in a disputation and then established the supreme greatness of "the Lord."<sup>3</sup> So close might be the union between the Powers once rivals, that in the Salem district (in South India) a plate of King Prithivipati described the eight-bodied Çiva<sup>4</sup> as becoming one half of Vishnu's form. The two Deities were thus united into one complex personality. Such instances from widely separated localities imply the diffusion of common religious tendencies and interests. Pilgrims were for ever travelling all over India. They carried news, they spread literature, they debated, preached, and sang. The fame of great teachers, the reports of new movements, were soon borne afar. The mendicant ascetic needed no funds, he could beg his way. The wealthy donor, who made gifts to the famous shrines, had perhaps his little company of attendants. Sanskrit provided a common language like the Latin of medieval Europe. The Tamil or Kanarese from the South who knew his own sacred books in their ancient speech, found no door closed.

In the twentieth year of the Chola king Rājarāja, A.D. 1004, a grant was placed under the protection of the Çrī-Vaishnavas. There was already, then, a group or denomination bearing Vishnu's name, numerous and powerful enough to be the

<sup>1</sup> *Epigr. Ind.*, iv. p. 118.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, i. p. 311.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, i. p. 202. The story is curious. Çiva appeared disguised as a Mīmāṃsaka; Gautama was an adherent of the Nyāya school. In the course of the debate Gautama, enraged at the appearance of Çiva's third eye in his forehead, produced an eye in the sole of his foot, and confuted the false reasoning by which the deity had tested him.

<sup>4</sup> *Cp. ante*, p. 290.

guardians of a royal benefaction. The age of the Saints was coming to a close; that of the Teachers was just beginning. Nātha-Muni received the torch of instruction from Nammālvār; and in his turn handed it on to his successors. Tradition ascribed to him the collection of the Four Thousand Hymns of the Ālvārs, and the arrangements for their recitation during the festivals at Ṣrīraṅga, which are still observed in the most ancient temples of Vishnu.<sup>1</sup> His philosophical writings have disappeared, but the extracts quoted by Vedānta Desika in the fourteenth century show that he was one of the forerunners of Rāmānuja. Like so many other teachers, he travelled widely. Devotion to Krishna carried him to the scenes of legend around Muttra in the North;<sup>2</sup> to Dwarka, Krishna's capital in Kathiāwār on the West; to Purī, the home of Jagannāth in Orissa on the Eastern coast. A modest estimate of his career contracts it within A.D. 985-1030.<sup>3</sup>

The Vaishnavite, like the Ṣaivan theology, was opposed on the one hand to the legal and ceremonial teaching of the Pūrvā Mīmāṃsā, with its doctrine of works and its provision of heavens to match; and on the other hand to the Illusion-theory of Ṣankara. Against the undisguised polytheism of the old religion it unflinchingly proclaimed the Divine Unity, and discarded a variety of fasts and feasts ordained in the Purāṇas in honour of the Powers on high, such as the sun, moon, and planets. From the "relative reality" of Ṣankara's world, where Īṣvara was only an appearance like all the other deities of ancient writ, it turned away unsatisfied, demanding more than an intellectual approach to an impersonal Absolute, and seeking the support and guidance of a Living God. To the philosophical justification of this faith, already quickened by the Ālvārs' hymns, Nātha Muni had opened the way. The work was

<sup>1</sup> Rajagopala Chariar, *The Vaishnavite Reformers of India*, Madras, p. 2.

<sup>2</sup> Mathurā, on the Jumna, in the N.W. Provinces.

<sup>3</sup> Gopinatha Row, quoted by Śrīnivāsa Iyengar, *Outlines of Indian Philos.*, p. 191. This seems too brief for the birth of a grandson while he was in the North (cp. below), and his death may possibly have occurred later.

carried forward by his grandson, Yāmuna,<sup>1</sup> so named in remembrance of his visits to the sacred spots of Krishna's youth. At first, indeed, it seemed that his grandfather's hopes might be disappointed. Victor in a philosophical debate at the court of the Chola king,<sup>2</sup> who was said to have staked half his kingdom on his own champion's success, he lived in luxury on the royal reward, and refused all intercourse with Nātha Muni's followers. But at last one of them, named Rāmamiçra, succeeded in reaching him, and intimated that he was in charge of a valuable treasure for him from his grandfather. It was to be delivered in the temple at Çrīranga. There Rāmamiçra led him into the sacred presence of the Deity, and Yāmuna learned the lesson of Nātha Muni's holy life. He left his palace and his wealth, adopted the robe of the *Sannyāsin*, and gathered disciples around him in the centre of the Vaishnava faith.<sup>3</sup> Here he lectured and wrote, presided over debates, and worshipped in the sanctuary.<sup>4</sup> Too busy, probably, to spend years in travel, he only visited some of the Vishnu shrines in adjoining states, and devoted himself untiringly to the teacher's work. Belonging to the Bhāgavata or Pāñcharātra school, he sought to establish the real existence of the Supreme Soul, and the eternal independence of the individual soul. The treatise entitled

<sup>1</sup> The Sanskrit name of the modern Jumna.

<sup>2</sup> He was consequently often known by the Tamil title *Alavandar*, "conqueror."

<sup>3</sup> For an account of the great Vishnu temple at Çrīranga, see Fergusson and Burgess, *Hist. of Indian Architecture* (1910), i. p. 370. The inscriptions on the walls go back to the first half of the tenth century. The temple now comprises seven enclosures, measuring 1024 yards by 840. The fourth contains a great pillared hall with 940 granite columns. Several saints resided there, and their images have been erected in different parts of the precincts. The dome over the shrine has been recently repaired and richly gilt. Like other famous sanctuaries, it contains many valuable jewels. The Prince of Wales (afterwards King Edward) presented a piece of gold plate on his visit in 1875. A Çiva temple of smaller dimensions, with inscriptions of about A.D. 1000, stands half a mile off. *Imperial Gazetteer of India*, xxiii. p. 107 ff.

<sup>4</sup> See a few verses from his "Gem of Hymns," translated by Dr L. D. Barnett, in *The Heart of India*, p. 42, where he describes himself as "the vessel of a thousand sins," and implores the grace of Hari. The poem contains about seventy-five stanzas.

the *Siddhi-trayam* expounded the fundamental ideas of the "Qualified Vedānta,"<sup>1</sup> and is quoted frequently by Rāmānuja. Yāmuna never spoke with his greater successor. They were actually kinsmen, for through a different line Rāmānuja was a great-grandson of Nātha Muni. Hearing of his rising repute while still a student under a preceptor of Çankara's school, Yāmuna went to Kāñchi to see him. Rāmānuja was discussing in the midst of a group of disciples. The old man would not disturb him, and with a prayer for the increase of the Çri-Vaishnavas he went away and soon after died.<sup>2</sup>

### III

The story of Rāmānuja's activity was briefly told in 114 Sanskrit verses by Āndhrapūrṇa, a devoted follower. He dwells lovingly on the condescension of the Teacher, who allotted particular duties to some of his more confidential disciples, "and who set me, most undeserving among them, the duty of looking after the milk supply, who always protected me the servant of servants to those who sought refuge at his feet, as if I were his friend, near his heart."<sup>3</sup> In the pious fancy of Āndhrapūrṇa his Master seemed a partial embodiment of the wondrous Serpent Çesha, the *Ananta* or "Endless," the symbol of eternity, on whom Vishnu reposed in the intervals between destruction and creation.<sup>4</sup> His education ran the usual course

<sup>1</sup> "The individual soul is a separate entity in each body," distinct from the senses, *manas*, *prāna*, etc. Quoted by T. Rajagopala Chariar, *The Vaishnavite Reformers*,<sup>2</sup> p. 30.

<sup>2</sup> See the *Yatirājavānbhavam* of Āndhrapūrṇa, in S. Krishnaswami Aiyangar, *Indian Antiquary*, xxxviii. (1909), p. 120 ff., vv. 13-16.

<sup>3</sup> Another account in 100 Tamil verses was written by Amudan of Arangam, at one time manager of the Temple at Çirāṅga, and an adherent of the Çankara school. On his conversion by one of Rāmānuja's disciples, he composed a poem on the Master, and Rāmānuja is said to have accepted the dedication, and at his followers' request added it to the Four Thousand Hymns. Cp. *Çri Rāmānujāchārya*, by S. Krishnaswami Aiyangar, Madras, p. 31.

<sup>4</sup> *Çeshāṇçaka*, ver. 7. An *aṇça* is a part or share. The usual rendering "incarnation" in this connection does not quite fit the Indian idea. Two places are assigned by tradition for Rāmānuja's birth, at Tirupati, a Vishṇu centre north-west of Madras, and Perumbudur to the south, where a shrine dedicated to him attracts large numbers of pilgrims every year. The long

based on the Veda (including the Upanishads) and its dependent studies; he married and took his wife to Kāñchi, where the head of the philosophical academy, Yādava-Prakāṣa,<sup>1</sup> gave instruction in Çankara's Advaita. There friction gradually arose between teacher and pupil. Rāmānuja disputed his professor's interpretation of a passage in the Chhândogya Upanishad; he successfully exorcised the evil spirit which tormented the king's son when Yādava had failed, and Yādava was not appeased when his disciple duly handed him the royal fee.<sup>2</sup> A second correction in class was more than Yādava could bear, and he angrily dismissed the audacious disputant. The news reached Yāmuna, who sent a disciple to fetch him to Çrīranga. Rāmānuja obeyed the summons, but only, as he neared the little city, to meet the old man's funeral. Taken to the bier, he noticed that three fingers on the right hand were tightly closed. The aged Āchārya, he was told, had left three tasks behind him—the composition of a commentary on the Vedānta-Sūtras on the principles of "Qualified Advaita," and the perpetuation of the names of Parāçara, the reputed author of the Vishnu Purāna, and St Satagopa (or Nammālvār), in gratitude for their works. Rāmānuja accepted the duty in presence of the disciples, and the dead man's fingers gently unclosed and straightened.

Vowed to his new purpose, Rāmānuja entered on fresh studies, partly under the direction of one of Yāmuna's leading followers. He learned the principles at once of union and distinction in the soul's relation to God, and the path of self-surrender as the way to final peace.<sup>3</sup> At length the decisive hour arrived. He could no longer bear the trials of an uncongenial marriage; he sent his wife back to her father, and adopted the triple staff and the brown robes of a mendicant ascetic.<sup>4</sup> From Çrīranga came an invitation to lead the disciples of the departed Yāmuna, and there for some time he both taught and studied in a sort of

life implied in the Tamil dates, 1017–1137, seems to start a good deal too early. His activity may be traced in the reigns of three kings, lasting from 1070–1146. He was thus an elder contemporary of St Bernard and Anselm.

<sup>1</sup> His maternal uncle, according to Pandit Vasudev Shastri Abhyankar, *Çri-Bhāshya* (Bombay Sanskr. series), ii. p. iv, who places his birth at Bhūtāpuri, a village in the district of Trichinopoli.

<sup>2</sup> *Āndhrapūrṇa*, vv. 17, 18.

<sup>3</sup> *Āndhrapūrṇa*, ver. 40.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, vv. 48–51.



college of preceptors, and was at the head of the temple-management. But he was not without opponents. Sectarian animosities were bitter. Āndhrapūrṇa is silent about a later tale of Yādava's machinations to murder him while he was still a student at Kāñchi; but he relates that at Ćrīraṅga an attempt was made to poison him, and two of the preceptors arranged that he should only take food which had first been tested by a disciple, Pranāthārthihara, who was thus installed as guardian of his person.<sup>1</sup> At length he was ready to enter the field of authorship, and in three brief works on the "Essence," the "Summary," and the "Light" of the Vedānta, he laid down the principles which were elaborated in his commentary on the Brahma-Sūtras and the Bhagavad Gītā. Accompanied by some of his followers he travelled widely, holding discussions and converting dissentients, till he reached Kashmir, where the goddess of learning, Sarasvatī, condescended to place the great Bhāshya on her head and assure the author that it was the best.<sup>2</sup> On his return to Ćrīraṅga he was again in danger. The Chola king<sup>3</sup> required the Vaishnava professors to subscribe to the brief creed "There is none higher than Ćiva," and sent messengers to fetch Rāmānuja.<sup>4</sup> His disciples hurried him away to the west, and he found refuge in the dominions of a Jain prince in Mysore.<sup>5</sup> On the incidents of his residence there Āndhrapūrṇa is silent. Later biographers relate that he cured the king's daughter and defeated the Jains in debate, and so secured the royal protection. After twelve years' absence he was able to return to Ćrīraṅga. There he occupied himself with

<sup>1</sup> Āndhrapūrṇa, ver. 68.—To this period is attached a later story which is exposed to suspicion of Christian "contamination." From one of his teachers Rāmānuja received certain secrets under the usual promise only to communicate them to a worthy disciple. He found them so valuable that he began to spread them widely. The indignant Guru threatened him with "eternal hell," and Rāmānuja replied that he would gladly suffer it if by so doing he could minister to the salvation of humanity. *Life and Times*, by Krishnaswāmi Aiyangar, p. 17. On the limitations of his own view to the three castes of the "Twice-born," see below, p. 403.

<sup>2</sup> Āndhrapūrṇa, ver. 87.

<sup>3</sup> Kulothunga (1070-1118); so Krishnaswāmi Aiyangar, p. 43.

<sup>4</sup> Āndhrapūrṇa, ver. 94.

<sup>5</sup> Bitti Deva, the Viceroy for his brother, afterwards himself king under the name of Vishnuvardhana (1104-31).

works of devotion and the organisation of his order. Following a common usage, he erected images of some of the Ālvārs; "for the prosperity of those who sought his protection" he even set up his own.<sup>1</sup> Seventy-four of his leading disciples were appointed to "apostolic seats," four being designated especially to expound the Commentary. Āndhrapūrṇa reckons seven hundred "ascetic followers," and "twelve thousand elect quite close to the Divine,"<sup>2</sup> and closes his story with the angry threat of Kālī, "the Black," fierce spouse of Ćiva—

"As you have driven me out everywhere and thus left me homeless,

So when I get the opportunity, I shall bring about a revolution in your religion."

