

CHAPTER X.

RIGHT KNOWLEDGE OF DIVINE POWERS.

THE mystery of the being of the Deity was declared in the seventh chapter. From the standpoint of pure reality the Deity is absolute and attributeless. But in consequence of the unsearchable power of the Deity there is an apparent relation between the Absolute Deity and conditions and attributes.

The declaration of the Blessed Lord concerning the Divine power, commenced in the seventh chapter, is interrupted in the eighth and resumed in the ninth, and is continued in this chapter.

The power of the Deity comprehends and yet transcends the universe; for the universe is nothing but the power of the Deity, but the Deity is not the universe. If the Deity be the same as the universe, then it is a mere multiplication of words without meaning to speak of universe and Deity. If the universe were different from the Deity, and both real, there would be a higher reality embracing the Deity and the universe.

Pantheism as well as Deism must be rejected. "Moveless and profound, neither light nor darkness, without name and manifestation, a mysterious reality," the Deity is in Himself. The universe is a portion of the Divine power; yet there is another portion, by reason of which the Deity is not the universe. The unsearchable power of the Deity is declared in the present chapter for the devout meditation of the worshipper.

THE BLESSED LORD *spoke*:

1. Even again, O thou of mighty arms, listen to my supreme¹ words, which to thee, rejoicing,² I am going to declare, desiring thy welfare.

¹ "Supreme," because relating to the supreme truth.

² "Rejoicing;" the reason for my speaking is the great joy with which thou art receiving my words.

The reason for the repetition of the subject by the Blessed Lord himself is given next

2. My lordly power¹ the godly synod does not know,
Job xxxvi 22, 26. nor even the great sages,² because I am the
 source³ of gods and great sages.

3. Whoever knows Me, the unborn,⁴ beginningless,
Rom. viii 14-21 supreme lord of the worlds, he among men,
 undeluded, becomes liberated from all sins.⁵

4. Subtle perception,⁶ spiritual knowledge,⁷ right
 judgment, forgiveness, truth, external and internal self-
 mastery, pleasure, pain, prosperity and adversity, fear
 and serenity,

5. Inoffensiveness, even-mindedness, satisfaction, re-
Rom ix 22, 23, 1 Cor xii. 6-11 straint of body and mind, almsgiving, fame
 for righteousness, and ill-fame for unright-
 eousness, become from Me the various⁸ conditions of
 creatures.

Not only does God possess all that is as His nature, but He is
 also the knower of all, the ruler of all, and the pervasive influence.

6. The great sages seven, and the ancient Manus
Acts xvii. 28. four, of whom this world is the offspring,
 are pervaded by my power and born of
 my mind.

¹ "Lordly power" might also mean "origin"

² "Great sages," that is, the seven primeval sages, sons of Brahmā the creator.

³ "Source;" that is, causing power, and the material forms, the gods, etc. The Supreme God being the cause of the gods is not known to them.

⁴ "Unborn," therefore beginningless.

⁵ "All sins," that is, whether knowingly or unknowingly committed.

⁶ "Subtle perception" is the perception of things not comprehended by the ordinary mind

⁷ "Spiritual knowledge" applies to the nature of that which is beyond the reach of internal and external senses

⁸ "Various," that is, different according to the difference in the character of individuals.

The seven sages are the primeval teachers of our race, and whatever spiritual knowledge exists in the world has been and is preserved by the spiritual descendants of these seven, the archetype of teachers, as the ancient Manus, or primeval kings, are the archetype of kings.

According to one authority "four" does not refer to the number of Manus, but to the four sons of Brahmā, — Sanaka, Sanandana, Sadānanda, and Sanatkumāra. These sons of Brahmā, in a previous epoch of the world's history, worked for final liberation by identification with the Deity, but did not attain to the supreme goal, and so are, in this epoch, the preservers of the path to Nirvāna.

The powers of these super-human personages exist in consequence of the omnipotence and omniscience of the Deity, as they have no independent power. "Born of my mind" signifies that the unsearchable Deity, as the creator Brahmā, thought, and the sages and Manus started into being. In the subsequent work of creation the agency fell to these elder-born sons of God.

The fruit of realizing these powers of the Deity is next given.

7. Whoever knows perfectly these manifestations,¹ and the power to cause them, becomes united to unwavering right perception; of this there is no doubt.

The power of the Deity to modify the Divine power into these manifestations is here emphasized. It must not be thought that the Deity is forced by some extraneous powers to produce these, or any other manifestations; it is also a *power* to exercise these powers; the Deity need not create unless He chooses to do so.

The nature of unwavering right perception is described.

8. I am the source² of all; owing to Me all things work; knowing this,³ the wise, full of love,⁴ worship Me.

Col. i 16, III. 17

¹ "Manifestations," that is, various modifications of Divine power, such as the sages and Manus just mentioned.

² "Source," is the Maker.

³ "Knowing this." The conviction of the emptiness of the world without the Deity fits a man to be a real worshipper.

⁴ "Full of love." God is the only joy in existence, but through the darkness which envelops our nature things seem attractive which are not God, and therefore not joy. The worship of God is not an obligation, but a privilege and delight.

"Owing to Me all things work" teaches that the continuance or destruction of creatures depends entirely on the Deity, for although it would appear that these processes require some co-operation on their part, in reality it is not so.

When the worshippers have this above-mentioned conviction, what are they to do?

9. With heart and life gone into Me,¹ enlightening one another² and declaring Me³ always, they want no more⁴ and find enjoyment.

10. To them, ever attached to Me, worshipping Me in love,⁵ I give that union to knowledge by which they come to Me⁶

11. To grant them grace, I, remaining in their hearts,⁷ destroy the darkness born of ignorance⁸ by the brilliant lamp of knowledge.

The lamp of knowledge is the perception of truth. The lamp is the passionless heart, its oil is Divine grace; the air that keeps it burning is the breeze of love that blows between man and God; and the boisterous wind from which it is protected is the desire for things perceived by sense or mind.

¹ "Heart and life gone into me," that is, the whole nature of man is at rest in the Deity, from absence of desire. Life is of no value without the Deity; this consciousness is described by the expression, "gone into me."

² "Enlightening one another," that is, communicating to one another spiritual knowledge accompanied by faith in the truth declared.

³ "Declaring Me," that is, instructing one another in the mystery of the Divine Spirit.

⁴ "Want no more;" cessation of want may be produced by conviction of the hopelessness of the desire or by its full gratification. Worshippers of the Deity want nothing, because they are full of enjoyment in God.

⁵ "Worshipping Me in love," worshipping for no object that they wish to attain

⁶ "Come to Me," that is, they recognize the Deity as the Self.

⁷ "Remaining in their hearts," that is, the hearts of the devotees being completely at rest in the Deity, He appears in their hearts as the spirit of illumination.

⁸ "Darkness born of ignorance;" darkness born of belief in falsehood, which, if true, would make God false. The unsearchable God is true, therefore all this that we now call true is really dark and false.

Having heard of the form with attributes and of the attributeless Absoluteness of the Deity, Arjuna longs to hear more about the first aspect, as the other is incomprehensible.

ARJUNA said:

12. The Supreme Brahmā, the Supreme power, Sacred¹ and Supreme Thou, the Spirit Eternal, the Divine,² the primeval God,³ the unborn, the all-pervading,

13. Thee, thus they call, the sages every one, the celestial sage⁴ Nārada, Asita, Devala, Vyāsa, and thou sayest the same to me.

14. All that thou sayest to me I believe to be true, O Lord; thy majesty⁵ is indeed not known to gods or demons.

15. O thou Supreme Spirit,⁶ by thyself thou knowest thyself,⁷ thou Creator of all, thou Lord of all, God of gods, and Master of the universe.

16. Thou art worthy to declare fully thy divine powers, by which powers thou art pervading these worlds.

17. How shall I, constantly thinking of thee, know thee,⁸ O thou Lord of mysterious powers; in what

¹ "Sacred," that is, undefiled by any touch of change

² "The Divine," being seated where the universe is not.

³ "Primeval God," that is, the only God who remains witness to the birth and dissolution of those whom men call gods.

⁴ "Celestial sage," that is, a celestial being who becomes a sage, renouncing all the glory of his state

⁵ "Majesty;" absoluteness.

⁶ "Supreme Spirit," the possessor of the acme of wisdom, majesty, and power. The other epithets are marks of great love.

⁷ "By thyself . . . thyself;" that is, thou art the only instructor about thyself. Therefore "thou art worthy to declare fully thy divine powers."

⁸ "How shall I . . . know thee," that is, after the purification of my nature is accomplished.

forms¹ art thou, O Lord, to be meditated upon by me?

18. O Janârdana, declare again at length thy powers and manifested forms, since there is no satiety for me in thy ambrosial words.

THE BLESSED LORD *spoke*:

19. Now then shall I declare to thee, the chief among the forms of Divine² manifestation, O best of Kuru's sons; there is no end to the variety of my manifested forms.

First is declared what the Deity really is apart from the conceptions of men.

20. O conqueror of sleep,³ I am the Ego seated in the hearts of all creatures.⁴ I am the beginning, middle, and end of all creatures.

21. Among Âdityas⁵ I am Vishnu; among those who illuminate I am the Sun, possessed of rays. I am Marichi among the Maruts; ⁶ among the orbs of heaven I am the Moon.