#### IV

It has been said by a modern student that the teaching of Rāmānuja presents to us the highest intellectual altitude reached in all its varied history by Indian Theism.<sup>3</sup> Whatever be the justice of such a judgment, it is probably true that the movement to which he gave the most powerful and lasting expression has also been the widest and most influential in shaping the religious life of the people at large. Many elements of ancient tradition meet in his pages. He founds himself, of course, upon the received Revelation, but he appeals freely also to texts of the lower rank. The mythological forms of different monotheisms are combined and harmonised. He opens his chief work with a prayer that his mind may be filled with devotion (*bhakti*) towards the Supreme Brahman, the abode of Lakshmi, consort of Vishnu, the imaginative symbol of his creative energy;<sup>4</sup> and he constantly quotes from the Vishnu Purāṇa, unnamed in Ćankara's exposition. Vishnu is accordingly identi-

<sup>1</sup> Āndhrapūrṇa, ver. 103.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, vv. 108, 109.

<sup>3</sup> Nicol Macnicol, *Indian Theism* (1915), p. 107.

<sup>4</sup> Thibaut, *SBE*, xlviii. p. 3. Lakshmi became in later Vaishnavism a kind of divine Mother of the universe; and a modern exponent claims for her the function of intercession with God on behalf of weak and erring humanity. Cp. Prof. R. Rāṅgāchārya, in *Sri Rāmānujāchārya, his Life and Times*, by S. Krishnaswami Aiyangar, Madras (2nd ed., no date), p. 102.

fied with the Most High Brahman, and so in turn are Vāsudeva and Nārāyaṇa. The Bhāgavata doctrine is thus accommodated in the Vedānta, and Rāmānuja ascribes it to revelation by Nārāyaṇa himself.<sup>1</sup> His religious philosophy was thus fed from various sources; it was developed along lines of thought that were undoubtedly of immense antiquity; but many of its details were sharpened by reaction against the monistic doctrine of Çāṅkara, and owed their form to his critical antagonism.

Like his predecessor, Rāmānuja expounded his views in the form of a commentary on the Vedānta-Sūtras, and defends them upon Scripture grounds. Raised above all contact with the senses, Brahman could be known through Revelation only.<sup>2</sup> The guarantee for the possession of various powers by the Godhead rested exclusively on the authority of the Veda,<sup>3</sup> and Rāmānuja did not contest the position of his opponents that this was based on an unbroken tradition, and could not be suspected of any imperfection.<sup>4</sup> Reasoning, as Manu allowed, might be employed in its support,<sup>5</sup> but no generalisations from experience could either prove or disprove Brahman. Elsewhere, however, another source of knowledge is admitted. The study of the Çāstras leads only to indirect knowledge; it must be supplemented by that which is direct.<sup>6</sup> This latter is obtained by the concentrated meditation known as Yoga. Something more is needed than the mere comprehension of the words of Scripture. It is the result of profound contemplation,<sup>7</sup> "in intuitive clearness not inferior to the clearest presentative thought,"<sup>8</sup> and arises through the divine grace in response to acts of daily worship and sacrifice. It is of the nature of *bhakti* or devout adoration, which wins the approval of the

<sup>1</sup> See the paper of Prof. R. G. Bhaudarkar, in *Verhandlungen des VII. Internationalen Oriental. Congr.*, 1888, "The Rāmānujīya and the Bhāgavata or Pāñcharātra Systems," p. 104 ff.

<sup>2</sup> i. 1, 3; *SBE*, xlviii. p. 161.

<sup>3</sup> ii. 1, 27; xlviii. p. 474.

<sup>4</sup> xlviii. p. 25.

<sup>5</sup> ii. 1, 12; xlviii. p. 426.

<sup>6</sup> *Parokṣāparokṣa-rūpe dve vyākāṇe*, i. 2, 23 (Bombay Sanskr. series, 1914); xlviii. p. 284.

<sup>7</sup> *Dhyāna*, or *upāsana*, i. 1, p. 8; xlviii. pp. 12, 699.

<sup>8</sup> *Pratyakṣa*, or perception.

Deity in accordance with the ancient saying, "He whom the Self chooses, by him can the Self be gained."<sup>1</sup> But for this choice to operate the believer must make humble preparation. He must abstain from all food naturally unclean or accidentally polluted. He must be free from the attachments of desire. The thought of Brahman must be his daily practice; the recitation of the Veda, sacrifice, alms, mortifications and fasts, his constant rule. Truth and honesty, kindness and liberality, must guide word and deed; neither depressed by lack of cheerfulness, nor elated by undue self-satisfaction, he must maintain inward calm and self-control. Then contemplation will beget remembrance, and steadfast recollection will open the inward eye to realise the sacred Vision as immediately present. That is the pathway to the Great Release.

What, then, is the content of the Vision? It concerned, of course, the nature of God, conceived as the Supreme Spirit (*Purushottama*), and his relation to the world and the soul. Like his predecessor Çankara, Rāmānuja must justify himself against Sāṅkhyan and Buddhist and other philosophical critics of theism; but it is against Çankara himself that his most formidable battery of argument is opened. It was not difficult to ask the Sāṅkhyan evolutionist how he could explain the orderly arrangement of the universe without a guiding mind, or provide for the start of the whole process out of the equipoise of the Three Strands if there was no causal will to disturb their balance. The Buddhist theories of "momentariness" and the "Void" were in like manner quickly pushed aside by the traditional metaphysic. But the monistic doctrine of Çankara met him on his own ground, and claimed to be the true meaning of the Upanishads. To rebut it needed all his strength, and in a lengthy introduction prefixed to the exposition of the first Sūtra he sought to clear the way for his own interpretation of the Vedānta.

Çankara had started from the distinction between subject and object, but he had allowed to it only a relative reality. It was valid for practical affairs, but it was, at the same time essentially false. Nothing truly existed but the universal undifferented Brahman. The belief in an individual Self was

<sup>1</sup> *Kāṭha Up.*, ii. 23.

an error arising from bodily experience and its entanglement in the Samsāra. The higher knowledge showed the whole world and its inhabitants enveloped in Ignorance and in the grip of Illusion. Rāmānuja advances to the attack along four main lines. In the first place, he examines the nature of consciousness, and its testimony to the presence of a permanent thinking subject. This is then submitted to the test of Scripture, and the evidence of Revelation is marshalled on its behalf. The conception of Ignorance then comes up for examination and is treated in the same fashion. And, lastly, the doctrine of the absolute identity of the apparent individual soul with Brahman is considered in the light of accepted teaching concerning deliverance from transmigration and final Release.

(1) All knowledge, it is argued, involves the perception of difference. The action of the knowing mind is presented under the figure of light which issues from a luminous centre,<sup>1</sup> and brings the object to be known within the range of apprehension. All clear conception arises through some distinction, marking off *this* from *that*, the characteristics of a cow from those of a buffalo. There is no source of knowledge enabling us to apprehend mere undifferentenced Being; and if there were, it would place Brahman in the position of an object, which (on the Advaita theory) would involve it in the whole sphere of ignorance and perishableness. But, further, consciousness<sup>2</sup> is only intelligible as the attribute of a conscious Self, which is known to each one by first-hand testimony, as universal experience enshrined in language proves. Its changes imply a constant in which they take place. But for this permanence memory would be impossible, and we could not recognise anything to-day as something that we had seen yesterday. The "I" and the "not-I" are thus given at the same time, and we do not say, "I am consciousness,"<sup>3</sup> but "I am conscious."

(2) The Self, however, cannot testify to its own origin. Memory does not reach beyond its present embodiment, and inference and reasoning cannot supply the deficiency. The

<sup>1</sup> *Svayamprakāśa*, cp. xlviii. p. 40 ff.

<sup>2</sup> Designated by various terms, *anubhūti*, *jñāna*, *avagati*, *saṃvid*.

<sup>3</sup> *Anubhūtiśrahaṃ*, cp. xlviii. p. 61.

nature or essence of the Self cannot be known by experience, but Scripture declares it to be unoriginated. It is not a product. Why? because Revelation tells us so: "The knowing one (*vipaś-chit*) is never born and does not die";<sup>1</sup> the body may be killed, but the Ancient (*purāṇa*), who is unborn, eternal, everlasting, is not killed. The author of the *Sūtras*, therefore,<sup>2</sup> teaches the soul's eternity.

The independent existence of the soul without beginning is, of course, incompatible with the doctrine of the sole being of "one homogeneous substance, viz., Intelligence free from all difference."<sup>3</sup> The sacred texts prove that the Supreme Brahman is "the substantial and also the operative cause of the world; that it is all-knowing, endowed with all powers; that its purposes come true; that it is the inward principle, the support and the ruler of everything." The doctrine that knowledge is the essential nature of Brahman does not mean that it constitutes the whole of reality. Light must have its seat in a gem, a lamp, the sun; and similarly knowledge can only be lodged in a knowing subject. To this character of knower (*jñātriva*) all Scripture bears testimony; and the text, "Thou mayest not see the seer of seeing, thou mayest not think the thinker of thinking," cannot be understood to deny the existence of a seeing and thinking subject, for such denial would involve a conflict with other passages which declare how the Self may be known.<sup>4</sup>

(3) The theory that Nescience is the cause of the error of plurality of existence was met by the question "Where is its seat?" It could not be in the individual soul, for that was a fiction produced by it; nor could it be in Brahman, which is nothing but "self-luminous knowledge," and hence incapable of harbouring its contradiction Ignorance.<sup>5</sup> No Scripture authority could be alleged in its support. *Māyā* was by no means

<sup>1</sup> *Kātha Up.*, i. 2, 15, *SBE*, xlviii. p. 541

<sup>2</sup> ii. 3, 18. Dr Ghate points out a curious difference of reading between the text of the *Sūtra* adopted by Çankara and Nimbarka and that followed by Rāmānuja. But the ontological meaning remains unaffected. *Le Vedānta*, p. 50.

<sup>3</sup> *Nirvīṣeṣa-jñāna* (knowledge), xlviii. p. 78.

<sup>4</sup> i. 1, 1, p. 61; xlviii. pp. 81, 84.

<sup>5</sup> xlviii. p. 103.

synonymous with falsehood; in many passages it denoted the power which produced wonderful effects, and it was in virtue of its possession that the Supreme Person was called *māyin*.<sup>1</sup> And of what use, inquired Rāmānuja, would an unbeginning Ignorance, an eternal unreal *Māyā*, be to Brahman? Was it to delude individual souls? For what end, then? If it was answered, "To provide him with a kind of sport," the reply was ready, "What need is there of sport for a Being of infinite Bliss?"<sup>2</sup> Moreover, Scripture itself is enveloped in the great world-error, and thus the whole foundation of knowledge was destroyed. When Brahman was involved in the same unreality as the world, what would remain but universal falsehood?

(4) There was, indeed, a part for Ignorance to play in our actual experience. The embodied soul, under the influence of its good or evil Karma, constantly fails to recognise its own essential nature as Knowledge, and in enjoyment or suffering identifies the body and its pains or pleasures with its Self. Only through apprehension of the Brahman as the Supreme Reality, "the True of the True," could it win deliverance from the entanglements of the material world, and secure final Release. This apprehension was expressed in an ancient formula, *Tat tvam asi*, "That art thou." What was the nature of this union? From the point of view of Çankara's monism it implied the complete disappearance or destruction of the Self.<sup>3</sup> But the Ego is not a mere attribute of the Self which might perish and yet leave its essential nature persisting uninjured; it constitutes its very being. Were it otherwise, who would undertake the labour needful for liberation, if the result of such endeavour was the loss of personal existence? So far from denoting an undifferentenced identity, the words "that" and "thou" clearly implied distinction. They are, indeed, co-ordinated, for the texts which declare Brahman to be the "Self of all" describe him as "the Inner Ruler" of the individual soul, the Immortal. Immanent in our spirits as in the external world, God will be at

<sup>1</sup> i. 1, 1, p. 102; xlviii. p. 126.

<sup>2</sup> ii. 1, 15, p. 429 f.; xlviii. p. 442 Rāmānuja forgets that he, too, elsewhere represents the Brahman as playing the great cosmic game.

<sup>3</sup> i. 1, 1, p. 59, *Satyātma-nāṣa*; xlviii. p. 70.



last recognised in immediate vision as the Soul of our souls. Such union is not loss of consciousness, for "how can one substance (*dravya*) pass over into the nature of another substance?"<sup>1</sup> The *Gītā* declared that this knowledge raised conscious beings above the world-vicissitudes of creation and destruction into community of nature with the Lord.<sup>2</sup> And Scripture showed how persons (like the Rishi Vāmadeva) in whom Ignorance had been destroyed by the intuition of their identity with Brahman, retained the consciousness of the personal "I."<sup>3</sup> The general conclusion, therefore, is thus stated :

"All this clearly proves that the authoritative books do *not* teach the doctrine of one non-differenced substance; that they do *not* teach that the universe of things is false, and that they do *not* deny the essential distinction of intelligent beings, non-intelligent things, and the Lord."<sup>4</sup>

With the rejection of the doctrine of Illusion the distinction between the lower and the higher Brahman fell away. The four-faced Brahmā, Lord (*adhipati*) of the mundane egg, who "represents the individual souls in their collective aspect,"<sup>5</sup> is no modification of the Most High who is Lord (*īṣvara*) of all. He is involved in the Samsāra, with a body like other *devas*; subject to Karma, among the great host of souls.<sup>6</sup> Brahman is no unknowable, impersonal Absolute. He is the Supreme Person, identified with Nārāyaṇa; and the essence of personality is placed in the capacity to realise desires and purposes.<sup>7</sup> God, accordingly, is defined as "the Lord (*īṣvara*) of all, whose nature is antagonistic to all evil, whose purposes come true, who possesses infinite auspicious qualities such as knowledge, blessedness, and so on; all-knowing, all-powerful, supreme in

<sup>1</sup> *Vishnu Pur*, II. 14, 27, *SBE*, XLVIII. p. 98.