22. Among the Vedas⁷ I am the Sâmvêda, among

¹ "In what forms," for the facility of meditation it is the practice among mystics to concentrate their minds on some emblematic representation of the Divine Spirit, and then gradually to efface the imagined figure from the mind, part by part, until at last the mind can render itself perfectly pure, for the rising of the spirit of illumination in the clear sky.

² "Divine," that is, independent, not produced by any secondary cause.

³ "O conqueror of sleep" implies that this Supreme Deity is only approachable by one who has awaked from the sleep of delusions.

⁴ "I am the Ego . . . creatures," this is the form in which it is best to meditate on me, but failing that, the forms hereinafter set forth may be meditated on, because "I am the beginning, middle, and end of all creatures," and as such may also be meditated upon.

⁵ *Âdityas* are the twelve sun-gods who bring about the universal conflagration by their simultaneous appearance.

⁶ *Maruts*, the gods of air.

⁷ *Vedas*, the four Vedas, — Rik, Sâma, Yajur, and Atharva.

gods Indra, among senses and organs the manas; of creatures I am the conscious existence.

"Conscious existence" is used here in a peculiar sense; it does not mean the true Ego which being identical with the Deity cannot be classed among his manifested forms, but the peculiar form of Buddhī or intellect which is manifested in the relation of cause and effect, the cognitive faculty.

23. Among Rudras¹ I am Cankara; among Yakshas² and Rakshas³ I am the lord of wealth; among Vasus I am Pāvaka; among high-peaked mountains I am Meru.⁴

24. Among the priests of kings know me, O son of Prithā, as the highest, Brihaspati; of leaders of hosts I am Skanda;⁵ of expanses of water I am the ocean.

25. Among the great sages I am Bhrigu; among words I am the monosyllable Om; among sacrifices I am the sacrifice through the repetition of sacred texts;⁶ of things that move not I am the Himalaya.

26. Among all trees I am Asvattha; of celestial sages I am Nārada; among Gandharvas I am Chitra-ratha; among those perfect from birth I am the sage Kapila.

There are three classes of perfectly illuminated sages; First, those who are born so without any reference to any prior event; second, those who are born perfect in consequence of perfection previously attained; third, those who become perfect after birth in consequence of illumination attained during life. Kapila, the revealer of Sāṅkhya philosophy, belonged to the first class; with him

¹ *Rudras* are the twelve gods of knowledge from whose power the seven great sages are born.

² *Yakshas*, an order of spirits not malignant by nature, but extremely sensual.

³ *Rakshas*, an order of evil spirits.

⁴ *Meru*, the celestial mountain where the gods dwell.

⁵ *Skanda*, the leader of celestial hosts.

⁶ "Sacrifice through . . . texts," because involving injury to no one.

were innate Knowledge, Power, Virtue, and Dispassion. (See Sâṅkhya Kârikâ, Aph. XLIII.)

27. Among horses know me to be Uchchaiṣravâ, born from ambrosia ; among elephant-kings Airāvata ; among men as lord of men.

28. Among weapons I am the thunder ; among cows, the cow of plenty ; among causes of production I am the god of love ; among serpents ¹ I am Vāsuki.

29. Among nâgas ² I am Ananta ; among things of the sea I am Varuna ; among the ancestors I am Aryamâ ; among rulers I am Yama.³

30. Among daityas ⁴ I am Prahlâda ; among those that reckon I am Time ; ⁵ I am the lion among wild animals ; among birds I am Garuda.⁶

31. Among sanctifiers I am the Air ; among those that bear arms I am Râma ; among fishes I am Makara ; among flowing streams I am the Ganges.

32. Among that which is produced I am, O Arjuna, even the beginning, the middle, and the end ; among all knowledge I am the knowledge of the Spirit ; I am the ascertainment, through discussion, of the meaning of spiritual teachings by those who are free from passion.

The "knowledge of the Spirit" is that form of the perceptive faculties in which no illusion exists, and "ascertainment" denotes the questions and answers by which a pupil learns spiritual philosophy from his master, as opposed to controversy and discussion among ordinary people.

¹ "Serpents," that is, poisonous reptiles.

² Nâgas are serpents without poison

³ Yama is the ruler of the dead, the judge of all judges.

⁴ Daityas are an order of super-human beings.

⁵ "Time," the great reckoner of all

⁶ Garuda, the celestial bird attending upon Vishnu.

33. Among letters I am the vowel A;¹ among compound words I am Dvandva;² I am the endless Time;³ I am the all-faced regulator.⁴

34. I am the all-snatching Death,⁵ and the causer of well-being of future creatures;⁶ among women I am Fame,⁷ Fortune, Speech, Memory, Intelligence,⁸ Patience, and Forgiveness.

35. Among the hymns of the Sāmaveda, again, I am the Brihat Sāman;⁹ among metres¹⁰ I am the Gāyatri; among months I am Mārgaśīrsha,¹¹ among seasons I am Spring, the source of flowers.

36. Of the deceitful I am the dice; I am the power¹² of the powerful; I am victory, I am determination, I am the goodness in the good.¹³

37. Among the sons of Vrishni I am Vāsudeva; among the Pāṇdavas I am the conqueror of wealth,¹⁴ among

¹ "The vowel A," because according to the sacred authorities this sound is the basis of all others, which are but its modifications

² *Dvandva*, a peculiar form of compound words in Sanskrit, such as Rāma-Krishna, meaning Rāma and Krishna. It is superior to all others because it preserves the independent meaning of both the words entering into the compound.

³ "Endless Time," not time that is counted by months, years, centuries, etc., but the power of causing succession

⁴ "All-faced regulator," I attach the legitimate effect to all causes that are produced in the universe

⁵ "All-snatching Death," which produces universal dissolution.

⁶ "Future creatures," that is, those who will deserve well-being in future periods of creation

⁷ "Fame," the goddess presiding over great deeds of righteousness.

⁸ "Intelligence," the goddess presiding over the right understanding of sacred writings.

⁹ *Brihat Sāman* reveals the path to Nirvāṇa.

¹⁰ "Metres," that is, the Vedic *mantras* or hymns; among these the Gāyatri is the best because it confers Brahmanhood

¹¹ *Mārgaśīrsha* is the month consisting of parts of November and December. It is the best of months because in it the harvest ripens.

¹² "Power," that is, absence of the liability to have one's commands successfully opposed.

¹³ "Good," possessed of the quality of *Sattva*, or goodness, which is manifested as righteousness, wisdom, dispassion, and other similar forms.

¹⁴ "Conqueror of wealth" is Arjuna.

those who understand the meaning of the Vedas I am Vyāsa;¹ among the end-seeing I am the seer Uçanā.²

38. I am the sanction of the representatives of the law;³ I am the policy of those desiring to conquer; I am the silence of the secret;⁴ I am the wisdom of the wise.

39. That am I which also is the seed⁵ of all things, O Arjuna; that thing, animate or inanimate, is not, which is without Me.

40. O harasser of thy foes, no end there is of my divine manifestations; a part only of the infinite manifestations is thus declared by Me.

41. Whatever creature there is, possessed of lordly power, of good fortune, or of power of determination, know all such as born of a portion⁶ of my power.

42. Or, O Arjuna, of what avail is it for thee to know much like this? I hold with one portion⁷ all this universe.

The powers of the Deity are beyond description and enumeration, yet both description and enumeration are needed for the benefit of the devotee. For that devotee, however, who can conceive of the infinite universe as though it were only a portion of the power of the Deity, no such helps to the budding spiritual perception are needed.

¹ *Vyāsa*, the author of the *Mahābhārata*, of which the *Bhagavad Gītā* is a part.

² *Uçanā*, the first teacher of ethics and politics.

³ "Representatives of the law," that is, those whose duty it is to keep men straight on the path of the law, and by punishment bring back those who go astray.

⁴ "The secret," those who through maturity of spiritual knowledge have gone beyond the need of speech, and "silence" is the wisdom of such beings.

⁵ "Seed," the first cause, the reflection of consciousness on objectivity.

⁶ "Portion;" it must not be supposed that the Divine Power is liable to be portioned, but it seems as though it were portioned.

⁷ "Hold with one portion," because the universe does not manifest the divine power by which it can be destroyed.

Thus ends chapter the tenth, called the "RIGHT KNOWLEDGE OF DIVINE POWERS," in the blessed BHAGAVAD GÎTÂ, the sacred lore, the divine wisdom, the book of divine union, the colloquy between the blessed KRISHNA and ARJUNA, and contained in the Bhîshma Parvan of the blessed MAHÂBHÂRATA, which is a collection of one hundred thousand verses by VYÂSA.

Having declared the manifestations of the Deity which the mind can grasp, it is finally shown that the infinite Majesty of the Deity is infinitely beyond the manifestation called the universe. If from infinity, infinity is taken, infinity still remains.

Salutation to Krishna, who, for the benefit of those whose minds still wander out through the gates of sense, has declared his divine manifestations for the meditation of the devotee.

CHAPTER XI.

VISION OF THE DEITY AS THE SOUL OF THE UNIVERSE,

THE Blessed Lord having declared, in the last chapter, that he holds the whole universe by one portion of his power, Arjuna began to be favored with a vision of the way in which the Deity by His unsearchable power supports the whole universe; and his prayer is granted. In reality the Deity has no form, what prophets and pure-souled devotees see is the reflection, so to speak, of the incomprehensible Divine Majesty on the spiritual perception of man. Arjuna's vision recalls the visions of Moses, Isaiah, Ezekiel, and Saint John. The mysterious and symbolical import of these spiritual experiences is not perceived by the spiritually blind, who in consequence fall into the most degrading superstitions.

ARJUNA said:

1. By the words supreme,¹ and relating to the mystery of the Spirit,² by thee spoken, has this, my delusion,³ been removed.

2. By me have been heard from thee in full⁴ the origin and end of things,⁵ O thou with eyes like the lotus-leaf,⁶ as also the exhaustless majesty.⁷

¹ "Supreme," because showing the path to Nirvāna.

² "Mystery of the Spirit," that is, discrimination between Ego and non-Ego. The words of the Lord beginning with Chapter II verse 11, are here referred to.

³ "My delusion," about the slayer and the slain.

⁴ "Heard from thee in full," in Chapters VII. to X.

⁵ "Origin and end of things," that is, I have heard from thee that the inscrutable divine power causes the origin and end of things (Chap. VII. v. 6).

⁶ "Eyes like the lotus-leaf," that is, as peaceful as the lotus-leaf.

⁷ "Exhaustless majesty." See Chapter IX. verses 7-9.

3. O Supreme God, it is even as thou sayest of thyself. I long to see thy Divine form, O Supreme Spirit.

The first epithet here is intended to show that Arjuna has no doubt of the absolute truth of what the Blessed Lord has said, and that it is not as a test of His authority, but for the satisfaction of his own spiritual aspiration, that he wishes to see the universe-form of the Deity.

Arjuna uses the final epithet to express his eagerness to see the highest form of the Deity, and not any of the other forms.

4. O Lord,¹ if thou thinkest it possible to be seen by me, then show me, O King of all mystics,² thy exhaustless Self.

THE BLESSED LORD *spoke*:

5. O son of Prithâ, behold my forms, by hundreds and by thousands, of many varieties, divine,³ and of many colors, and with many limbs.

6. Behold the Vasus, the Rudras, the Aṅgins, and also the Maruts, O son of Bharata; behold many and wonderful things never seen before.⁴

7. Here, in my body, behold to-day, O Gudâkeṣa, the whole universe, animate and inanimate, in one place contained, and every other thing that thou wishest to see.⁵

8. But⁶ thou art not able to see Me⁷ with these thine own eyes. I shall give thee the eye divine;⁸
 Matt xi 27. behold my power as God.

¹ "O Lord," receiver of my prayer, in whom I put all my trust.

² "O King of all mystics," that is, if mystics can exercise superhuman powers, then who can tell the extent of thy powers, since all other powers are but the reflection of thine? If in thy eyes I am fit (I know I am not in mine) for this favor, may it be granted to me.

³ "Divine," that is, produced by no temporal or secondary cause.

⁴ "Seen before," that is, by thee or any other mere mortal man.

⁵ "That thou wishest to see," that is, the uncertainty that thou hast felt as to the issue of the battle will be dispelled by this vision (Chap. II. v 6).

⁶ "But," in reply to verse 4 ⁷ "Me," as the soul of the universe.

⁸ "Eye divine;" that is, the spiritual illumination which a man cannot get from within his self-conscious nature.

SANJAYA said:

9. O King, having said this, Hari,¹ the lord of great and mysterious power, showed to the son of Prithâ the Supreme form Divine.

The Deity has no form in reality, but by reason of His unsearchable powers He appears to have infinity of forms and attributes. Among such forms, that seen by Arjuna is the highest.

10. With many mouths and eyes, with many marvels, with many divine ornaments, with many divine weapons raised,

11. Wearing divine garlands, and garments, with divine perfumes and ornaments, full of what is wonderful to all, the universe-faced infinite Lord.²

12. The splendor of that great Soul may haply be likened to the radiance of a thousand suns risen at once in the heavens.

13. Then Pându's son beheld, seated in one place, in the body of the God of gods, the whole universe, in many forms varied.

14. Then Dhananjaya, overcome with wonder, and hair standing on end with joy, bowing down with his head to the Deity, spoke with joined palms.

ARJUNA said:

15. O God, in thy body I behold all the gods, the assemblage of things of every kind, the lord Brahmâ

¹ *Hari* literally means the remover. Krishna is so called because he removes ignorance with all its powers.

² "Universe-faced;" that is, having equal power over every part of the universe.

seated on his lotus-seat,¹ and all the sages² and uragas³ divine.

16. I behold thee on all sides, with infinite forms, with many arms, stomachs, mouths, and eyes. O Lord of the universe, O Universe-formed, thy end, nor middle, nor again thy beginning do I see.

17. Thee, with diadem, mace, and discus, the mass of splendor, on all sides refulgent, do I behold, so difficult to behold,⁴ immeasurable, on all thy sides the majesty of burning fire and sun.

18. Thou art the exhaustless, supreme goal of knowledge; thou art the supreme support of this universe; thou art changeless, the protector of the unchanging law of righteousness; thou art the Eternal Spirit, — this is my faith.

Arjuna in his vision sees the Deity as possessed of the infinity of attributes; consequently the attributeless Deity referred to in this verse could be perceived by him only through faith.

19. Devoid of beginning, middle, and end, with power infinite, with infinite numbers of arms, with sun and moon as eyes, I behold thee, with burning-fire-mouth, and with thy majesty oppressing⁵ the universe.

20. Heaven and earth and space between are filled by thee alone, as also the sides, every one. Seeing this thy marvellous form of terror, the worlds three⁶ are afflicted, O thou great Soul.

¹ "Lotus-seat" The lotus is the emblem of the universe. The Supreme Deity, as the creator Brahman, is seated in the centre of the infinite universe; this is his lotus-seat.

² "Sages," that is, the seven sages.

³ "Uragas" are an order of celestial beings who possess great wisdom, usually understood to be in some way connected with serpents.

⁴ "So difficult to behold," for those not favored by Divine grace.

⁵ "Oppressing," that is, the universe seems unable to bear the majesty of the Deity.

⁶ "Worlds three," that is, "heaven and earth and the space between."

21. This concourse of gods¹ enters into thee, and some in fear² chant praise with joined palms, the assemblage of great sages and perfect beings,³ saying "Svasti,"⁴ behold and glorify thee with perfect hymns.

22. The Rudras, the Adityas, the Vasus, and they called the Sâdhyas,⁵ the Viçvadevas,⁶ the Açvins,⁷ the Maruts, and the Ushmapâs,⁸ the Gandharvas,⁹ the Yakshas, the Asuras,¹⁰ and the assemblage of the Siddhas all behold thee in wonder.

23. O Thou of mighty arms, beholding thy form immense, with many mouths and eyes, with many arms, thighs, and feet, many stomachs and many twisted tusks, all beings are trembling with fear, and so am I.

24. Seeing thee, sky-touching, with many resplendent limbs,¹¹ with gaping mouths, my heart oppressed with terror, I know not self-possession, nor can I gain calmness of spirit, O Vishnu.¹²

25. Beholding thy faces like the fire of destruction, and frightful to behold, owing to tusks, neither do I

¹ "Concourse of gods," that is, the heroes gifted with godly powers, who are about to fight this great battle

² "In fear," that is, overcome with fear of the divine wrath. Those among the warriors who are filled with diabolical powers can neither fight nor flee, humbled, they cry, "Glory, glory to the Lord, destroy us not"

³ "Perfect beings," such as Kapila (See Chap X v 5)

⁴ "Saying 'Svasti,'" dreading the untimely destruction of the universe, the sages cry "Svasti," — "good be the world."

⁵ Sâdhyas, a celestial order

⁶ Viçvadevas, a class of gods connected with funeral ceremonies.

⁷ Açvins are two brothers, physicians to the gods. The name literally signifies "horsemen"

⁸ Ushmapâs, literally the "feeders on warmth." This celestial order is composed of the pious dead raised to superhuman life.

⁹ Gandharvas are celestial musicians.

¹⁰ Asuras, that is, those among them who are not rebels, but worshippers of the Deity.

¹¹ "Resplendent limbs;" strictly, the word translated "limbs" means the rise and fall in the body in consequence of the distribution of limbs.

¹² Vishnu, the Pervading Spirit.

know the points of heaven, nor can I gain peace. Be gracious, O Lord of gods, O Support of the universe.

26. All these sons of Dhritarāshtra, together with this assemblage of the rulers of earth, Bhīshma, Drona, as also Karna, together with the chief among warriors on our side,

27. Impetuously are rushing into thy mouths, terrible and preternatural owing to the tusks. Some are seen, caught between thy teeth, with their heads crushed.

28. As the many-watered rush of rivers flows ever towards the ocean, so these heroes of this mortal sphere enter into thy mouths, on all sides burning.

29. As moths, with impetuosity excited, enter for destruction into the flaming fire, even so do these creatures, for destruction, enter into thy mouths with collected impetuosity.

30. Whilst swallowing on all sides, with flaming mouths, thou relishest all these creatures assembled; filling the whole universe with thy splendor, thy cruel flames oppress with heat, O Vishnu.