<sup>2</sup> *Mama sādharṇyam āgataḥ*, XIV. 2.

<sup>3</sup> XLVIII. p. 71.

<sup>4</sup> I. 1, 1, p. 82, *Nāpr-cid-acul-īṣvarāṇām svarūpa-bheda-mashedhaḥ*; XLVIII. p. 102.

<sup>5</sup> *Jīva-samashṭi-rūpa*, I. 3, 12, p. 294; XLVIII. p. 312.

<sup>6</sup> The term *jīva-ghana* is applied to him, *yasya hi karma-nivṛttaṁ dehitvaṁ sa jīva-ghana ityucyate*, I. 3, 12, p. 295; XLVIII. p. 313, cp. pp. 330, 328.

<sup>7</sup> I. 1, 12, where *Chhānd. Up.*, VIII. 1, 5, is quoted; XLVIII. p. 307.

causation,<sup>1</sup> from whom the creation, subsistence, and dissolution of this world proceed."<sup>2</sup>

This doctrine, of course, carries with it the reality of the world, which is involved in Rāmānuja's conception of causation. Creation did not mean for Indian thought production out of nothing, nor did dissolution imply total destruction.<sup>3</sup> The ancient teaching, known as *sat-kārya-vāda*, viewed the effect as already existent in the cause, which simply passed from one state into another. Production and dissolution are thus merely different conditions of the same causal substance. Jars and platters are modifications of the same clay; crowns and bracelets are fashioned from the same gold.<sup>4</sup> "There is no such thing as an effect apart from its cause; the effect, in fact, is identical with the cause."<sup>5</sup> Just as the effect inheres in the cause before its action, so the cause when it has acted persists in the effect. If Brahman, therefore, is the cause of the world, as the Scriptures teach, the world cannot be unreal; and further, Brahman who produces it must also abide in it. In other words, he is not only its operative or efficient, he is likewise its material cause. With repeated insistence on the philosophic figure of the Inner Ruler<sup>6</sup> within the visible scene and the conscious spirit, Rāmānuja proclaims the immanence of Brahman in the universe. Against the Purusha theism of the Yōga, which ascribed the whole cosmic process to an unconscious Nature (*pradhāna*), he boldly identified Brahman with Prakriti. Nature is the *upādāna* or material cause, but so is Brahman; Brahman and Prakriti are thus presented in indissoluble unity.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup> i. 1, 2, *parama-kāraṇika*, p. 132 Thibaut, xlviii p. 156, translates "supremely merciful," having apparently read *kāruṇika*.

<sup>2</sup> For the Pāñcharātra doctrine of the Fourfold form of Brahman as Vāsudeva, etc., promulgated by Brahman as Nārāyaṇa, cp. ii. 2, 42, p. 525 ff., and *ante*, p. 221.

<sup>3</sup> Rāmānuja accepts the current doctrine of world-periods, and the Sāṅkhyan order of development from the subtle matter into which the universe has been reduced, but he places it under the will of God.

<sup>4</sup> ii. 1, 14; xlviii. p. 430.

<sup>5</sup> ii. 1, 15, *kāraṇa-vyavahārikam kāryaṁ nāstīti kāraṇadananyat-kāryam*; xlviii. p. 432.

<sup>6</sup> In the *Antaryāmin-Brahmana*, *Bṛihad. Up.*, iii. 7.

<sup>7</sup> i. 4, 23, p. 384; xlviii. p. 398. Cp. ii. 1, 4-11.

This is a system of Non-duality (*advaita*), but it is "qualified"<sup>1</sup> by the recognition that both the world and souls, while they subsist solely in and through Brahman, are nevertheless real. The whole field of existence can thus be summed up in three terms: God, conscious beings, and matter.<sup>2</sup>

The universe and all its contents, animate and inanimate, thus form a kind of body for Brahman of which he is the Self.<sup>3</sup> When the Vishnu Purāṇa celebrated Brahman's sole being in the words "Thou alone art real,"<sup>4</sup> the poet did not assert that the whole world is unreal, but only that as Brahman is the Self of the world it has no existence apart from him.<sup>5</sup> Did not the Scripture itself describe him as "embodied"?<sup>6</sup> From the simplest food to the most subtle ether, from breath to mind and knowledge and bliss, the same truth holds good. All that exists, intelligent or unintelligent, constitutes the body of the Self, which still abides in unconditioned being.<sup>7</sup> Hence this doctrine (*çāstra*) of the Brahman was known as the *çārīraka*, "the embodied Self." There is thus a true plurality, but it inheres in an ultimate unity. Did not Revelation say, as it depicted Brahman issuing forth from his majestic solitude, that he resolved "May I be many"?<sup>8</sup> In thus becoming many, he did not cease to be one. Like the coils of a snake, the unconscious world is Brahman's mighty coil;<sup>9</sup> it can have no separate being, and hence may be described as a part of him.<sup>10</sup> And this is no less true of souls.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Viçishṭa*. On *viçeshana* as the qualifying or distinguishing attribute, cp. ii. 3, 45; xlviii. p. 563.

<sup>2</sup> *Īçvara*, *çhet*, and *achit*. Cp. xlviii. pp. 88, 133, 135, 138.

<sup>3</sup> *Jagad-Brahmanoh çārīrītmabhāva-nibandhanam*, i. 1, 1, p. 73; xlviii. p. 93.

<sup>4</sup> i. 4, 38 ff.

<sup>5</sup> xlviii. p. 94.

<sup>6</sup> *Taitt. Up.*, ii. 5, 6, *çārīra*. The Vedānta or *Uttara-Mīmāṃsā* was hence called the *Çārīraka-Mīmāṃsā*, a name used by Rāmānuja himself in the introduction to his Commentary, xlviii. p. 7 f.

<sup>7</sup> i. 1, 13, *nirupādḥika*, "without any *upādhis*" or limiting adjuncts, p. 202; xlviii. p. 230. Cp. the discussion of the doctrine of "modification," i. 4, 27, *ibid.*, p. 403, and the passages from the *Subāla Up.*, quoted pp. 229 and 403.

<sup>8</sup> *Taitt. Up.*, ii. 6, 1; *Chhānd. Up.*, vi. 2, 3; xlviii. p. 85.

<sup>9</sup> iii. 2, 26 f.; xlviii. p. 619.

<sup>10</sup> iii. 2, 28; xlviii. p. 620. On the soul also as an *aṃṣa*, see below, p. 406.

<sup>11</sup> ii. 3, 42; xlviii. p. 558 ff.

This doctrine seemed, however, to involve one dangerous consequence. Did it not implicate Brahman in all the suffering of individuals, as well as the unconsciousness and mutability of matter? Was he not thus a partner in the whole world's pain, at once its author and its victim? From this conclusion Rāmānuja shrinks abashed. The imperfections of the soul in its various states are, indeed, too palpable to be denied. But that which is really hurtful in them is not the mere connection with a body, but the retributive influence of evil deeds.<sup>1</sup> A distinction is accordingly drawn between various definitions of the term "body"; it must be entirely subordinated to the soul, which in its turn must be capable of completely controlling and supporting it for its own ends.<sup>2</sup> Such is the supremacy of Brahman over the world. As the creature of "names and forms," the conditions of particular objects, Brahman necessarily transcends them and is unaffected by them. In common life the subjects of a sovereign experience pleasure or pain according to his favour or restraint, but the fact that he too has a body brings no suffering to him if his commands are transgressed.<sup>3</sup> The analogy is not impressive, and Rāmānuja falls back again and again on two main arguments. In the first place, all evil is the issue of past wrong. It is the product of the soul's life in the *samsāra*, the fruit of its own act. For this God is in no way responsible. Above the endless succession of existences he dwells in light where no shadow of wrong can dim his glory. Such life is even possible for embodied spirits in the world above; how much more then for the Most High Self!<sup>4</sup> So Scripture testifies with the utmost emphasis that Brahman is "free from evil, from old age, from death, from grief";<sup>5</sup> he abides in his wonderful divine form, of immeasurable splendour, beauty, fragrance, possessing the charm of eternal youth.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> i. 2, 8; xlviii. pp. 265, 427, 607.

<sup>2</sup> ii. 1, 9; xlviii. p. 424.

<sup>3</sup> ii. 1, 14; xlviii. p. 428.

<sup>4</sup> iii. 3, 27; xlviii. p. 648.

<sup>5</sup> *Chhand. Up.*, viii. 1, 5; xlviii. p. 608. Cp. the whole section on the "twofold characteristics," iii. 2, 11-25.

<sup>6</sup> *Śrī-Bhāṣya*, i. 1, 21, p. 213; xlviii. p. 240. On Brahman as Vāsudeva and the four *Vyūhas* cp. xlviii. p. 525. His wondrous power (*vibhāti*) contains the whole aggregate of things (p. 306) summed up under the terms

What, then, was the relation of souls to such a Being? Like Brahman they, too, are eternal.<sup>1</sup> In one aspect they may be viewed as "manifestations of Brahman's power"; in another they possess a qualified independence, for "they exist in their own independent nature." Their essence lies in being the subjects of knowledge. "The judgment 'I am conscious' reveals an 'I' distinguished by consciousness."<sup>2</sup> The Self is by its own existence a "knower." Its knowledge may, indeed, contract or expand as it moves from one condition to another and is associated with different forms and senses. In any given world souls are embodied in diverse ranks of being, Devas and Asuras and demons of many orders, men, beasts and birds and creeping things, trees, bushes, grasses.<sup>3</sup> Nay, they may even enter inanimate stones, or find a temporary resting-place in manufactured articles like jars and cloth.<sup>4</sup> Atomic in size, as Scripture affirms, the soul passes in and out of successive bodies, and its consciousness, dwelling in the heart, pervades the entire frame.<sup>5</sup> But all the while it is intrinsically a part of Brahman,<sup>6</sup> but it is no portion<sup>7</sup> cut out from the whole into separate independence, for Brahman admits of no division. The individual soul (*jīva*) is thus comprised, as it were, within the Supreme Self. Language and analogy are, of course, strained to the uttermost to express the relation. Light and heat may be said to be "parts" of fire and sun; colour of cow or horse; the body of an embodied being. The individual differs, indeed, in essential character from the Most High. Their relation is no absolute identity. Something discriminates the part from the whole; the luminous body is different in nature from the radiance which it emits. As an inhabitant of the universe the

*chit* and *achit*. For the later theological systematisation of the Rāmānujīyas, see below, p. 414.

<sup>1</sup> ii. 3, 18, *nātmotpadyate*, "the soul is not originated," p. 521; xlviii. p. 541. This based on the authority of Scripture.

<sup>2</sup> i. 1, 1, p. 44; xlviii. p. 62.

<sup>3</sup> i. 1, 4, p. xlviii.

<sup>4</sup> Sukhtankar, *Vedānta according to Rāmānuja*, Wien, 1908, p. 59; quoting the *Vedārthasamgraha*.

<sup>5</sup> ii. 3, 20 ff.; xlviii. p. 548.

<sup>6</sup> i. 1, 4, *aṃṣa*, ii. 3, 42; xlviii. pp. 191, 559.

<sup>7</sup> *Khaṇḍa*, "piece."

soul exists in God. As the Inner Ruler God condescends to dwell within the soul. All conscious beings are thus "qualified" forms of Brahman; the qualifying element (*viçeshana*) being found in the "limiting conditions" attaching to successive births in the *samsāra*.<sup>1</sup> This is expressed in the doctrine of "distinction without distinction," or "qualified Non-duality."<sup>2</sup>

The recognition of the eternity of souls as well as of the material world involves the usual difficulty of accounting for the origin of the whole cosmic process. The clue to its operations is found in Karma, but what first brought this mysterious power upon the scene? If souls are in any way (as "parts" of Brahman) sharers in the divine nature, they must have once possessed its freedom and purity. How did they lose such auspicious qualities? Again and again it is affirmed that Karma is without beginning;<sup>3</sup> but neither Scripture nor Reason can tell how it got souls into its power. They have not, however, wholly lost their liberty. They are still free within certain limits. Their activity is, indeed, dependent on the ultimate causation of the Supreme Self. But the Inner Ruler has regard in all cases to the "volitional effort" which prompts a man's action.<sup>4</sup> Were no such initiative possible, the commands and prohibitions of Revelation would be unmeaning. But the divine assent is needed to carry out the volitional resolve. In other words, every act implies a kind of partnership by which God condescends to give effect to the soul's purposes. The whole physical or material mechanism is his, guided unerringly by the Law of the Deed. And no charge of heartlessness can be brought against him for permitting evil which he might arrest, for he is pledged to execute the moral order which is the eternal expression of his righteousness. Karma is thus incorporated in Brahman's nature, and beside Intelligence and Bliss his Being includes untiring energy and impartial justice.

But that is not all. Did not Scripture affirm that "he makes

<sup>1</sup> Cp. ii. 3, 45; xlviii. p. 563; for the *upādhis*, cp. i. 1, 4; xlviii. p. 193.

<sup>2</sup> *Bhēdābheda*, or *viçishṭa Advaita*.

<sup>3</sup> i. 1, 4, *anādi-karma*, p. 168; cp. xlviii. 147, 198, ii. 1, 36, *anādi-va*, p. 463; xlviii. p. 478.