31. Declare unto me who is this terrible form of thine. Salutation to thee, O Greatest of gods! Be gracious! I seek to know thee, the primeval; I know not thy doing.

THE BLESSED LORD *spoke*:

32. Time¹ I am, in fulness, the consumer of creatures, here at work for the destruction of creatures. Besides thee, the warriors in these divisions² shall not be.

33. Therefore stand thou up, gain fame; conquering enemies, enjoy foeless empire; even before, by me they

¹ "Time;" the divine power of causing change.

² "These divisions;" that is, opposed to thee. Bhīshma, Drona, Karna, Duryodhana, and all the others of whom thou hast spoken, must perish.

have been slain; be thou but the instrument, O thou both-handed.¹

34. Drona, Bhîsma and Jayadratha, Karna, as well as the other heroic warriors, by me slain, conquer thou; lose not heart, fight; thou art² the conqueror of enemies in war.

SANJAYA said:

35. Hearing these words of Keçava, with palms joined and in tremor, bowing down to Kṛishna, again spoke the diademed hero³ with faltering voice, again and again frightened and bowing down.

ARJUNA said:

36. Verily it is so, O Hrishikeça; by thy glorification the universe rejoices and shows love to thee;⁴ the evil spirits, frightened, flee in all directions, and all the assembled perfect men bow down to thee.

37. O Great soul, why should they not bow down to thee, greater even than Brahmâ, the first maker,⁵ O Eternal, O Lord of gods, O Abode of the universe. Thou art the aught and naught, the exhaustless essence that is beyond.⁶

¹ "Both-handed." Arjuna could draw the bow with either hand with equal skill. His great proficiency in warfare renders him the proper instrument in the hand of Time.

² "Thou art," etc., that is, thy future success can be foreseen from the vision vouchsafed to thee.

³ "Diademed hero." Arjuna is so called on account of the great splendor of his diadem.

⁴ "Shows love to thee," that is, the Deity, being the true Self in all creatures, is the most beloved of all; in fact, is Love.

⁵ *Brahmâ*. In Brahmanical theology he is not the maker of the plan or idea of the world, his own being is limited by the Divine idea, in obedience to which he makes perceptible and sensuous what the idea contained in an imperceptible and super-sensuous state.

⁶ "Thou art," etc. "Aught" is the apparently real existence, and "naught" is what does not exist. The Reality in itself being incomprehensible cannot fall under either of these two classes, which but for the Reality could not exist.

38. Thou art the primeval God, the ancient Spirit; thou art the supreme place of extinction¹ of this universe; thou art the knower, thou art the known, as also the supreme abode;² O thou infinite-formed, by thee this universe is filled.

39. The gods Wind, Death, Fire, Water, and Moon, the ancient progenitor thou art, as also the great-grandfather.³ Salutation, salutation be unto thee, thousand-fold and again and again salutation, salutation unto thee!

40. Salutation in the east,⁴ and salutation also behind, O thou All; salutation in all directions; thou art of infinite valor and immeasurable power; thou pervadest all things and hence art All⁵

41. By me, not knowing this thy majesty, whatever lowering to thee has been said, either in thoughtlessness or in love, — such as, "O Krishna, O Yadu's son, O friend,"

42. And whatever unmeet treatment thou hast received in walking, bed, seat, and eating, for the purpose of jest, whether in thy presence or absence, — this I beg thee, the immeasurable,⁶ to forgive.

43. Of this universe, animate and inanimate, thou art

¹ "Place of extinction," that is, at the season of universal dissolution the Deity is the only being that remains

² "Knower . . . known . . . supreme abode," that is, the spirit within us, the God towards which all things turn, their union also is comprehended in this Absolute Deity.

³ "Great-grandfather," being the Creator of Brahmā the grandfather, through whose agency the visible universe is formed.

⁴ "In the east" Feeling the Divine all-pervasiveness, Arjuna speaks of it by saluting the Deity in all directions; he begins with the east as being the direction in which the sun rises

⁵ "Hence art All." Nothing is of which the substance and form and function is not the Divine Will; and the Will itself is not a co-ordinate reality with the Divine Spirit. Hence the Deity is all things, and yet nothing is the Deity, who is incomprehensible.

⁶ "Immeasurable." Being immeasurable, who can give thee meet honor?

the father and the object of adoration, the greatest of the great. There is none equal unto thee, how can there be a superior, O Thou with majesty unimaged in the three worlds?

44. Therefore, bowing down, and holding the body so low, thee, O Lord, I pray for grace; forgive, O Lord, as forgives the father the son, the friend the friend, and the lover the beloved.

45. Having seen what was never seen before, I am joyful, and yet my heart is afflicted with terror; show me that form, O God, be gracious, O Lord of gods and abode of the universe.

46. With diadem and mace in thy hand, I desire to see thee as before O Thou of a thousand arms, of that form with four arms become Thou, O Universe-formed.

The Supreme Spirit is the Self in the Blessed Lord, and therefore as the Supreme Spirit (in Biblical language "in the name of God") he receives the worship of Arjuna. "He that honoreth not the Son honoreth not the Father which hath sent him" (John v 23) Neither can there be a second Supreme Spirit, nor can any one see or know Him as an object of consciousness. The Blessed Lord knew Him as the true and only Ego, and hence incomprehensible.

THE BLESSED LORD *spoke*:

47. By me, full of grace, this my supreme form, all-reefulgent, all-embracing, infinite, primeval, that has been shown to thee by my mysterious power, has not before been seen by any other.

48. Neither by study of Vedas, nor the practical knowledge of sacrifices, nor through gifts,
Matt. xxi. 16, 17 nor works, nor frightful austerities, I, thus in form, am able to be seen by any but thee, O best of Kuru's sons.

Thou hast seen me in this form only through my grace, and no one not similarly favored can ever see this form.

49. Let there be no affliction for thee, nor downheartedness; having thus seen this, my form
Matt. xvii. 6, 7. of terror, this my previous form, behold again, with fear departed and joyous in heart.

SANJAYA *said*:

50. Then Vāsudeva, who thus speaking showed again his proper form¹ to Arjuna. The great soul comforted him, the frightened one, by again becoming gentle-formed.

ARJUNA *said*:

51. O Janārdana, having seen this thy gentle and human form, I am now become peaceful at heart and self-possessed.

THE BLESSED LORD *spoke*:

52. This my form, whose sight is so hard to obtain, that thou hast seen, even the gods are ever desirous of the sight of this form.

53. As seen by thee, I may not thus be seen by the study of the Vedas, nor by austere practices, nor by the making of gifts, nor by acts of worship.

54. By self-identifying devotion, indeed, as thus I may be known² and seen³ in truth and entered into.

55. He that works but for me,⁴ for whom I am the

¹ "Proper form," that is, as the Son of Vasudeva, the mortal father of Krishna.

² "Known," that is, from others.

³ "Seen," that is, by one's self.

⁴ "But for me." As the slave works for the master without expectation of personal advantage, so the aspirant for eternal life must perform all acts, enjoyable and painful, for the sake of the Deity, who is his true Self and therefore his absolute joy.

supreme goal, who is devoted to me, devoid of zest in things,¹ and devoid of hostility,² comes to me, O Pându's son.

Thus ends chapter the eleventh, called the "VISION OF THE DEITY AS THE SOUL OF THE UNIVERSE" in the blessed BHAGAVAD GÎTÂ, the sacred lore, the divine wisdom, the book of divine union, the colloquy between the blessed KRISHNA and ARJUNA, and contained in the Bhîshma Parvan of the blessed MAHÂBHÂRATA, which is a collection of one hundred thousand verses by VYÂSA.

The final verse contains the essence of the whole Bhagavad Gîtâ, which in its turn is the essence of all the Vedas. This verse is therefore the very jewel of knowledge, the very pearl of price.

"But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea, doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord; for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ" (Phil. iii. 7, 8).

Salutation to Krishna by devotion to whom is attainable the vision of his universe-form, which even the gods long in vain to see.

¹ "Devoid of zest in things," that is, being ready at every moment to part with wife, children, friends, relatives, and wealth, for the sake of the Lord.

² "Devoid of hostility," that is, free from the least tendency to injure any creature, even such as are engaged in doing the greatest harm to himself. Such a devotee, on departing from the sphere of mortals, goes nowhere but to the Deity, the soul of the universe, omnipotent and omniscient.

CHAPTER XII.

RIGHT KNOWLEDGE OF DEVOTION.

FROM the eleventh verse of the second chapter to the end of the tenth chapter the Blessed Lord declared the worship of the attributeless, unsearchable Deity by the acquisition of spiritual knowledge; and also the worship through right meditation on the attributes of the Deity, as declared by the Scriptures.

In the eleventh chapter the worship of the Deity as the soul of the universe is set forth as the road to salvation. The question of the relative merit of these different paths is solved in this chapter by removing the apparent contradiction of the following texts, and manifesting their underlying harmony. —

“Swear, O son of Kuntī, my devotee never is destroyed” (IX. 31).

“He that works but for me, for whom I am the supreme goal, who is devoted to me, is devoid of zest in things, devoid of hostility, comes to me, O Pāṇdu’s son” (XI. 55).