<sup>4</sup> ii. 8, 44, *sarvadeḥ kriyadeḥ puruṣheṇa kṛtaṁ prayatnam udyogam apakṣhy-antaryamī*, p. 567; xlviii. p. 557.

him whom he wishes to lead up from this world do a good deed," and in like manner impel men to evil?<sup>1</sup> Is not the way thereby opened for the divine will to control the human, and thus transcend the limiting activity of Karma? The answer takes us into the heart of Rāmānuja's religion, the doctrine of Grace. For what is the effect of Karma? It is (in its broadest sense) to entangle the soul in the material world, and by the works of the flesh obscure the realities of the Spirit. Deliverance, therefore, can only be accomplished by the removal of ignorance. This is the mystery of God's revelation of himself. The "Inner Ruler" discloses his own presence, and deigns to illuminate the prayerful heart. Did not the ancient text describe the believer's election to the sacred insight? "Only he gains Him whom the Self chooses for Himself."<sup>2</sup> And did not Krishna say, "To those who are ever devoted and worship me with love, I give that knowledge by which they attain to me"?<sup>3</sup> To help those who are striving to fulfil his will, God inspires a tendency to virtue; to punish the disobedient, he engenders yet more wilfulness.<sup>4</sup> The gift is thus not unconditional. It is no accident or chance result, nor is it an act of capricious favour. It is the blessed result of a long preparation both of outward conduct and of inward affection. The external duties embodied in the successive stages of life from youth through maturity to age must be loyally discharged. Sacrifices must have been regularly performed, the Veda studied, the demands of charity fulfilled, the moral virtues assiduously cherished. But all this must be accomplished, as Krishna had taught, in the spirit of Renunciation.<sup>5</sup> All desires for "fruit," for reward hereafter, must be abandoned; all self-satisfaction in good works must be suppressed; all claims of agency must be relinquished. The righteous deed must be humbly surrendered to God alone as its sole author.<sup>6</sup> Then by the Lord's grace mind and heart will become pure. With quiet thoughts the

<sup>1</sup> *Kaush. Up.*, iii. 8.

<sup>2</sup> *Kātha Up.*, ii. 23.

<sup>3</sup> *Bhagav. Gītā*, x. 8 ff.

<sup>4</sup> Rāmānuja, iii. 3, 41, xlviii. p. 558; cp. ii. 2, 3, xlviii. p. 488.

<sup>5</sup> *Bhagav. Gītā*, xviii. 4; on *tyāga*, cp. *ante*, p. 262. *Thibaut*, xlviii. p. 523.

<sup>6</sup> *Bhagav. Gītā*, iii. 30.



believer will be open to the heavenly teaching, and win the simplicity, the freedom from pride, the ready response to higher guidance, the docility and obedience, of a child.<sup>1</sup>

Here are the conditions of the higher meditation, the devout peace and love summed up in *bhakti*. For this the preparations of religious duty are needful. The worshipper seeks to realise a constant communion with his divine Lord. Its loftiest form is indeed independent of all outward acts. But it is supported on remembrance, and remembrance is in its turn upheld by the daily practice of sacrifice and such virtues as truthfulness, honesty, kindness, liberality, gentleness.<sup>2</sup> This generates a memory which enables the mind to keep the thought of God continually before it, until the consciousness of the sacred Presence becomes clear, and the soul, lifted into adoration, beholds the majesty and the mercy of the Eternal.<sup>3</sup>

"No thanks he breathed, he proffered no request,  
Rapt into still communion which transcends  
The imperfect offices of praise and prayer,  
His mind was a thanksgiving to the Power  
That made him, it was blessedness and love."

The mystic in Rāmānuja did not shrink from the assertion that in such communion a divine want was also satisfied. Had not Krishna said, "Noble are they all (the four orders of doers of righteousness), but the man of knowledge I deem my very self."<sup>4</sup> What did that mean, inquired Rāmānuja, but this: "My very life depends on him. If it be asked how,—the reason is that in the same manner that he cannot live without me, his highest Goal, I cannot live without him."<sup>5</sup> This was the pathway of Release. For the liberated soul, set free from the bonds of sin and emancipated from all worldly "attachments," an eternal life of infinite joy was opened in the intuition

<sup>1</sup> On *bālyā*, "childlikeness," cp. xlviii. pp. 709, 712.

<sup>2</sup> i. 1, 1, xlviii. p. 713 f.

<sup>3</sup> iii. 4, 26; the character of *vision* is again and again emphasised in the word *pratyakṣatā*, "before-the-eye-ness," cp. xlviii. pp. 15, 699. The soul's "awareness" of its immediate relation to God is due to insight or direct perception.

<sup>4</sup> *Bhagav. Gītā*, vii. 18.

<sup>5</sup> *Commentary* on the *Gītā*, tr. A. Govindāchārya, 1898, Madras, p. 246.

of God. Here was no loss of individuality. The bodily environment of "name and form" was indeed laid aside.<sup>1</sup> But it was only to enable its occupant to enter on loftier union with the Most High. This was no absolute identity any more than the iron became the magnet which attracted it.<sup>2</sup> From all eternity distinct from Brahman by its essential nature, it cannot lose that distinction through all eternity. Were that possible, its very being would be ended, and, so far from becoming one with Brahman, the soul itself would perish utterly.<sup>3</sup> The consciousness of personal identity (*aham iti*) must therefore remain unimpaired, and Scripture testified that Vāmadeva and others had retained it.<sup>4</sup> Its everlasting object is the Supreme Brahman in perfect blessedness, with all the manifestations of its glory.<sup>5</sup> Sharing his joy, the liberated spirits can move freely in all worlds. They cannot indeed create,<sup>6</sup> but they can range at will through all Brahman's creations, share all experiences, realise all wishes, partake of all knowledge, transcending all prohibitions and commands, for desires of evil can touch them no more. It is a glorious and blissful freedom, but with a curious shock the student learns that it is reserved for the Twice-Born of the first three castes. Not for the Çūdra is the grace of God available in this life. By dutiful conduct he may work his way up to another birth in which he may be admitted to the study of the Vedas which is indispensable for the saving knowledge.<sup>7</sup> Thus a rigid Scripturalism triumphs over the universality of the love of God. It will be the work of the next two or three centuries to break down this restriction, and throw the gates of heaven open to every caste and colour and creed.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Cp. the oft-quoted passage from *Mund. Up.*, iii 2, 8.

<sup>2</sup> xlviii. p. 99, a figure quoted from the Viṣṇu Purāṇa.

<sup>3</sup> i. 4, 22; xlviii. p. 393. Cp. i 3, 2-4, and iv 4, 17.

<sup>4</sup> i. 1, 1, p. 52; xlviii. p. 71.

<sup>5</sup> iv. 4, 19, xlviii. p. 768

<sup>6</sup> *Jagad-vyāpāra* is expressly withheld from them, iv. 4, 17.

<sup>7</sup> See the long discussion in i 3, 32-39, where the exclusion of the Çūdra (and of certain ascetics who have fallen from their vows) is justified from the sacred texts.

<sup>8</sup> For this, indeed, a preparation was made by the practice of *prapatti* or surrender to God. Those who felt themselves helpless might seek the

## V

Rāmānuja was not alone in his protest against the Illusion-doctrine of Çankara. A copious literature in the form of Purānas and tracts in Upanishad style had long been growing. The cultus of Vishnu in his Krishna manifestation had spread through the South and awakened an active devotion; and though Rāmānuja founded his exposition of the Sūtras on the names of Nārāyana and Lakshmī, later teachers were not slow to identify the Brahman of the Vedānta with the gay young hero who sported with the cowherdesses at Vrindāvana.<sup>1</sup>

Among the younger contemporaries of Rāmānuja was Nimbārka, whose death is placed by "a rough calculation on uncertain data" about 1162.<sup>2</sup> By birth a Brāhman, he received the name of "Sun of Numba,"<sup>3</sup> which Sir R. G. Bhandarkar provisionally identifies with Nimbāpura, in the Bellary district of Madras. His father was a Bhāgavata, and the boy was probably brought up in the same faith. But he warmly espoused the cultus of Krishna and his mistress Rādhā with her thousand attendants, and established himself in the midst of the sacred localities near Mathurā upon the Jumna.<sup>4</sup> A brief commentary on the Vedānta Sūtras is ascribed to him, and in ten verses entitled the "Jewel of the Siddhānta"<sup>5</sup> he summed up his teaching. Like Rāmānuja, he sought to determine the relation of the world and its animate inhabitants (*achūt* and *chit*) to God. The visible scene and its innumerable souls were in some sense identical with Deity, dependent on him for their being and their power to act, and yet also in some sense distinct from him.

advice of a preceptor and resign themselves to the heavenly will. Even Çūdras might practise this self-abandonment, which played an important part in later teaching. Such worshippers were known as *prapannas*, and were on the way to Release, though they could not gain it in this life. See below, p. 416.

<sup>1</sup> The modern Brindāban, in the district of Muttra, near the Jumna, United Provinces. Cp. below, p. 430.

<sup>2</sup> Bhandarkar, *Vaiṣṇavism*, p. 62.

<sup>3</sup> For the legend associated with the name, see Wilson, "Religious Sects of the Hindus," *Works*, vol. i. (1861), p. 151.

<sup>4</sup> Cp. below, p. 433 ff.

<sup>5</sup> *Siddhānta-Ratna*, translated by Bhandarkar, p. 63 f.

The Supreme Spirit was, of course, presented as free from all defects, a storehouse of all beneficent attributes, possessed of a heavenly body full of beauty and tenderness, sweetness and charm. Between the periods of dissolution and re-creation all existence, animate and inanimate, dwelt in him in a subtle state, till Brahman's energies (his *śaktis*) manifested themselves, and by a kind of modification produced a universe where each separate soul found fit embodiment under the Law of the Deed. Brahman was thus, as the Upanishads taught, at once the material and the efficient cause of the world.<sup>1</sup> The evolution of Nature, as usual, was viewed as the product of the Three Strands. But there were two other magnitudes which belonged to the unconscious realm, and yet were not material like Prakriti—the hands and feet, the sun-like radiance, the ornaments and palace of the Most High – and the mysterious stream of Time. Souls were infinite in number, and (according to Rādarāyaṇa's teaching) atomic in size and "parts" of Brahman. But this term (*aṃṣa*) did not imply a fragment separate and detached, which was inconsistent with the formula of identity ("That art thou"); it signified an energy or capacity (*śakti*) of Brahman projected into individuality.<sup>2</sup> This was a doctrine of "difference without difference" (*bhedabheda*), devised to avoid affirming the absolute identity of all three kinds of being, which confused their attributes and abolished all distinction, and no less to escape asserting an absolute separation which would have impaired Brahman's omnipresence and limited his nature and his sovereignty.<sup>3</sup> Like the "qualified non-duality" of Rāmānuja, the scheme of Nimbārka is a compromise between different tendencies. Both consider difference and non-difference as equally real. But in treating animate and inanimate existence as attributes of Brahman, Rāmānuja emphasised the principle of identity against that of distinction. Nimbārka argued that it was the function of an attribute to differentiate its possessor from other entities which did not share it. There was no other entity from which to distinguish Brahman. The character of

<sup>1</sup> *Upādāna* and *nimitta*, cp. Ghate, *Le Vedānta*, p. xxxv.

<sup>2</sup> On *Sūtras* ii. 3, 43–53, cp. Ghate, p. 61.

<sup>3</sup> A favourite illustration was found in sparks from the fire and light from the sun.

attribute, therefore, fell away; and the principles of difference and non-difference stood side by side on the same plane.<sup>1</sup>

The path to Release for Nimbārka lay alone through Krishna. His grace was ever ready to lift up the helpless, and awoke the adoring love (*bhakti*) of the worshipper, who must recognise his nature as Being, Intelligence, and Bliss, merciful and gracious. All outward action for selfish ends must be abandoned, and the whole soul surrendered to God in serenity, enthusiasm, the faithful devotion of a servant and the intimate affection of a friend. No more must the body be confounded with the self. The worship of other gods was forbidden. Thankfulness must replace ingratitude. Personal duties must not be neglected, the commands of Scripture must be fulfilled. But when the soul, at length delivered from liability to rebirth, passes into the company of Brahman, its essential nature as a "knower"<sup>2</sup> is fully realised in a union which is still freedom and eternal joy.

The philosophical debate was not closed by Nimbārka's modification of the "qualified non-duality" of Rāmānuja. The emphasis laid upon the reality of the world and the soul in distinction from Brahman might be carried further and produce a complete dualism. This was effected by the teacher commonly called Madhva.<sup>3</sup> Born shortly before 1200 in a Brāhmaṇa family at Kallīānpur, in the Udipi district of South Kanara on the south-west coast, about forty miles west of Ṣaṅkara's great foundation at Srīngēri,<sup>4</sup> he received the usual education at the village school. Tradition told of his ability to run and wrestle, jump and swim, and presented him as no less precocious in learning though irregular in attendance and inattentive in lessons.

<sup>1</sup> Cp. Ghate, p. xxxvii.

<sup>2</sup> *Jñāna-svarūpa*, Ghate, p. xxxiii.

<sup>3</sup> His father named him Vāsudeva, but he was known also as Ānanda-tīrtha, and Pūrṇa-Prajña ("full of wisdom"). Cp. *S'rī Madhva and Madhvaism*, by C. N. Krishnaswami Aiyar, Madras, 1907, founded upon the *Madhva-Vijaya* or "Triumph of Madhva," a poetical life by Nārāyaṇa son of Trivikrama, one of his leading disciples. To this sketch Mr Subba Rau has added *The Philosophy of Madhvāchārya*, Madras, 2nd ed., no date. Mr Rau published a translation of his Commentary on the Vedānta Sūtras in 1904, and on the Bhagavad Gītā in 1906, with a short Memoir.

<sup>4</sup> Cp. *Imperial Gazetteer*, vol. xiv. p. 314; Sir G. A. Grierson, *EEE*, viii. p. 223. The most probable date is 1197, Bhandarkar, *Vaiṣṇavism*, p. 58.

What influences led to his resolve to renounce the world and adopt the life of a wandering monk we are not told. The sorrowing parents, foreseeing that there would be no son to perform their funeral rites (two boys had died in infancy before his birth), endeavoured to dissuade him. He prophesied the gift of a younger brother, and on his advent took the final vows in the temple of Anantēṣvar (Vishnu as "Lord of Infinity") at Udupi.