These texts establish the supreme excellence of devotion to the Great Ruler of the universe. Again, we have such texts as these which declare with equal authority the unparalleled greatness of knowledge: —

“Of them the wise man is the best” (VII. 17).

“If thou wert the greatest evil-doer among all the unrighteous, thou shalt cross over all sins, even by the bark of knowledge” (IV. 36). Therefore,

ARJUNA said:

1. Among those devotees who thus¹ worship thee, with heart ever at rest, and those that worship the

¹ “Thus,” that is, as described in Chapter XI verse 55; working for the Deity alone and loving Him as being the very Self

unmanifested, exhaustless,¹ who know the knowledge best.²

The Blessed Lord, in His reply, divides the subject into two parts,—the path which is most easy to follow, and that which leads immediately to Nirvāna.

THE BLESSED LORD *spoke*:

2. Those who, with hearts entered into me, constant in devotion, joined to excellent faith, perfectly worship me, are, in my sight, supremely illuminated.

Among those who are not worshippers of the unmanifested, exhaustless essence, the most illuminated are those whose hearts are never void of me.

3. But³ those who perfectly worship the exhaustless, incapable of being pointed out,⁴ unmanifest, all-pervading, unthinkable,⁵ the witness of illusion,⁶ unmoving,⁷ eternal,

4. Withdrawing⁸ the assemblage of senses and organs, they, at all times the same in heart, and enjoying benevolence towards all creatures, find even Me.⁹

¹ "Unmanifested, exhaustless," those who, having renounced all desires, become attached to knowledge leading to the realization of the attributeless Divine essence.

² "Know the knowledge," that is, receive higher illumination.

³ "But" is used here to exclude the notion of comparison between those declared "supremely illuminated" in verse 2, and those described in the succeeding verses.

⁴ "Incapable of being pointed out," that is, being unmanifest, cannot be pointed out as "this" or "that."

⁵ "Unthinkable," that is, not representable by the symbolism of words or any intellectual form.

⁶ "The witness of illusion," that is, the consciousness, which appears as though affected by the workings of the unsearchable Divine power, but in reality is only the witness.

⁷ "Unmoving," because consciousness is beyond the illusive power, the universal dynamic energy, and therefore eternal.

⁸ "Withdrawing," etc., that is, depriving them of power to adhere to objects through relish of them.

⁹ "Find even Me," and are thus identical with Me, and hence cannot be called supremely or otherwise illuminated. This is why there can be no such comparison as is implied in the question of Arjuna.

The perfect worship of the attributeless consists in gaining through study of the Scriptures a direct perception of the truth they contain, continuous and unbroken like the line formed by the closely adhering drops of oil when it is poured out.

5. Greater is the difficulty for those whose hearts are fixed¹ on the unmanifest. Verily, firm devotion² to the unmanifest is obtained with great suffering by embodied creatures.³

6. On the other hand, who worship Me, committing to Me⁴ all actions, regarding Me as the supreme end,⁵ and meditating on Me,⁶ to nothing else turning,

7. For them, with hearts entered into Me, I become, O son of Prithā, without delay, the rescuer from the ocean of death-bearing, migratory existence.

Therefore,

8. Fix thy thoughts⁷ upon Me alone; in Me let thy faith⁸ dwell, and thou shalt hereafter⁹ abide in Me without doubt.

In his great mercy the Blessed Lord proceeds to smooth the path for every earnest aspirant, however low his state may be.

¹ "Hearts are fixed;" these are such as do not find the worship of a Deity with attributes satisfactory, and only desire to obtain a realization of the attributeless Divine essence

² "Firm devotion," an all-excluding pursuit of spiritual knowledge. The difficulty of unbroken perception of the mysterious identity between the individual and universal spirit is wellnigh insurmountable to ordinary men.

³ "By embodied creatures;" those not conscious of connection with the body are not embodied in the present sense. The reason of this great difficulty lies in the abandonment of the identification of the Ego with the body.

⁴ "Committing to Me," feeling that they have nothing to do for themselves, but certain charges are laid upon them by the Deity which they must fulfil.

⁵ "As the supreme end," desiring God, and not anything that He can give.

⁶ "Meditating on Me," the soul of the universe.

⁷ "Thoughts," that is, the manas, or reflective self.

⁸ "Faith," that is, buddhi, or the conviction of reality attaching to any desire; the "substance of hope" in the God-aspiring; the belief in the reality of the world and its ways in ordinary people.

⁹ "Hereafter," that is, after death.

9. If, again, thou art not able to fix thy heart¹ on Me, seek, O Dhananjaya, to obtain Me by devotion through repeated endeavors.

Whenever the heart wanders in search of pleasure in worldly things, bring it back to me by the conviction that of all joys the highest joy is the Deity. The supreme bliss is the Supreme Spirit; of this bliss that which the infinity of creatures enjoy is but an atom.

10. If thou art unable even to practise devotion through repeated endeavors, then regard as
James ii 24, 25 supreme, special works² for Me. Even performing works for Me thou shalt obtain perfection.³

11. If thou art unable to do even this, then resting
Luke xviii 10 in devotion to Me, and being self-controlled, abandon the fruit of all actions.

Knowing that all things come from the Deity, do not believe that any result can come from our efforts except by Divine grace. Therefore the foreseen and unforeseen consequences of our acts are only apparently their effects; in reality, they are sent by God for our perfection. Living this life of faith, perfection becomes attainable. In short, we can, this very minute, put our feet upon the upward path by leading a life of righteousness in obedience to the will of God, and depending upon Him in faith; rejoicing when smitten by the just sentence of the Deity, and gratefully receiving the good that He grants.

But it must never be forgotten that this dependence on the Deity does not imply recklessness of conduct. With self-control and thought we are to do the duties pertaining to our condition in life, with the firm conviction that whatever comes to us, joy or suffering, is from the Deity, who is absolutely righteous and merciful.

¹ "Heart," that is, thoughts and faith.

² "Special works," such as singing hymns, keeping fasts and feasts, building places of worship, giving alms when performed in faith and for the love of God alone.

³ "Obtain perfection," by the reception of knowledge for which natures purified in the way described become fit.

The ninth chapter is for the indifferently spiritual, who can only worship the Deity by act, speech, or thought, and not by all-excluding communion in meditation, nor by perception of the full truth. The various sub-divisions of that class appear before the Blessed Lord to receive his commandments in verses 8-11. In conclusion He commands the renunciation of the fruit of all action, and then goes on to impress upon the hearers the benefit of such renunciation by bestowing upon it excessive praise.

12. Better is knowledge¹ than repeated endeavors;²
 Matt. x. 37-39, superior to knowledge is meditation;³ to
 xix. 28, 29 meditation renunciation of the fruit of ac-
 tion is superior; from renunciation immediately comes
 peace.

"Peace" is Nirvāṇa. Because from the renunciation of all desires the supreme end is attained, therefore even the renunciation of the ordinarily spiritual aspirant, although of a different order, is yet possessed of the merit of the general class to which it belongs; hence its praiseworthiness.

Although the duty to the Deity is suited to the state of the aspirant's development, yet it is true that the worship of the attributeless God marks the highest spiritual condition

13. Hating no creature,⁴ full of brotherly love, and
 compassionate,⁵ devoid of my-ness,⁶ devoid of egotism,⁷
 equal towards suffering and enjoyment, forgiving,

14. Ever content,⁸ of tranquil heart, with nature⁹

¹ "Knowledge," intellectual apprehension of spiritual truth.

² "Repeated endeavors," accompanied by ignorance of the nature of the goal.

³ "Meditation," combined with knowledge.

⁴ "No creature," not even those which do one harm, because such a devotee regards all creatures as his own self.

⁵ "Compassionate," of whom no creature will ever know fear.

⁶ "My-ness," consciousness of ownership in anything.

⁷ "Egotism," consciousness of being the doer of anything.

⁸ "Ever content;" that is, does not think of gain beyond what the body needs in order to be kept alive.

⁹ "Nature," that is, the assemblage of cause and effect forming one's personality or individual character.

Psalm cxli 7. subjugated, firm in intent, and with thought
and faith given up to Me; whoso is my devotee¹ is dear unto Me.

He then goes on to amplify what is said in Chapter VII. verse 17: "I am excessively beloved of the wise man, and he is also beloved of Me."

15. He from whom no one feels perturbation, also whom no one perturbs, who is free from the agitation arising from exultation,² despondency,³ and fear, is beloved of Me.

16. Unexpecting,⁴ pure, capable,⁵ neutral,⁶ devoid of fear,⁷ giving up initiation of action, whoso is my devotee is beloved of Me.

17. He who does not feel exultant, nor hates, nor mourns, nor longs, giving up good as well as evil,⁸ whoso is possessed of devotion is beloved of Me.

18. Equal towards friend and enemy and also towards honor and disgrace, equal towards heat and cold, towards enjoyment and suffering, and devoid of attachment,

19. Equal to whom are abuse and adulation, silent, content with any and every thing, without fixed habitation, firm in heart, possessed of devotion,—such a man is beloved of Me.

¹ "Whoso is my devotee;" that is, a wise man.

² "Exultation," from the fulfilment of wishes, and

³ "Despondency," from the opposite

⁴ "Unexpecting," that is, neither body nor mind craving gratification.