The country was full of eager debate. The poet described the situation thus: "The doctors of the dominant theology had grown turbulent, and were proclaiming from the housetops that phenomena were unreal, that God is no Person and has no attributes, that souls were undifferentiated, and so forth. Several pious people had begun to feel dissatisfied with the prevalent philosophy and its influence on character. The shades of false theology had obscured the Sun of Truth. There were twenty-one heretical systems then in existence."<sup>1</sup> The young monk was among the doubters. He had already discussed the principles of Çankara's monism with his teacher, whom he afterwards converted, and his learning won for him the proud title of "Ruler of the Kingdom of Vedānta."<sup>2</sup> So the years passed in study, prayers, austerities and disputations, till he was ready to set out upon a teaching tour. His first journey was limited to South India, where he encountered at Trivandrum the head of Çankara's order from Sringēri, and, worsted apparently in the controversy, conceived a fierce anger against his opponents. They retaliated with frequent annoyance and persecution, on one occasion robbing him of his library, which they were only compelled to restore by an appeal to the reigning sovereign at Vishnumangala. Subsequent travel led him to the North. There were perils of robbers and wild beasts; rivers must be forded and hostile chiefs conciliated; Mohammedans must be addressed in their own Persian. At Hardwar he rested for fasting, silence, and contemplation,<sup>3</sup> and then plunged into a

<sup>1</sup> *Mahā-Vijaya*, quoted by Krishnaswami Aiyar, p. 11.

<sup>2</sup> Krishnaswami Aiyar, p. 23. This is supposed to mean that he was promoted to the headship of the monastery.

<sup>3</sup> In the United Provinces, on the right bank of the Ganges. It was a bathing-place of peculiar sanctity, having a footprint of Vishnu on the wall

Himālayan retreat alone, for communion with Vyāsa, the mythical compiler of the Vedas and the Great Epic. On his return to Hardwar he proclaimed the supreme Godhead of Vishnu, and published his Commentary on the Vedānta Sūtras. Once more at Udipi he founded a temple to Krishna, and sent two disciples to Jagannātha in Orissa to fetch the original idols of Rāma, another incarnation of Vishnu, and his consort, Princess Sitā.<sup>1</sup> A copious author—no less than thirty-seven works are attributed to him,—he still found time for preaching excursions, gathering converts, and defeating the “Illusionists,” until one day as he sat teaching he disappeared and was seen no more.<sup>2</sup>

The poet Nārāyana presents his hero as himself also a divine incarnation. In him appeared no less a Person than Vāyu, Vishnu's son.<sup>3</sup> This claim is actually made at the close of Madhva's Commentary on the Vedānta Sūtras;<sup>4</sup> did it issue from Madhva himself? The advent of such a being must have been duly announced from heaven, and accordingly, just as in Buddhist and Christian legend, the Devas in heaven rejoiced at his birth, and proclaimed success to the righteous and confusion to the wicked. The spirit of Vāyu was seen to descend from the sky and enter the infant's form.<sup>5</sup> In his fifth year the child was missed, and after three days' anxious search his parents found him in the temple at Udipi, “teaching gods and men how to worship Vishnu according to the Scriptures.”<sup>6</sup> After his initiation as the young monk adored the Deity, the spirit

by the bathing-ghāt Every twelfth New Year's day (at the beginning of the Hindu solar year) is still especially sacred. In 1903 about 400,000 persons were present. *Imperial Gazetteer of India*, vol. xiii p. 51.

<sup>1</sup> Bhandarkar, p. 58. On Rāma and the rise of his cult, see below, p. 425.

<sup>2</sup> Tradition extended his headship over the monastery to 79 years, 6 months, and 20 days, implying a life of at least 96 years; Subba Rau, *Comm. on the Bhagavad Gītā*, p. xv. A more moderate estimate interprets the number 79 as that of his age, and places his death in 1276; Bhandarkar, p. 59, and Grierson, *EEE*, viii. p. 233.

<sup>3</sup> Vāyu was the ancient Vedic wind-god, who in the well-known Purusha hymn sprang from Purusha's breath. He was thus theologically equivalent to “spirit.”

<sup>4</sup> Subba Rau, p. 294.

<sup>5</sup> Cp. the reading *ἐκ αὐτοῦ*, *Mark* i. 10.

<sup>6</sup> Krishnaswami Aiyar, p. 16 f.



fell on one of the crowd, who turned to Madhva's teacher and cried, "My son, behold my beloved, for whom thou hast been longing all the while. He is thy guide and the means of thy salvation!"<sup>1</sup> Thus attested, it is not surprising that he should have multiplied loaves for his disciples in the wilderness, walked dryshod like the Buddha's followers across rivers, or when he went to bathe in a rough sea stilled its violence with a look.<sup>2</sup> In such embellishments it is impossible not to see traces of the Christian influence which suggested the description of the zealous converts as actively engaged in "fishing for men."<sup>3</sup> The effects of this contact are probably to be found again in his admission of the doctrine of eternal punishment.

The reader who opens Mr Rau's translation of Madhva's Commentary on the Vedānta Sūtras is struck at once with the difference of his method compared with his great predecessors. From among the twenty-one commentaries already produced, those of Çankara and Rāmānuja stand out by their lengthy discussions and their dependence especially upon the more ancient Upanishads. Madhva disdains fine-spun arguments, and, passing by many a crucial passage in the venerable texts, gathers support from a wide range of later literature, Purāṇas, and tracts in Upanishad style. Well might he deplore the loss of his library. Quotations have been traced or referred to more than a hundred works, and there are about one hundred and fifty more passages from unknown sources.<sup>4</sup> The Scriptural argument of the older type is largely set aside in favour of a vast body of later opinion which shows how widespread had been the influence of the implicit dualism of the Vishnu theology.

This dualism reaches its fullest expression in the exposition of Madhva. At the head of all existence is the Deity, who creates, maintains, and dissolves the world. The sovereign power over the universe is his. By revelation he imparts the sacred knowledge; he manifests himself in incarnate forms; he is the ruler of all souls; and his grace confers deliverance. Innumerable attributes are gathered round his thought and bliss,

<sup>1</sup> Krishnaswami Aiyar, p. 21.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 28, 36, 51.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 47. Cp. *Mark* i. 17, *Matt.* iv. 19. On Christian influence in India, see *Notes*, p. 523.

<sup>4</sup> Subba Rau, *Vedānta Sūtras*, p. lvi.

and by his side is his consort Lakshmī, capable also of assuming various forms, but without material body, and concomitant with him through space and time.<sup>1</sup> Over against God thus conceived in two Persons souls and the world are eternally distinct.<sup>2</sup> Five sets of relations may be formulated between them: (1) God and souls; (2) God and the world; (3) souls and the world; (4) souls towards each other; (5) objects to each other. Nature in its undifferentiated matter is thus self-existent. The universe is indeed God's handiwork; he is its efficient but not its material cause; he organises and disposes its intrinsic powers, but reason cannot allow that a world which is not intelligent should have been produced by Supreme Intelligence.<sup>3</sup> Souls in like manner, infinite in number, are essentially independent. This is boldly affirmed in the words of the Sūtras: "The soul is separate from (not one with) Brahman, from the statements in Scripture."<sup>4</sup> The ancient formulæ of inner union, "That art thou," and "I am Brahman," cannot, however, be ignored. But they may be reduced in meaning, and the next Sūtra is thus rendered: "Only on account of having for his essence qualities similar to those of Brahman, the soul is spoken of as Brahman, as in the case of the all-wise Brahman." And to this the following comment is appended:—<sup>5</sup>

"Since the essence, i.e. the very nature of the soul, consists only of wisdom, bliss, and other qualities similar (in some degree) to those of Brahman, there proceeds the statement that the soul is one with (like) Brahman; just as in the text, 'All this indeed is Brahman' (*Chhând. Up.*, iii. 14, 1), Brahman is spoken of as identical with all (the world) on account of there being all the qualities in Brahman which are predicated of the whole world. The following is in the Bhavishyat Purāna: 'The souls are separate, the perfect

<sup>1</sup> Bhandarkar, p. 59, from a compendium of Madhvaism.

<sup>2</sup> The relation of the Son ontologically does not seem to have been defined.

<sup>3</sup> Ghate, *Le Vedānta*, p. xxxviii.

<sup>4</sup> ii. 3, 28, tr. Subba Rau, p. 141. This is an expansion of a Sūtra of two words only, *prithag-upadēśāt*, literally "separate by (or on account of) statement." The purport of the words depends, of course, on their application. See Çankara and Rāmānuja *in loc.* The statement is guaranteed by a quotation from "Kausika Sruti," declaring that "the Supreme Lord is absolutely separate from the whole class of souls."

<sup>5</sup> iii. 3, 29, *ibid.*, p. 141 f.

Lord is separate, still owing to the similarity of intelligent nature they are spoken of as Brahman in the various Scriptural disquisitions.'"

The doctrine that the soul is a "part" of the Lord<sup>1</sup> is similarly explained away into that of various relationships such as son, brother, friend, with the help of the Vārāha Purāṇa, which maintained that "separateness and non-separateness ought not to be understood literally." Unhappily Madhva did not adhere to this suggestion. He grouped his souls in three orders: (1) those who were fit for attaining final bliss; (2) those continually traversing the round of birth and death; (3) sinners of the worst sort, including the Illusionists and those who rejected Vāyu as the divine Son, with demons of all kinds, fit only for eternal hell.<sup>2</sup> The doctrine of everlasting alienation from God bears a suspicious resemblance to Catholic dogma, and the triple division of souls has a curious analogy with the Pneumatics, Psychics, and Hylics of the Valentinian Gnosis.<sup>3</sup> Release from transmigration is conditioned by two elements, divine grace on the one hand and human sacrifice on the other. Its essence lies in knowledge, not simply Scriptural, nor reasoned, but direct intuition. This is conferred by grace, but it is no arbitrary or capricious gift. The preparation of a life is needed, pitched on the highest plane of devotion.<sup>4</sup> Among its elements are detachment from the world, equanimity, and self-control. In love to God (*bhakti*) as the greatest and best of all beings, the mind must be fully surrendered to him in resignation and trust. The commandments must be observed, and appointed works fulfilled, without any desire or claim for "fruit." With an approach to Goethe's "Three Reverences," Madhva demanded sympathy with inferiors, love for equals, and reverence for superiors. Special stress was laid upon attendance on a suitable Preceptor and due reflection on his teaching. False doctrines must be reprobated, and Scripture studied. God, as Being, Thought, Joy, and Spirit, is the sublime object to be kept by meditation before the soul. Then the wondrous Emancipation will flash

<sup>1</sup> ii. 3, 43, *aṅga*, p. 147.

<sup>2</sup> Bhandarkar, p. 60; Grierson, *ERE*, viii. p. 234.

<sup>3</sup> Cp. the author's *Phases of Early Christianity* (1916), p. 315.

<sup>4</sup> Cp. the relation of *donum* and *opus* in the Catholic doctrine of salvation.

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at last before the inward eye. For men the vision may only be swift as lightning; for gods it will be steady as the sun.<sup>1</sup> But when once beheld, even in momentary splendour, it is the pledge of eternal bliss.

All three teachers, Rāmānuja, Nimbārka, and Madhva, established religious orders for the maintenance and propagation of their systems. Wilson found the communities of the Rāmānujīyas still numerous in the Deccan a century ago, and the "spiritual throne" of his successors is still maintained at Mēlukoté.<sup>2</sup> The significance of the philosopher in connection with the worship of Vishnu is well illustrated by an inscription recording a donation by King Sadāçivaraya of Vijayanagara in 1556.<sup>3</sup> He gave "to the Great Sage" Rāmānuja thirty-one villages "to provide incense, lights, oblations of food, flowers, dancing, singing, music, etc., to celebrate in proper style the yearly festival of Vishnu,<sup>4</sup> as well as the annual car-festival; and every day to provide food of all kinds for the Vaishnava twice-born, and their wives, children, and aged people, at the extensive hall of the holy Rāmānuja here constructed." Was not the saint "the best of instructors in inaugurating the path of the Veda"? Had he not "broken the pride of the Illusionists"? Was not his mind "quite spotless from his bathing at holy places"? Had he not "assumed the form of an image in the sacred place, ever mindful to propitiate Rāma"?<sup>5</sup> His followers are still numerous in the Deccan, and may be occasionally found in the North. Like other devout sects, they have their personal marks, their sacred utterances; they perform daily service to Vishnu's image (often set up in the house), sometimes drinking the water in which the idol's feet have been

<sup>1</sup> Bhandarkar, p. 61.

<sup>2</sup> The Guru who occupies it is known as Parakālaswāmi, Rice, *Gazetteer of Mysore* (1897), vol. 1. p. 474. Some four hundred Brāhmins are attached to the great temple of Krishna, with numerous servants, musicians, dancing girls, and Sātānis (followers of Chaitanya), *Imperial Gazetteer*, xvii. p. 290.

<sup>3</sup> *Epigr. Ind.*, iv. (1896), p. 2 ff. On the remains of this once famous city, cp. *Imperial Gazetteer*, vol. xxiv. p. 310.

<sup>4</sup> On the holy *nakshatra* of Rāmānuja's birth (*Indian Antiquary*, xxiii. p. 121).

<sup>5</sup> On the cultus of Rāma, cp. below, p. 425. The inscription concludes with the invocation of Çiva and Vishnu.

washed, and eating food which has been presented to it. One peculiarity of practice marked the preparation of their meals. They cooked for themselves; but should a stranger see them thus engaged, or find them eating, the process was at once stopped, and the food buried in the ground.<sup>1</sup> The followers of Nimbārka are in like manner both cœnobitic and secular. Very numerous near Mathurā in the localities of Krishna story, they worship Rādhā in association with him; they are found also in Bengal, and are scattered throughout all Upper India.<sup>2</sup> The temple to Krishna at Udipi, founded by Madhva, still stands, and is visited by throngs of pious pilgrims.<sup>3</sup> No animal sacrifices were offered there; a lamb of rice-meal was substituted for flesh. The eight religious houses established by the Teacher also remain, their superintendents presiding in turn for two years over the temple. They are also charged with the collection of funds for the maintenance of their *maths*, gathered by travel among their lay brethren.<sup>4</sup> Life in the community is austere, and the obligations on ordinary believers (who are almost all Brāhmins) involve severities of fasting which "under the high pressure of modern life" is said to be gravely lowering their physique.<sup>5</sup> They have spread through North and South Kanara, and are found in Mysore; in Upper India they are unknown. Their numbers are small; Sir George Grierson does not venture to put them above 70,000.<sup>6</sup> But their earnestness impels an outside observer to describe Madhvaism as "one of the most living of Indian faiths."<sup>7</sup>

## VI

The followers of Rāmānuja were not slow to develop his principles and extend his teaching. They lectured and wrote, and commentaries, expositions, refutations of rival systems,

<sup>1</sup> Wilson, *Works*, i. p. 39. On the protest of Rāmānanda, cp. below, p. 428.

<sup>2</sup> Wilson, *ibid.*, i. p. 151.

<sup>3</sup> *Imperial Gazetteer*, vol. xxiv. p. 111.

<sup>4</sup> Wilson, *ibid.*, i. p. 142. There are three other *maths* in the interior.

<sup>5</sup> Krishnaswami Aiyar, *Sri Madhvaśārya*, 2nd ed., p. 72.

<sup>6</sup> *ERE*, viii. p. 233a.

<sup>7</sup> Krishnaswami Aiyar, p. 73.

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hymns, formed a copious literature in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries in Sanskrit and Tamil. The Mohammedan invaders might overrun the country, capture Çri-Ranga, pillage the city and temple, and massacre thousands of the inhabitants, but the heroic teachers with dauntless patience steadily pursued their labours. The author of eighteen *Rahasyas* or esoteric treatises, Pillai Lokâchârya (born in 1213), was compelled to leave the sanctuary with the sacred Image.<sup>1</sup> Vedânta Desika (born in 1268), hidden during slaughter under a mass of dead bodies, escaped to Mysore with some of his disciples, returning many years later to the sacred city, and produced in his long life over one hundred works in Sanskrit and the vernacular, on geography and the practical arts as well as religion and philosophy.<sup>2</sup>

In the scheme of theological systematisation the Supreme Bhagavat was placed at the summit of all existence as the Ultimate Reality, transcendent and eternal.<sup>3</sup> Six primary perfections were ascribed to him, knowledge, energy, strength, lordship, vigour, brilliance, the types from which an infinite number of others were derived. Mythologically he was conceived as Nârâyana, dwelling in the highest heaven, Vaikuntha, seated on the Serpent Çesha on the Lion-throne, with his consorts Çri (Lakshmî, prosperity), Bhû (the earth), and Lîlâ (sport) and the heavenly hosts around him.<sup>4</sup> The Spiritual Essence manifested itself for all the functions involved in the production, maintenance, and destruction of the world in the four *Vyûhas*,<sup>5</sup> the highest Vāsudeva possessing all the six Perfections, while the three lower only shared them two by two. Within the field of sensible existence God further deigned to

<sup>1</sup> Govindâchârya, *JRAS* (1910), p. 569.

<sup>2</sup> T. Rajagopala Chariar, *The Vaishnavite Reformers of India*<sup>2</sup> (Madras, 1909), p. 86.

<sup>3</sup> Cp. Govindâchârya's exposition of one of Pillai Lokâchârya's *Rahasyas*, the *Artha-Pañcaka*, in *JRAS* (1910), p. 576 ff. Attention was first called to this work by Prof. R. G. Bhandarkar, *Verhandlungen des Siebenten Internat. Congr.* (1888), Arische Sect., p. 101.

<sup>4</sup> This is the representation of a later writer, Çri Nivâsa (about 1600), in the *Yatindra-Dîpikâ*, ix., tr. Govindâchârya, Madras, 1912; and Otto, Tübingen, 1916.

<sup>5</sup> Cp. *ante*, p. 221.

act through his "Descents," such as Rāma and Krishna,<sup>1</sup> ever since in his Boar-form he lifted the earth out of the waters; and as the Inner Ruler he constituted the ground of the being of all souls, and by his perpetual presence watched their behaviour and supplied their needs.<sup>2</sup>

Various, indeed, were the ranks of spirits. There were the Blessed or "Ever-Free," whose wills were in untroubled harmony with God's, his helpers in all his works, who had never fallen into the control of the world and become captive in the round of birth and death. There were the "Liberated," who had been set free by divine grace, and dwelt in joy in the eternal heaven. There were the "Bound," still entangled in the body and its passions, craving in their ignorance for the pleasures of sense. There were the "Isolate," who had realised the distinction between soul and body, and pursued the path of "knowledge," but remained satisfied with the poor enjoyment of their own detachment, and did not rise to the infinitely more joyful nature of God. And there were the "Would-be Free," conscious of their bondage, longing for deliverance, some seeking escape by their own exertions, and some, recognising their impotence, abandoning themselves to God. Here was the ground of a remarkable cleavage in the conception of the divine action, which produced two rival schools among the Rāmānujīyas.

Both were agreed that the process of salvation was only effected ultimately by divine grace. But was the soul wholly passive beneath the heavenly gift, or did it co-operate with God in his emancipating work? Did Bhagavat do all, or

<sup>1</sup> Cp. *SBE*, xlviii. p. 525.

<sup>2</sup> One more form was recognised in the image. Neither Rāmānuja nor his followers could reach the height of the Tamil poets of Āivism (*ante*, p. 352). Lokāchārya pathetically explains the significance of the divine figure "having no fixed form but that which the worshipper may choose and desire to have of Him; having no fixed name but that which the worshipper may choose and desire to call Him by; all-knowing, but seeming as if not knowing; all-powerful, but seeming as if powerless; all-sufficient, but seeming as if needy; — thus seeming to exchange places, the Worshipped with the worshipper, and choosing to be ocularly manifest to him in temples and homes, in short at all places and at all times desired." *JRAS* (1910), p. 577.



could man respond and assist? Two answers were given to these questions, based on the types of moral and religious experience which have their parallels in Christian theology. In view of the divine source whence all grace streamed forth, it seemed that its entry must carry all before it. The soul, convinced of its own helplessness, had only to fling itself upon God in a single act of resignation, and in this posture of surrender await the inflow of the liberating power. This was the doctrine of *Prapatti* or "self-abandonment"; and those who adopted this attitude of resignation were known as *Prapannas*. This path was open to all, irrespective of caste or colour or creed.<sup>1</sup> All acts became thenceforward acts of loving service to God, and as such lifted the agent above the bonds of Karma. He might then address himself to God alone for the grant of all other things needful, seeking no boons from lower deities, and patiently enduring whatever suffering still remained due to him from past sins.<sup>2</sup> Or he might feel himself still in the midst of a world in flames, and, panting for immediate deliverance, ask for no gifts from God himself save the knowledge and love of him.<sup>3</sup> Of this school (*galai*), which acquired the name of Southern (*Ten-galai*), Pillai Lokāchārya and his distinguished commentator Manavala Mahā-Muni (born about 1370) were the chief leaders.

Vedānta Desika,<sup>4</sup> a younger contemporary of Lokāchārya, took the opposite view. The divine grace did not discharge man from all responsibility; it called for his effort and enlisted his co-operation. To illustrate his teaching he resorted to the drama, and in the diversity of his compositions wrote a morality play, "The Rise of the Sun of Divine Will."<sup>5</sup> The modern

<sup>1</sup> Lokāchārya, *JRAS* (1910), p. 584.

<sup>2</sup> The believer who could not act for himself might apply to a preceptor and be guided by him. "The preceptor goes through all that is necessary to effect his pupil's deliverance, as a mother takes medicine herself to cure an infant"; Bhandarkar, *Verhandlungen*, p. 103.

<sup>3</sup> The distinction between the *Ekāntin* and the *Paramaikāntin*, in the *Yatindra-Dipikā*, viii.

<sup>4</sup> Really a title, "Vedānta Teacher"; his personal name was Venkatanātha.

<sup>5</sup> *Sankalpa Sūryodaya*, cp. Rajagopala Chariar, *Vaishnavite Reformers*, p. 89.

Hindu scholar tells us that its purpose was "to exhibit dramatically the toils and troubles of the human soul before it obtains an insight into divine truth, the difficulties in its path of progress to liberation created by passions like love and hate, the saving power of divine grace at every step of this progress, and the final triumph of the soul over its enemies." Here King Discrimination and his Queen Wisdom seek to free Purusha (Soul) from the toils of Karma, and are opposed by Delusion and Anger, Love, Hate, Jealousy, Pride, Vanity, and all their tribe. In the sixth Act the king makes an aerial voyage with his charioteer Reason all over India, and surveys the places of Vaishnavite pilgrimage. The object of the aviators was to seek out a quiet place for meditation. The quest issued in the conviction that the true seat of contemplation is the heart, the home of the moral and religious life, the abode of the Supreme Self. Such a home the troubled Soul after a violent conflict finally discovers within himself, and (in the tenth Act) obtains the desired Release. This school of thought prevailed among the Northern Vaishnavas (*Vaḍa-galai*), though both have still their representatives in the South.<sup>1</sup> From the quaint animal illustrations used to point the distinction, the teaching of the Northern School was designated the *Markaṭa-kiṣora-nyāya* ("monkey-young-method"). As the monkey cub must hold fast to its mother round the waist for conveyance on her hip from place to place, so must the soul cling actively to God, and saving grace then only reaches its full effect when it is supplemented by human endeavour. The Southern School, on the other hand, piously ascribed all to God, and was nicknamed the *Marjāra-kiṣora-nyāya* ("cat-young-method"). The cat takes hold of her offspring without effort on its part, and carries it in her teeth to a place of safety.<sup>2</sup> God does not wait

<sup>1</sup> On the differences between the two schools, see A. Govindāchārya, *JRAS* (1910), p. 1103 ff. In Mysore, for example, Rice gave the Vadagalais as 12,914 against 7161 Tengalais, *Gazetteer of Mysore* (1897), vol. i. p. 237. Buchanan, *Journey through Mysore* (1807), vol. ii. p. 73, was told at Mēlikote that the schism arose in the time of Vedānta Āchārya, but it was supposed that he was born thirty years only after Rāmānuja's death. For some modern particulars cp. Bhattacharya, *Hindu Castes and Sects* (Calcutta, 1896), p. 438 f.

<sup>2</sup> Cp. Sir G. A. Grierson, *JRAS* (1908), p. 337.

for man's exertion, but anticipates his need, takes full possession of him, and lands him irresistibly on the further shore of the great ocean of existence. The divine grace is sovereignly free and without price.

The path of Deliverance thus conducted the worshipper through many phases of experience. There were ritual duties to be fulfilled in obedience to the Divine Will, not to secure bliss in some sensuous heaven, but out of the pure joy of self-forgetting service. The daily sacrifices and charities, the reading of holy books, bathing at sacred places, austerities, meditations, prayers, all withdrew the mind from worldly objects and trained it in the discipline of self-control. Above this *karma-yoga* rose the severer meditations which aimed at knowledge, whether obtained by study or realised in experience, and imaged in radiant forms of beauty (*jñāna-yoga*). In such contemplations the soul tended to find its own self-satisfaction; detached from the world, and indifferent to others, it dwelt apart, seeking no issue from its isolation. But the vision of the divine loveliness might enkindle wonder and admiration, and these would melt into loving faith. In this sublime affection lay the secret of further progress. 'Thought blends with feeling, mind and heart are one. In the rapture of advance effort is merged in longing, and self-assertion dies into self-surrender. That is one way to the great Release. But for the help of those who cannot tread its ascension by themselves, the aid of a Teacher is provided. He may come in the divine form of an actual Descent, such as Rāma or Krishna, or in partial manifestation in sage or saint. This is God's own device for the rescue of the impotent "in the manner of the mother feeling love for her child." The Teacher "sees his children as weak and helpless, incapable of shifting for themselves. He stretches his hand down to them on the one side to lift them up, and he stretches his hand up on the other side to present them to God as fit objects for his mercy and compassion."<sup>1</sup> Such teachers themselves became objects of pious worship. At Krishnāpura (south-east of Tinnevely) the king Śādaçivarāya about 1568 made a grant of villages to Saint Venkata-nātha (Vedānta Desika). The dedicatory inscription,

<sup>1</sup> Lokāchārya, *JRAS* (1910), p. 587.

after the common reference to Vishnu's Boar-Descent, provided for the maintenance of the temple worship, both daily and on festivals, with incense and lights, sacred food and flowers, music, dancing and song, and umbrellas.<sup>1</sup> Spiritual religion could not dispense with ceremonial expression.

Meanwhile the practice of *bhakti* had its philosophical aspects, and these were gathered up in aphorisms or *sūtras* of scholastic type. Placed under the sanction of names long famous, like Çandilya or Nārada, they aimed on the one hand at systematising the culture of emotional devotion, and on the other at providing it with both psychological and scriptural justification. The *Sūtras* of Çandilya, interpreted by Swāpneçvara,<sup>2</sup> occupy a middle position between the philosophies of Çankara and Rāmānuja. With the former Swāpneçvara declares at the outset the ultimate identity of the soul and Brahman. With the latter he vindicates the reality of the world; to allow its falseness would involve the unreality of its cause.<sup>3</sup> Brahman and Prakriti are both causes, and Māyā is not "illusion" but power.<sup>4</sup> The appearance of individuality in the successions of birth and death is due to the Internal Organ (*antaḥ-karana*) constituted out of the Three Strands by the *Upādhis* or determining conditions of the particular lot.<sup>5</sup> The great Release can only be attained by their removal, and the instrument for this end is *bhakti*, Devotion or adoring Love.<sup>6</sup> Other modes, indeed, are offered to the believer by the teachers of Knowledge or Concentration (*yogu*). But the supremacy of Devotion does not rest on the ground of experience or the methods of inference and proof; it has behind it the authority of Revelation and ancient Tradition.<sup>7</sup>

What, then, is *bhakti*? It is no judgment of the intellect,

<sup>1</sup> *Epigraphia Indica*, ix. p. 328 ff.

<sup>2</sup> A native of Bengal. Cp the translation by Prof. Cowell, Calcutta, 1878, who places the *Sūtras* in the thirteenth century, or possibly a little earlier, p. v. Another translation by Manmathanath Paul appeared at Allahabad, 1911.