⁵ "Capable," possessed of presence of mind and sound judgment.

⁶ "Neutral," not espousing any cause.

⁷ "Devoid of fear," this neutrality is not on account of fear of probable consequences.

⁸ "Giving up good," etc., that is, having given up all works of merit and demerit, rests in that perfect love which casts out fear.

20. Those who worship this immortality-bearing law¹ as declared, full of faith, regarding Me² as the supreme end, and devoted³ — are excessively beloved of Me.⁴

With this chapter ends the second hexad, containing the declaration of the being of the Deity in His character of the supreme paradox, — the attributeless, unknowable God of the wise, and the infinitely attributed God of goodness to His devotee. The former (the wise) are identical with the Deity by realizing the truth that the innermost-reality in man is the spirit of God, and therefore not dependent upon Him; for the latter He is the only door to salvation.

God is to be known as attributeless where separated from Nature and attributed as possessing her. By the will of God the consciousness in Nature is one with Him, and like oil in the sessamun seed, at the start of creation pervades all things. Those who know the reality call that which is anotherless consciousness by the word *Brahmā*, the Supreme Spirit, the Lord.

Thus ends chapter the twelfth, called "RIGHT KNOWLEDGE OF DEVOTION TO THE DEITY," in the blessed BHAGAVAD GĪTĀ, the sacred lore, the divine wisdom, the book of divine union, the colloquy between the blessed KRISHNA and ARJUNA, and contained in the *Bhīshma Parvan* of the blessed MAHĀBHĀRATA, which is a collection of one hundred thousand verses by VYĀSA.

Salutation to Krishna, by devotion to whom the rugged path of devotion to the attributeless becomes smooth, and salvation easy of attainment.

¹ "Law," as declared in verses 13-19.

² "Me," the attributeless.

³ "Devoted," resting in that supreme love which is identification with the Deity.

⁴ "Excessively beloved of me." This concludes the full exposition of the thought contained in Chapter VII. verse 17.

IDENTITY

CHAPTER XIII.

THE RIGHT KNOWLEDGE OF THE DISCRIMINATION BETWEEN KSHETRA AND KSHETRAJNA.

THE first six chapters of this book declared the nature of the individual spirit; the six succeeding chapters dealt with the nature of the universal spirit, with this chapter begins the final hexad, which declares the relation between the two to be identity, — the Spirit or Consciousness as itself being one and indivisible.

In the seventh chapter (vv 4, 5) it is shown that the nature of the Deity is twofold, — that which is composed of the three qualities, the eight-fold divided inferior nature, the cause of bondage; and that which is Consciousness, which is the Spirit of God. By teaching the truth in respect to this twofold nature, the Blessed Lord illuminates the great mystery of the being of the Deity, since the creation, preservation, and destruction of the universe is due to the union and disunion of the superior and inferior nature of the Deity. Further he shows forth the nature of that spiritual knowledge which, joined to the performance of the law declared in the previous chapter (vv 13-20), makes the devotee eminently dear unto the Lord. It is to be borne in mind that in verse 7 the Blessed Lord said: "For them, with hearts entered into Me, I become, O son of Prithâ, without delay, the rescuer from death-bearing, migratory existence."

How is this done? The Deity, as Himself, is not liable to act. He acts through the mysterious plenitude of power, and salvation from the conditioned life of change is not possible without spiritual knowledge. (Cf. John xvii. 3; 1 Cor. xiii. 12) Hence in the present chapter the Blessed Lord declares the knowledge of the being of God, who is beyond all comprehension.

THE BLESSED LORD *spoke*:

1. This body,¹ O son of Kuntī, is named Kshetra:² who knows it,³ him, those acquainted with both, call the Kshetrajna.⁴

It is not perfect wisdom merely to know the Ego as different from the body.

2. Know me even as the Kshetrajna in every Kshetra, O son of Bharata; that knowledge which realizes the Kshetra and the Kshetrajna is knowledge in my sight.

The Ego is to be known as different from the body, as being the same in all the infinitude of bodies, and also as being identical with the Supreme Spirit. This does not mean by three different chronological manifestations of the Ego, but as being true once and forever. They are three co-inhering identities which, when realized, show that the real nature of God, Consciousness, is incomprehensible, but by the operation of a mysterious power it seems to be dwelling in all creatures as that which they call the self.

3. That Kshetra,⁵ what it is,⁶ how it is,⁷ what it

¹ "This body," the inferior nature of the Deity transforms itself, for the purpose of the enjoyment and experience of the spirit, or the conscious, superior nature, into the inner faculties, external senses, and the material of the body: this assemblage is "this body."

² "Kshetra" literally means "the perishable," "subject to decay." It also signifies "a field," and in this sense is a fitting name for the body, as the seeds of good and evil sown in the body germinate into new forms of good and evil experiences.

³ "Who knows it," that is, knows the body completely, and is now receiving instructions about its nature from the Blessed Lord, the Ego in its two aspects, bound and liberated.

⁴ "Kshetrajna," the knower of Kshetra enjoys it as the owner of a field enjoys the fruit thereof.

⁵ "That Kshetra." The body is called Kshetra, because to an ordinary man it represents the whole of nature; a man knows everything only in relation to his own body. To understand the truth represented by the usual division into body and soul, it is necessary to comprehend Prakṛti (or Power), together with its twenty-three products, and the manner of their production.

⁶ "What it is," that is, it is an essential reality unconscious and objective.

⁷ "How it is," that is, it has the power of producing.

produces,¹ and what is from what derived,² also who he is,³ what is his power,⁴—all this hear from Me in brief.

Praises of this knowledge of body and soul, object and subject, now follow.

4. By the Rishis⁵ has it⁶ been fully⁷ sung with discrimination⁸ in the Vedic hymns of many kinds,⁹ and by words that indicate the Supreme Spirit, and are certain and full of reason.¹⁰

According to the practice of spiritual teachers, having removed from the mind of the hearer all other things, by declaring that which forms the highest importance of the teachings, the Blessed Lord proceeds to declare the natures of the Kshetra and Kshetrajna. It should here be explained that when the reward of spiritual living is spoken of, the object is not to encourage selfishness, but to remove obstacles from the path of the disciple by quieting the unrest which comes from manifold desires.

¹ "What it produces," that is, all that appears to be comes from it.

² "What is from what derived," that is, the relation between the primary and secondary causes.

³ "Who he is," that is, what, in reality, the Ego or Purusha is.

⁴ "His power," that is, through reflection in various objective bases.

⁵ "By the Rishis," not only is the sufficiency of the right knowledge of object and subject established by authoritative opinion, but also by the eternal revelation of the Vedas.

⁶ "It;" that is, the knowledge which the Blessed Lord is about to declare in brief.

⁷ "Fully," that is, in many ways, and with greater fulness than is to be found in this chapter.

⁸ "With discrimination," the cause of bondage is the want of discrimination between the ego and the non-ego, while the realization of this distinction is liberation.

⁹ "Vedic hymns of many kinds," many, because of various schools (gākhās) of the Vedas, and also, as one authority says, owing to the various names by which the Kshetrajna is called in the hymns.

¹⁰ "Words that indicate full of reason," that is, not only in the hymns, but also in texts where arguments are used to increase the aspirant's receptive power; such as, "approach the ātmā," "he that knows the Supreme Spirit attains the supreme goal;" "he who worships another God, and considers his Ego as one and God another, is like a beast of burden to the gods;" "How can that which is come from that which is not?"

5. The great elements,¹ ahankāra,² buddhi,³ and the unmanifest,⁴ — it is even this;⁵ the ten indriyas,⁶ the one,⁷ and the five objects of sense,⁸

Then is declared that which is produced by Prakriti.

6. Desire⁹ and aversion,¹⁰ pleasure and pain, coherence,¹¹ conscious life,¹² recuperative power,¹³ — thus has been declared the Kshetra,¹⁴ together with its products.

¹ "Great elements;" great because pervading all the products, namely, the ten indriyas, the manas, and the five gross elements

² "Ahankāra," that is, egotism or the Ego, through false knowledge considered as an object of cognition, — the power represented by "I am this."

³ "Buddhi" is the producing or determining power of Nature, in individuals it is the intellect or power of judgment

⁴ "Unmanifest," is the root-cause, Prakriti, the unseen power of God. "My Illusive power, difficult to cross over" (Chap VII 14)

⁵ "It is even this," that is, my eight-fold, differentiated, inferior nature (mentioned, VII 4) is thus described here

⁶ "Indriyas," the five senses and the five powers or organs of action. Organs do not here mean the different parts of the body, but the powers which manifest themselves through these various portions of the body, — as walking through the feet, and so on

⁷ "The one;" that is, the manas, or reflecting self

⁸ "Objects of sense;" that is, the gross elements. The assemblage of all these powers is the Kshetra

⁹ "Desire" is the attraction towards an object belonging to the same class as one previously experienced, the concomitant of such attraction is pleasure.

¹⁰ "Aversion," with its concomitant pain, is the opposite of desire.

¹¹ "Coherence" is the power by which the senses, organs, limbs, and internal faculties are held together as one.