<sup>3</sup> § 86, Cowell, p. 89.

<sup>4</sup> §§ 37-42.

<sup>5</sup> Cowell oddly renders by "disguiser."

<sup>6</sup> § 3.

<sup>7</sup> Pre-eminently the Upanishads, the Bhagavad Gītā, and the Vishnu Purāṇa. As an indication of date it may be noted that the author does not quote the Bhāgavata Purāṇa (see below, p. 421).

but an emotion of affection, the opposite of hate (§ 6). Distinct from a mere act of remembrance, an occasional meditation or song of praise; more than belief, which, though involved in it, is subsidiary to it; transcending knowledge which may exist even in opponents—it is directed permanently to God, in steadfast union of thought and feeling.<sup>1</sup> No effort of will, indeed, can produce it. In that respect it resembles knowledge, which depends on evidence and cannot be generated or altered by volition; but it may rise out of lower forms of secondary devotion such as are addressed to the familiar Descents (§ 55 ff.), and the aptitude for it is in part the result of good deeds in former births (§ 7). Knowledge, indeed, may awaken it, and the analogy of a young girl's affection kindled by knowledge of a man's beauty is thought not unworthy of support for the plea that the apprehension of the Supreme Soul as all-merciful, almighty, and all-lovely, will lead to the highest form of devotion. And just as the path of Knowledge demands the constant practice of Concentration, so is Yoga needful also for Bhakti. The mind must be withdrawn from earthly cares. Habitual duty must be performed without thought of future gain. All action must be surrendered to the Lord, but his supreme compassion in revealing himself (for example, in Krishna) will draw forth from the *bhakta* many signs of loving adoration, the celebration of his praise, and lowly resignation to his will. And all this was open to all castes. True, the study of the Vedas was limited to the three ranks of the Twice-born; but even the Chandālas were permitted to hear the Mahābhārata and learn the lessons of the Gītā, and from the Legends and the Purāṇas women as well as men might draw the teaching of Bhakti, like the great common truths of universal morality (§ 98).

Later writers scrutinised the phases of religious emotion with pseudo-scientific exactitude. Its culture was organised with the most minute subdivision. Nine varieties of devotional practice were separately enumerated from simple acts of praise, "recollection," homage, up to the ministration of a servant, the behaviour of a friend, the complete dedication of the soul to God.<sup>2</sup> Each of these was susceptible of three degrees of intensity, and could

<sup>1</sup> The *bhakta* is *tat-saṁsthā*, "abiding in That," i.e. Brahman, § 3.

<sup>2</sup> Nārada's *Sūtras*, tr. Nandlal Sinha, Allahabad, 1911, § 82.

be realised under any one of the Three Strands which lay at the base of human nature, Goodness, Passion, and Ignorance, as white, red, or black. The believer might thus advance through eighty-one modes to Pure Bhakti which issued in ardent love (*preman*) and the immediate perception or intuition (*sākshāt-kāra*) of the Lord.<sup>1</sup> Elaborate ethical disciplines were devised to produce indifference to the world and the excitement of religious feeling by association with holy men. Ill-regulated thoughts must be subdued. No evil must be spoken of the Vaishnavas; nor must Śiva and Vishnu be regarded as different deities. The religious Preceptor must not be treated as an ordinary mortal; the rules of morality must be maintained; no sin must be committed in reliance on the power of the Name to save the sinner.<sup>2</sup> With the believer's progress to the higher stages of knowledge and purity, love grows in warmth as it contemplates either the majesty or the sweetness, the lordliness or the beauty, of the Most High; till the whole being is completely identified with the Divine will, and in the consummation of affection Karma is exhausted and Release is won.

Many illustrations of these themes are to be found in the famous *Bhāgavata Purāna*, which became the leading religious authority for the Vaishnavas. Its extent—it contains some 18,000 verses in twelve books,—its range of subjects, and its special glorification of Krishna, all confer on it a high importance.<sup>3</sup> Out of its wealth of piety Vishnu Purī, a devout Bengali Sannyāsin of Tirhut (north of the Ganges), compiled a "Necklace of Devotional Gems," to which he added a commentary. A pretty tale ascribed its production to a message from the great Vaishnavite teacher Chaitanya (1485–1533),

<sup>1</sup> Nārada's *Sūtras*, p. xi.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, § 34 ff., p. ix.

<sup>3</sup> The date assigned to it in the thirteenth century by the earlier Sanskritists, Colebrooke, Burnouf, and Wilson, and adopted by Prof. Macdonell (*Sanskrit Literature*, p. 302), has been recently challenged by Winternitz (*Gesch. der Ind. Literatur*, i. p. 465) and Mr Pargiter (*ERE*, x. p. 455, "not before the eighth century"). I find it difficult to believe that it was in existence in the age of Rāmānuja. The first translation into Bengali was not made till 1473–1480, D. C. Sen, *History of Bengali Language and Literature* (Calcutta, 1911), p. 222.

whose acquaintance Vishnu Purī had made at Benares. Chaitanya was at Purī on the Orissa coast, and a pilgrim from Benares was about to return to his own leader. To the wonder and distress of his ascetic disciples Chaitanya asked him to tell Vishnu Purī to send him a necklace of gems. What was the meaning of this demand for jewels from a man who had renounced the world? After long time the pilgrim reappeared from Benares with a manuscript in his hand. It was the *Bhakti-Ratnāvali*, or "Necklace of Devotional Gems."<sup>1</sup>

Pious tradition attributed the composition of the Purāna to the imaginary author of the Veda and the Mahābhārata, Vyāsa, who thus deigned to provide the spiritual knowledge needful to the world, and unsupplied in the Great Epic. It builds largely upon the earlier Vishnu Purāna, and owed much of its popularity to the enhanced account of Krishna in the tenth book.<sup>2</sup> Boldly discarding the method of "Works"—the worldlings bound by the chain of Vedic ritualism are like blind men led by the blind,<sup>3</sup>—and disparaging the philosophical discussions of the Upanishads, it affirms that devotion (*bhakti-yoga*) which leads to union with Vāsudeva Krishna is the only way to knowledge and detachment from the world.<sup>4</sup> Even the despised Chandāla, an eater of dogs' meat, who has dedicated his thoughts, his words, his actions, his means and life to the Lord, is worthier than the Brāhman with a round dozen of qualifications like noble lineage, rigid mortification, Scripture knowledge, who will not worship Vishnu.<sup>5</sup> "The man who resorts to anyone else for refuge wishes to cross the ocean by taking hold of the tail of a dog."<sup>6</sup> "The gods dwell in him who has unceasing devotion to the Blessed Lord."<sup>7</sup> And this ardent affection was reciprocated by the Deity: "I do not love my own soul, or the beloved Lakshmi, so much as those devoted to me, to whom I am salvation."<sup>8</sup> So precious

<sup>1</sup> See the translation by an anonymous "Professor of Sanskrit," Allahabad, 1912, p. iii.

<sup>2</sup> Prof. D. C. Sen gives a list of forty translations into Bengali, mostly limited to that book, *op. cit.*, p. 224 f.

<sup>3</sup> *Bhag. Pur.*, vii. 5, 30–31.

<sup>4</sup> iv. 29, 37.

<sup>5</sup> vii. 9, 10.

<sup>6</sup> vi. 9, 21.

<sup>7</sup> v. 18, 12.

<sup>8</sup> ix. 4, 63; cp. xii. 14, 15.



was this relation that some of the faithful preferred to retain their own individuality and enjoy the perpetual service of God's feet in his own heaven, rather than pass by absorption into him.<sup>1</sup>

The Vishnu Purāna had already declared that sin which brought on men the pain of hell was at once abolished by repetition of the sacred Name. Swāpneçvara was at great pains to justify the Çāndilyan aphorism "that even a little act in the case of the faithful worshipper," such as the recollection or recital of the holy Name, "destroys great sins" (76) if all other modes of expiation are abandoned and the sinner casts himself wholly upon God. The Purāna emphasises the glory of Krishna which sheds blessings upon all, so that to sing his praise and worship him instantaneously removes all sins.<sup>2</sup> But beside Krishna stands another figure. "Whether Sura or Asura (deva or demon), man or ape, let each one worship Rāma, who is Hari in human form."<sup>3</sup> In the demand for human revealers in whom God might share the life of man, Rāma and Krishna are again and again presented as the two chief objects of the Bhakti-cult, which in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries gained new and impassioned expression in Northern India.<sup>4</sup> How had Rāma acquired so eminent a position that he could ultimately become the sole Deity for ninety millions of people?

## VII

Rāma was the eldest son of King Daçaratha, sovereign of Kosala, whose capital Ayodhyā (the modern Oude) was still one of the largest cities of India in the reign of Akbar in the sixteenth century. The story of his marriage with the lovely princess Sītā, the daughter of the king of the Videhas, Janaka of Mithilā, of his banishment from his father's court through an intrigue of the second of the old king's three queens, of Sītā's devoted companionship amid the hardships of the forest life, of her abduction by the demon Rāvana, of the defeat of her captor and his wicked horde with the help of Hanumat the

<sup>1</sup> iii. 25, 32 ff.

<sup>2</sup> ii. 4, 15.

<sup>3</sup> v. 19, 8.

<sup>4</sup> On the *Bhakti-Māhāt* of Nābhā-dāsa (about 1600) see the important articles of Sir G. A. Grierson in the *JRAS*, 1909 and 1910.

monkey-chief and his faithful host of monkeys and bears, of the rescue of Sītā and the restoration of the reunited pair to sovereignty and earthly happiness—these are the themes of Vālmiki's poem, the *Rāmāyana*.

Hardly a quarter of the Great Epic in length,<sup>1</sup> it is distinguished by greater unity of theme and design. It has of course its numerous irrelevancies, its myths and legends, its moral and religious discourses, after the manner of the *Mahābhārata*. Like the story of the Five Brothers, it has undergone expansion and interpolation by later poets. Not only are the first and last of its seven books universally recognised as additions in the Vaishnava interest, but other passages in the main narrative in ii.-vi. are palpable insertions, betrayed by incongruities of style and detail. The literary process through which the poem assumed its present form does not concern us. It is generally accepted as the forerunner of the later art-poetry, emerging out of an earlier and simpler style of ballad narrative. So freely might it be handled, as travelling reciters found different episodes awaken the interest of different audiences, that it exists at the present time in three separate recensions, belonging to Bengal, Bombay, and West India. In each of these texts about a third of the verses do not appear in the other two.<sup>2</sup> Whatever was its original scale, there seems no reason to question its composition by a poet named Vālmiki. From what sources he drew his tale can no longer be determined. Āyodhyā lay 350 miles south-east of Hastināpura, the capital of the Kurus;<sup>3</sup> the Aryan immigration had advanced much further along the Ganges valley; some of the antique traits of the Great Epic (such as the marriage of Draupadī to the Five Brothers) have no parallel in the *Rāmāyana*, which nowhere alludes to the incidents of the great strife. The poem may therefore have sprung out of a later historical situation. But

<sup>1</sup> It comprises about 24,000 verses, compared with 100,000 in the *Mahābhārata*. For what follows, cp. Winternitz, *Gesch. der Ind. Lit.*, i. p. 404 ff., and Macdonell, "Rāmāyana," in Hastings' *ERE*, x. p. 574.

<sup>2</sup> Winternitz conjectures that only about 6000 verses are original, *op. cit.*, p. 428.

<sup>3</sup> The modern city known as Ajudhiā stands on the right bank of the river Gogra, in the Fyzābād district of the United Provinces. Cp. *Imp. Gaz.* v. p. 175.

on the other hand there is little doubt that it was completed before the last additions were made to the *Mahābhārata*, whose poets seem acquainted with some of its latest details. Its composition, therefore, probably falls within the limits of the larger work. On metrical grounds Oldenberg places it after the poetry of the early Pāli literature of Buddhism, and Professors Winternitz and Macdonell appear practically agreed in assigning it to the centuries between 350 B.C. and A.D. 200.

The theological significance of the poem lies in the presentation of Rāma as an incarnation of Vishṇu. He is at first a local prince, the hero of his own people. In the warfare with Rāvana he becomes an impersonation of Indian humanity against the demonic powers. These are only finally defeated when Indra lends Rāma his chariot, armour, and weapons, and, after fighting unceasingly for seven days and nights, Rāma discharges at his adversary an arrow made by Brahmā out of wind and fire, sun and sky. The demon falls to the ground and expires; his stricken spouse Mandodarī recognises the tremendous truth; and the Devas chant the praises of Rāma who had thus saved them from destruction. Rāma is no other than the Great Yogin, the Supreme Soul, the Eternal, without beginning, middle, or end, the Most High, whose conch, discus, and club identify him with Vishnu.<sup>1</sup> Here the banished prince is presented in a yet higher light. He is one of the "Descents" of the Preserver of the universe.

The story is told in the first book. The king's three queens had borne him no son, and solemn rites were celebrated to secure one. The ancient gods who had received their offerings then went to Brahmā with Indra at their head, and complained of their oppression by the demon Rāvana. Brahmā in turn led them to Vishnu, who promised himself to come to their aid by dividing himself into four parts and taking birth as the four sons of Daśaratha.<sup>2</sup> The divine essence is conveyed in a mysterious drink,<sup>3</sup> so that Rāma, born of the first Queen with the wondrous marks of Vishnu, possesses half of it; Bharata, son of the second Queen, a quarter; while the fourth portion is

<sup>1</sup> vi. 111, 112 f. (ed. Bombay, 1888).

<sup>2</sup> i. 15.