¹² "Conscious life" is not consciousness, which is identical with the Ego, and therefore with the Deity. Conscious life appears to pervade the body as force may be said to pervade matter in which it resides. The buddhi is described as transparent to consciousness, and thus able to produce an image or simulation of consciousness in a being

¹³ "Recuperative power" is the energy supplied from within a creature for the purpose of maintaining the organism and its functions. This power revives the senses when weakened by fatigue, it also shows itself as mental and physical endurance. No amount of food could invigorate a man if this power did not exist before eating. Authority and argument prove these powers to be properties of matter, and not spirit. The Vedic text says "Desire, intention, effort, belief, non-belief, recuperative power and its opposite, shame, intelligence, fear, — all this is but the mind." The Ego not being an object cannot be related to any of these things, which can be experienced and are therefore objects.

¹⁴ "Kshetra;" the individual body is one of the groups into which these objects are divided.

This explains the nature of the Kshetra, which is the first of the three topics of this chapter. The others are knowledge and the Kshetrajna, in revealing whom knowledge reaches its consummation and ceases to have further use.

The powers enumerated are products of Prakriti and not properties of the Ego which, united to Prakriti, is declared to be omniscient, almighty, etc. By this distinct statement the philosophy of the Atomist and the Logician are rejected. Sāṅkhya and Yoga philosophers do not completely follow the Blessed Lord, who is declaring the teaching of the Vedānta, the orthodox philosophy of the Brāhmins.

The Blessed Lord proceeds to declare what knowledge is. Although in the third verse knowledge is not distinctly mentioned as one of the subjects, it is yet impossible to describe the object to be known without giving some idea of the knowledge, or the knower. The true Ego being the object to be known, or realized, the apparent knower is really the knowledge. The buddhi, in connection with the body which answered to the name forming the subject of the statement made by another, "He has attained Nirvāna," is the knowledge.

Spiritual knowledge, in short, is that simple reality which is represented by the instructor, the instruction, and the pupil who receives it. This knowledge is an interior or transcendental reality, while the practical meaning of these three words is included in the Kshetra. Spiritual knowledge is not the product of effort, for no effort can produce that which is absolutely nothing before the effort is made. Nor is it a thing which pre-exists the effort which can be said to establish a new relation between it and the maker of the effort, as is the case with any object of possession, where ownership results from the action of the owner; for spiritual knowledge cannot co-exist with the sense of proprietorship or any other form of egotism.

The question as to who gains the knowledge is based upon ignorance of what the knowledge is. Such questions can only arise in regard to the false nature of the Ego as opposed to its true nature. The traditional reply to such questions as "Who is bound by ignorance, and who is liberated by spiritual knowledge?" is the demonstration of their irrationality. Nothing else so clearly discloses the want of humility which prompts questions on a subject which is of need care and thought, as is shown by these questions.

This universe is the false nature of the Ego, and appears as true by the illegitimate ascription to it of the property of Truth. In fact, it is the illegitimacy of the ascription that makes this nature false. The ascriber is also that false nature and no other. As an actor may personate a king without being a king, so the false nature personates the Ego without being it. The actor may pretend to die on the stage and yet his real personality suffers no injury, he remains unchanged when his part is finished. So when the false nature shall finish its pretences the Ego will be itself, — that is, the same it was in the beginning and is now, — having no more parts to play forever and forever. This is the last thought on the stage of the world before the false Ego, or, more strictly speaking, the falsehood about the Ego, finally disappears as the baseless fabric of a dream. "I have done all that is to be done, obtained all that is to be obtained, known all that is to be known, — it is finished." Thus ends the working of the false nature, not indeed by mere lapse of time. As a play does not end from this cause, but by the consummation of the purpose of the play, so by the realization of the purpose of existence, namely, the perception of all that exists, man's destiny is fulfilled; then comes the disappearance of that perception because all things have been perceived, as appetite ceases when a satisfying meal is eaten. Spiritual knowledge is the revelation of this purpose, the completion of the destiny of man. A man hears from those who know what the destiny of man is, and then realizes his own destiny, the purpose of his being. This is spiritual knowledge, to exist no more as a man.

In reality the Ego is as independent of spiritual knowledge as it is of false knowledge. It requires no knowledge, true or false, for a thing to be itself.

7. Want of conceit,¹ want of ostentation,² inoffensiveness,³ forgivingness,⁴ sincerity,⁵ devotion to spir-

¹ "Conceit" is here used for the conscious attributing of merit to one's self.

² "Ostentation" is the disclosure of one's spiritual condition.

³ "Inoffensiveness," causing pain to no creature by mind, speech, or body.

⁴ "Forgivingness," want of perturbation in the mind on being injured.

⁵ "Sincerity," harmony between act and feeling; the sage having no personal motive has no thought as to how he acts.

itual instructors, cleanliness,¹ firmness,² restraint of self.³

8. Dispassion about objects of sense,⁴ absence of pride, and meditation upon the evils⁵ of birth, death,⁶ decrepitude, disease, and suffering.

9. Want of attachment to objects and self-identifying interest⁷ in son, wife, house, and so forth, and unchanging equal-heartedness on the occurrence of what is favorable and what is unfavorable.

10. Love unflinching to Me through self-effacement⁸ in non-separateness⁹ from Me, fondness for secluded spots,¹⁰ and want of pleasure in congregations of men.¹¹

¹ "Cleanliness," external and internal, the latter is freedom from attachment and aversion, and is gained by impressing upon the mind the unclean character of these qualities

² "Firmness," perseverance in working out one's salvation.

³ "Restraint of self." "Self" is here the union of body and the faculties, which produces our present being. Its restraint is in the power to end their natural union, which is manifested as the tendencies of the natural man.

⁴ "Dispassion . . . sense," that is, want of attraction towards any sensuous object, experienced or unexperienced. This comes by

⁵ "Meditation upon the evils," etc. "The moment thou art born thou art fated to die, the moment thou diest thou art fated to be again imprisoned in the dark dungeon of the womb, sunk in the foulest impurities, and even while thou livest the body is liable to be afflicted by the most loathsome diseases, and the mind by the intensest sufferings from passions and the uncertainties of life."

⁶ "Death." The agonies of death are produced by the violent wrenching of the senses and faculties from their normal operations.

⁷ "Self-identifying interest," etc. The thought that their life is my life, their suffering mine, and so on. This natural force has the effect of making the working out of salvation appear to be an act of personal interest to be compared with the interests of son, wife, etc. A man is thus blinded into the belief that it is unselfish to give up working out his salvation for the worldly well-being of his family and relations (Cf. Matt. x 37.)

⁸ "Self-effacement," or Samādhi, a state of spiritual exaltation in which consciousness of the present self is completely obliterated.

⁹ "Non-separateness." There is nothing beside my God, Vāsudeva, and He is my supreme goal.

¹⁰ "Fondness for secluded spots," perception of the Spirit is obtained in such places.

¹¹ "Congregations of men;" in the midst of unregenerate men the eye of the spirit is blinded.

11. Constancy in the pursuit of spiritual knowledge, meditation as to the end of the knowledge of truth,¹—these² are said to be knowledge; ignorance is that which is opposite to this.

The question arises as to how these attributes can be called knowledge of the Supreme Spirit, since they do not define and condition consciousness. It can be observed everywhere that knowledge conditions the object known. This involves reasoning in a circle. It conditions the object known because it is knowledge, it is knowledge because it conditions the object. The truth is, that when knowledge is said to condition the object known, the meaning is that the object is different from other objects not connected with that knowledge; as, for example, the knowledge that reveals a baked earthen jar does not manifest fire.

Hence it is not unjustifiable to speak of these attributes as knowledge of which the object is the Supreme Spirit, meaning by knowledge the concomitant indications of knowledge which is indefinable. The knowledge of the Supreme Spirit is the knowledge "I am He." None can know the "I" as an object; no more can the Supreme Spirit be known as an object. This knowledge in its consummation is Nirvāna.

12. That which is to be known I shall declare, knowing which a man attains immortality,—the beginningless, Supreme Brahmā that is said to be neither Aught nor Naught.

Although the Absolute Deity is so difficult to be known, yet the pursuit of spiritual knowledge is worthy of unfaltering devotion, because the consummation of it is beyond description glorious,—identity with the Supreme Spirit. In order to declare the Absolute Deity, the beginning is made at the highest point of conditioned existence; namely, the cause of creation, preservation, and destruction.

¹ "End of the knowledge of truth," that is, liberation. "The truth shall make you free" (John viii 32). By constant thought about Nirvāna, or eternal life, the mind begins to believe that of all things this is the best, and acquires strength to work for it.

² "These;" all that has been said in verses 7-11. "These" are called knowledge because they fit one for the reception of knowledge.

of the universe, which is beginningless for all, and unending for those who do not attain Nirvāna, where the attribute of being the cause no longer illusively conditions consciousness. The Supreme Spirit is beginningless and yet itself

It might at first sight appear that after the promise to declare what is to be known for the purpose of attaining immortality, it is inadequate to say that the Supreme is "neither Aught nor Naught." But it is not so, and is in perfect agreement with all teachings of the Vedānta. It being impossible to make any affirmation about the Deity, — since all that is, is but falsely imputed to Him as His attributes, — negation is the only right method of declaring Him, who cannot be found out by searching.