<sup>3</sup> For conception through a potion or drug, cp. Hartland, *Legend of Perseus* (1894), i. p. 83.

divided to produce the two sons of the third.<sup>1</sup> But when the Devas praise the conqueror of Rāvana as Vishnu, it is the whole Godhead whom they laud. And when at the close of the seventh book, his reign on earth being ended, he ascends to heaven in his Vishnu-form, he is welcomed by the Grandsire Brahmā and the heavenly powers as "the Refuge of the world, surpassing thought, the Great Being who decays not, nor grows old."<sup>2</sup>

The poets of the Mahābhārata know Rāma in this exalted character.<sup>3</sup> The Vishnu Purāna refers (iv. 4) to the fourfold appearance of Vishnu in Rāma and his brothers; and about the same time the epic poet Kalidāsa tells once again the story of Vishnu's promise to be born as a son of Daśaratha for the destruction of the demon Rāvana.<sup>4</sup> But no cultus seems to have then gathered round his name. For many centuries the figure of Rāma stood out in Epic grandeur before Indian imagination as the loyal son, obedient to the promise extorted from his aged father by the ambition of an unscrupulous and designing queen; as the model of morality, the conqueror of the demons, and the righteous ruler of his realm—but he did not, like Krishna, draw believers to his feet. Devotion to him is first illustrated in the traditions of Rāmānuja in the twelfth century.<sup>5</sup> The devout Madhva in the thirteenth century sent two of his disciples all the way from Udipi up to Purī in Orissa to fetch what were supposed to be the original images of Rāma and Sītā.<sup>6</sup> How old they were, how they were placed in the temple of Jagannātha, or on what grounds they were entrusted to Madhva's messengers, we are not told. But the worship of Rāma was slowly establishing itself,<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup> i. 18.

<sup>2</sup> vii. 110, 10 f.

<sup>3</sup> Hopkins, *Epic Mythology*, p. 212, quoting *Mbh.*, iii. 151, 7.

<sup>4</sup> *Raghuvamśa*, x., quoted by Macdonell, "Rāmāism," in Hastings' *ERE*, x. p. 567.

<sup>5</sup> "In Rāma the Supreme Being becomes manifest," *SBE*, xlviii. p. 525. The philosopher's name shows that Rāma was at last becoming more prominent. The Rāmāyana was translated into Tamil in the twelfth century, and was thus known in Southern India. In 1197 a Buddhist prince named Bāmadeva rebuilt a shrine which had been burnt as burnt at Arigom, fifteen miles S.W. of Ṣrinagar, in Kashmir. *Epigr. Ind.*, ix. p. 300.

<sup>6</sup> *Op. ante*, p. 408.

<sup>7</sup> *Cp.* the invocation of Rāma with the moon in an inscription of 1225 in a temple on an island in the Nerbudda river, Central Provinces, *Epigr. Ind.*, ix. p. 113.

and before the end of the thirteenth century a festival of his birth was described by Hemadri.<sup>1</sup> The first translation of the Rāmāyana into Bengali was made by Krittivāsa (born in 1346), who began his studies in Sanskrit, grammar, and poetry in a school on the banks of the river Padmā in his eleventh year.<sup>2</sup> In the *Adhyātma-Rāmāyana* before the sixteenth century the story is re-told with the utmost elevation of Rāma's divine character. When the Devas uttered their praises on the death of Rāvana, they beheld with astonishment a small flame issue from his mouth and enter Rāma's foot. It was the demon's soul, saved from his sins and united with God, because, as Nārada explains, he had listened piously to the tale of Rāma's wondrous works, and though outwardly at enmity had ever worshipped him in his heart and remembered his name.<sup>3</sup> So Rāma could be incorporated into the philosophy of the Vedānta; his nature was Knowledge; the medieval formula *Sachchidānanda*, "Being, Intelligence, and Bliss," identified him with the Infinite and Absolute.<sup>4</sup> Sītā, type of the faithful wife, steadfast and pure under every trial, becomes in her turn the incarnation of Vishnu's consort Lakshmi, and the moving picture of the princely pair enduring unmerited hardship with patience and courage now exhibits the divine compassion with which Deity takes his share in the suffering and sorrow of the world. Read in this light, it is hardly surprising that the Rāmāyana should be credited with a profounder influence on the life of a people than any other work of secular origin in the whole literature of the world.<sup>5</sup>

The spread of Rāma-worship was largely promoted by a

<sup>1</sup> Macdonell, *ERE*, x. p. 567. In 1387 Virūpāksha, son of Harihara II., weighed himself against gold in the presence of the god Rāmanātha at Rāmeṣvaram (Tanjore district), *Epigr. Ind.*, viii. p. 305.

<sup>2</sup> Sen, *Bengali Lang. and Lit.*, p. 170, who states that this translation is still the most popular book in Bengal, where nearly 100,000 copies are sold annually. "It is, in fact, the Bible of the people of the Gangetic valley." On the Rāmāyana of Tulsī Dāsa, see Lect. VIII., p. 507 ff.

<sup>3</sup> J. Talboys Wheeler, *History of India*, vol. ii. (1869), p. 375. Cp. the transl. by Baij Nath, Allahabad, 1913, xi. 78 ff., p. 167.

<sup>4</sup> Inscription at Vijayanagara, 1515, where Vishnu is invoked as Boar and Rāma, *Epigr. Ind.*, vi. pp. 109, 127.

<sup>5</sup> Macdonell, *ERE*, x. p. 574; similarly, Winternitz, *op. cit.*, i. p. 405.

follower of Rāmānuja's teaching, who took the name of Rāmānanda. Born (according to one tradition<sup>1</sup>) in 1299 at Prayāga (Allahabad) in a Brāhman family, he showed such aptitude for learning that he was sent at twelve years old to the great seat of philosophical study at Benares. There he attached himself first of all to the Advaita school of Çankara, but eventually became a disciple of the "Qualified Advaita" under the instructions of Rāghavānanda, who initiated him into the fellowship of the Çrī Vaiṣṇavas. In due time he went on pilgrimage through India, and his experience among men of different castes may have led to the wider outlook which prompted his subsequent movement. The discipline of Rāmānuja confined the function of teaching to Brāhmaṇas, and further imposed on the followers of his rule the duty of cooking and eating their food in private, so as to avoid all danger of caste-pollution. Tradition told that after Rāmānanda's return to Benares the members of the religious house objected that in the vicissitudes of travel this practice must have been violated, and they required him to purify himself by penance. Refusing to submit to this demand, Rāmānanda quitted the order, and began to gather followers of his own.

All worshippers of Viṣṇu-Rāma, he proclaimed, of whatever occupation or tribe, animated by true devotion, might share their meals and eat together. It was a bold departure. He threw down the walls of caste-division, and called his followers the *avadhūtas* or "emancipated," who had rid themselves of the bands of ancient prejudice. This admission of degraded classes to full religious equality involved another step. Rāmānuja, like

<sup>1</sup> Cp. Bhandarkar, *Vaiṣṇavism*, p. 66; Grierson, *ERE*, x. p. 569. His birth-name was Rāmadattā, afterwards changed to Rāmānanda by his preceptor. Ānanda is a very frequent element in the names of *bhaktas*, a significant indication of their inward joy. Macauliffe, *The Sikh Religion*, vi. p. 100, places his birth at Maikot in South India (Mysore), where Rāmānuja had induced the Brāhmaṇas to renounce Çiva-worship for Viṣṇu, and supposes him to have flourished in the end of the fourteenth and first half of the fifteenth century. In the *JRAS* (1900, April), p. 187 ff., Dr Farquhar also brings him from the South, but discards the tradition of his connection with Rāmānuja's sect, and supposes him to have belonged to a school of Rāma worshippers, using the *Ādhyātma Rāmāyaṇa*, which he took with him to the North about 1430.

Çankara, had taught in Sanskrit, and only the Twice-born, to whom the study of the Veda was permitted, could attain Deliverance in this life. Rāmānanda and his little band of disciples freely preached in the vernacular, and opened the way to men and women of every race. "Let no man," said he, "ask a man's caste or sect. Whoever adores God, he is God's own." This broad sympathy has been ascribed to Christian influence. But it had been the characteristic of the Buddhist and the Jain for eighteen hundred years, though not expressed in that religious form, and in the discussions in which Rāmānanda engaged with them this view was common to them both. He left nothing in writing, but hymns attributed to him are still sung among the peasants.<sup>1</sup> Accompanied by a few followers, he resumed his travels through North India. The lists of his apostolate (like those in the Gospels) vary in later authors.<sup>2</sup> But what is important is not their number but the variety of castes which they included. One was a barber, another a Brāhman, a third a despised leather-worker, a fourth a Rajput, a fifth a woman. Kabir, weaver and poet, if he may be included,<sup>3</sup> was a Çūdra brought up by a Mohanmedan. Using the dialects of Hindī, they taught and sang from village to village, and awakened an enthusiasm destined to spread through all North and Central India. Tradition prolonged Rāmānanda's life through the fourteenth century to 1410. Two hundred years were yet to pass before the divinity of Rāma was to receive exalted epical expression in the Rāmāyana of Tulasī Dāsa.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Grierson, *Modern Vernacular of Hindustan* (Calcutta, 1889), p. 7.

<sup>2</sup> Grierson, *JRAS* (1907), p. 319, who thinks that Rāmānanda "drank afresh at the well of Christian influence," gives twelve; Bhandarkar, thirteen. Grierson significantly says, "Note the number."

<sup>3</sup> Cp. below, Lect. VIII.

<sup>4</sup> Cp. below, Lect. VIII. Sir G. A. Grierson estimates the present number of the sect between 1,500,000 and 2,000,000. All Rāmānandīs are said to place on their foreheads the distinguishing Vishnu mark, three upright lines, the centre one red, the other two white; J. C. Oman, *Mystics, Ascetics, and Saints of India* (1905), p. 188. Mr Oman further states that they have large and wealthy monasteries in Upper India, and names four subjects or orders, all professing celibacy, but the Bairāgis are said often to violate this rule. Cp. Wilson, *Religious Sects*, i. p. 185; J. N. Bhattacharya, *Hindu Castes and Sects* (Calcutta, 1896), p. 444 f.



## VIII

Meanwhile the cultus of Krishna was steadily acquiring a higher religious meaning. There were, indeed, elements in the story of his youth which might seem difficult to harmonise with his divine character. The tale of his sports with the wives of the cowherds in the woods of Vrindāvana was only endurable when it was read (as the Vishnu Purāna hinted) in the light of the spirit.<sup>1</sup> As he began to sing in the moonlight when the air was perfumed with the fragrance of the water-lily in whose buds the clustering bees were murmuring, the *Gopīs* one after another came forth. One called out his name, then shrank abashed. Another, prompted by love, pressed close to his side. A third dared not venture, but contented herself with meditating on Krishna with closed eyes and entire devotion; all acts of merit were then effaced by rapture, and all sin was expiated by sorrow at not beholding him; while others again, reflecting on the Most High Brahman as the cause of the world, obtained final Deliverance. So through the lovely autumn nights they danced and frolicked, and the illimitable Being, assuming the character of a youth, pervaded the herdsmen's wives with his own essence, all diffusive like the wind; and the way was opened for the interpretation of sexual love upon the higher plane of the relation of the soul to God. In the centuries which followed, as the ethical strength of Buddhism seemed stricken with decay, Bengal became the seat of a strange movement issuing from the cults based on the conception of *Śakti*, the divine Energy, personified as the wife of Śiva.<sup>2</sup> The devotees of the "Left-hand" ritual of sensuous indulgence threatened to overthrow the moral fabric of society.<sup>3</sup> Out of a degraded Buddhism of this type came a perverted attempt to reach Emancipation from continuous birth and death through the love and worship of young and beautiful women. "In sexual love," says Prof. Sen, "there is surely a higher side which points to love Divine. The Sahajīā-cult was based upon this idea." Its first exponent was Kānu Bhatta, a Buddhist scholar of the latter part of the tenth century, who used the

<sup>1</sup> *Vishnu Purāna*, V. xiii.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. ante*, p. 278.

<sup>3</sup> *The Vāmācārīna*. *Op. Sen, Bengali Lang. and Lit.*, p. 38.

vernacular Bengali for his love-songs.<sup>1</sup> The doctrine passed into Vaishnava literature, and at the hands of Chandī Dās in the fourteenth century received a far higher spiritual tone. He demanded of the woman perfect purity, while she must sacrifice herself entirely to love. The lover, on his part, must be able to make a frog dance in the mouth of a snake, to bind an elephant with a cobweb, or suspend the highest peak of Mount Sumēru by a thread. Under these austere conditions of self-restraint—which only one in a million (Chandī Dās admitted) could fulfil—he addressed his daily prayers to a washerwoman named Rāmī.<sup>2</sup> But Rāmī was not the only theme of his love-songs, of which before 1403 he had already composed no fewer than 996.<sup>3</sup> A new figure had been brought into the Krishna story some centuries before. Unknown among the 16,000 wives of the young god, with Rukhminī and her seven companions at their head,<sup>4</sup> the princess Rādhā, wife of Āyān Ghosha, falls in love with the beautiful shepherd youth. This was the theme of the famous lyrical drama by the poet Jayadeva in the twelfth century, entitled the *Gītāgovinda* or “the Cowherd in Song.”<sup>5</sup> Rādhā is here, indeed, no princess, but one of the cowherdesses in the woods of Vrindāvana. To the companion of her solitude as she waits for Krishna she sobs out her hopes and fears. Here are raptures and ecstasies, languors and despairs, the anguish of separation and estrangement, the joy of restoration. She is impatient under Krishna’s neglect; he is penitent for his fall. The whole is steeped in the soft airs of the forest with its moonlit glades and solemn shadows. Adorned with every grace of

<sup>1</sup> His work has been recently recovered from Nepal, Sen, p. 38.

<sup>2</sup> The results of such teaching were, of course, often disastrous. Chaitanya and his followers (see below) condemned it unsparingly. But for a season it had a considerable influence, and Sen reckons about thirty authors in old Bengali literature who advocated the Sahajū principles. *Op. cit.*, p. 46.

<sup>3</sup> Sen, p. 119.

<sup>4</sup> *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*, IV. xv.

<sup>5</sup> Jayadeva was one of the five jewels of the court of King Lakshmana Sena, one of the last centres of ancient Sanskrit culture. The Bengal village of his birth, Kensuli, still holds an annual fair in his honour in January, which is said to be attended by 50,000 persons.