The Vedas declare, "Now then this commandment, not this, not that, not great, not small, not short, not long, not within, not without, not before, not behind, not sound, not touch, not form, not changing, also not taste," because a legitimate application of the demonstrative pronoun is not possible in respect of the Deity. How is this different from universal negation? In this, that about which the verb "to be" is used in an affirmative sense exists, and the reverse does not. But the employment of the verb for affirmation or negation is an act of mental operation, which cannot extend to the Supreme Spirit, who is not an object limited by the mind.

Let us take an example in the phrase, "The barren woman's son." The difference between the two cases is this. In so far as the "barren woman's son" can have any importance he must be perceptible by ordinary physical means. When we reject the figment of the barren woman's son, we mean nothing more than this, that our conscious existence, as well as the happiness which existence implies, is in no way affected by that figment. In other words, it is the implied perceptibility of the barren woman's son that gives the mind the feeling of rest in certitude when we negative his existence.

Not so in the case of the Absolute Deity, in regard to whom there is no implication of perceptibility. Being beyond the possibility of experience by the mind, the Deity cannot be the object of the mental function of negation. Therefore the being of the Deity is proved by the word, that is, by the mystery of revelation. That which is not of any advantage to any man (as is an object declared to be beyond the power to experience), no man can or will invent.

Here another doubt arises. Granted that Absolute Deity is not subject to negation, how is it possible to know Him from whom alone eternal life can be inherited? The very consideration of the impossibility of perceiving the Deity through the mind and the senses, which establishes His being, establishes the other truth that immortality is impossible, because we have no means of knowing the Deity. This doubt is not well founded; for the same authority which establishes the being of the Deity as an absolute truth, and therefore not amenable to sense perception or inference, also declares that there is a power called divine grace or spiritual illumination, which makes the Deity known, not indeed as an object, but as the consciousness within us (Cf. Matt. x 27; John v. 21, 26). Consciousness alone is life in itself, or is self-existent, and the moment it is perceived that I, the Self, am the Spirit or pure consciousness, immortality is achieved.

The Supreme Spirit is proved by the word but not made known. For words can cause us to realize four categories only; namely, class, action, attribute, and relation. The Supreme Spirit is none of these. How then can He be called reality, which is a class containing many members? This use of reality is a mere figure of speech, and has no scientific precision; for the revealed authority, the Vedas, declares, "For Brahmā there is neither clan nor caste." Respecting action it is said, "Without action, peace;" as regards attributes, "He is one only and attributeless;" touching relation it is explicitly declared, "One without a second." In brief, words can only deal with quality and their co-inherence, usually called substance, but the Supreme Spirit is different from all of them, and consequently beyond all words.

From the rejection of the attribution of reality or being to the Deity, it may seem as though He were nothing. To remove this fear it is shown that the existence itself of the limbs, organs, senses, and faculties of creatures affords the proof that they are the powers of consciousness. Disconnected with consciousness they cannot for a moment be, and yet they are not disconnected. Consequently their apparent non-identity with consciousness is not due to any power in them. Nor is it possible to say that they are self-existent. Hence they are and are not identical with consciousness, without any power of their own. This is the same thing as to say that they are the powers of consciousness with which they are identical or not, according to another power which must be regarded as absolute

free-will, or independence of consciousness, — a power not liable to be described. The conclusion is undeniable that the point of view from which reality is attributed to powers cannot admit of the same epithet being applied to the Powerful, but without the Powerful neither attribute nor attribution can be.

The knowledge of the Deity is the realization that the Deity is unknowable by reason of His absoluteness, but being Consciousness, He is that which every creature feels after as the "I." The world being His power is in reality nothing but Himself. The apparent non-identity which gives an apparent reality to the world is an indescribable, unessential something, — a falsehood to be avoided with contempt. Consciousness cannot be known except as that by which and through which all things are known; and no thing can exist that is not known. Consciousness is independent and self-existent, while all things can and do exist only through it. Hence the whole universe is the power of consciousness; in other words, the universe is, and can cease to be, only by the power of consciousness, the power which destroys the universe would itself be destroyed if rejected by consciousness.

Fully to realize this is to know God with true knowledge. No being can thus know God except those who, thoroughly purified by complete renunciation and perfect resignation, know Him as the Self, — know Him by the knowledge "I am He."

13. That has hands and feet everywhere, everywhere eyes, heads, and mouths, ears everywhere, he remains in the world, covering all.

The bodies and minds of different creatures are really presided over by one consciousness, the Kshetrajna, who appears as though distinct in each creature. But if these illusive forms are rejected, the consciousness which is man, and God, and all beings at the same time, and at all times, remains.

14. Reflected¹ by the functions of all senses and fac-

¹ "Reflected," that is, nothing can exist without consciousness, yet nothing is consciousness, therefore it is said to be reflected, — consciousness appears as though acting. "He seems to rest, he seems to move," says a sacred text. The revered commentator says, "For those devoid of right discrimination when the senses and faculties act, the Ego appears as though the actor, as, when clouds move about, the moon seems as though in motion."

ulties, yet devoid of all senses¹ and faculties, unattached, yet all-supporting; ² devoid of qualities, yet witnessing all qualities.³

15. That is the within⁴ and without⁵ of creatures, animate and inanimate; it is unrealizable on account of subtlety, and is distant⁶ as well as near.⁷

16 That which is to be known, though undistributed is distributed in creatures,⁸ and is the support of creatures,⁹ as also destroyer and creator.

17. That is the light of all lights,¹⁰ is said to be beyond darkness;¹¹ the knowledge,¹² that to be known,¹³ and that which is known,¹⁴ seated in specialty¹⁵ in the hearts of all.

¹ "Devoid of all senses," that is, in reality the Ego is unconditioned by any organ, limb, or faculty. The Scriptures say, "He, devoid of hands and feet, moves and grasps, sees, though without eyes, hears, though without ears."

² "Unattached yet all-supporting," that is, though the Spirit is without relation to anything, yet if it were not, nothing would be. Even the seeming reality of the world requires The Reality to be simulated.

³ "Qualities," here used in the technical sense of the Sāṅkhya philosophy, means the three components of nature, fully described in the succeeding chapter.

⁴ "Within," to the wise the innermost thing, the Ego, is the Supreme Spirit.

⁵ "Without," that is, for those who, being in delusion, take the body as the Ego, the Spirit is the external body from the skin to the marrow. Such is their delusion.

⁶ "Distant," for the unwise, who search the whole world for it in vain.

⁷ "Near," for the wise who know it to be the Self. The holy text says, "It moves, it does not move, it is distant, it is near, it is the innermost of all this as well as the outermost of all this."

⁸ "Distributed in creatures," in consequence of being considered in reference to each body. As the cause, the Spirit is but One, while in regard to effects it is many.

⁹ "Support of creatures" during the life of the Kosmos, and at other seasons destroyer and creator.

¹⁰ "Light of all lights," as without the sun nothing can be seen, so the sun himself cannot be seen except through the majestic, self-sustained splendor of the Spirit.

¹¹ "Is said to be beyond darkness," beyond the reach of false knowledge; "said" by the Vedas. (See comment, Chapter VIII verse 9)

¹² "Knowledge" (See verses 7-11)

¹³ "To be known" (See verses 12-17)

¹⁴ "That which is known," when the truth is realized in a heart purified by the virtues called knowledge in verses 7-11

¹⁵ "Seated in specialty," as the rays of the sun fall everywhere but are peculiarly seated in transparent media, so these three realities, though all-pervading, are in the heart or buddhi.

The real nature of the Supreme Spirit is incomprehensible. Whoever, knowing this, knows Him as declared in verses 13-16, and perceives that the real nature of the Deity is identical with the true Self in us, knows truly indeed and is immortal

18. Thus has been declared in brief the Kshetra,¹ knowledge,² and that to be known;³ my devotee,⁴ realizing this, attains to my state.⁵

From the practical point of view the last verse of Chapter XI. is the most important in the book; as regards philosophy, the foregoing verses of this chapter are incomparably the most important

The truth fully sung by Vāṣiṣṭha and the other divinely illuminated sages in the Vedas, and illustrated by well-reasoned arguments, has been thus briefly declared by the Blessed Lord. Whoever realizes this truth is set free.

The twofold nature of the Deity is declared in Chapter VII. verses 4, 5, and it is also said that these two form the source from which all things come. The subject is resumed here.

19. Know Prakṛiti⁶ and Puruṣa⁷ as both beginningless. Know the emanations⁸ and qualities⁹ as born of Prakṛiti.

Prakṛiti and Puruṣa are co-eternal and are the power of the Deity by which creation, preservation, and destruction take place. Prakṛiti is the power by which all work is done, while Puruṣa looks on. If he did not oversee she would not work, and if she did not work he could not look on, in the absence of anything to be looked at. But yet essentially consciousness is different from the objective; therefore their union, as described, is due to the fact of

¹ "Kshetra," described in verses 5, 6, for the purpose of giving the right knowledge of the individual ego.

² "Knowledge," that is, the relation between the Kshetra and the Supreme Spirit.

³ "Known," that is, the Supreme Spirit

⁴ "My devotee," he who having firmly placed his entire heart in the Supreme Spirit sees nothing but the Supreme everywhere and in everything

⁵ "My state," identity with the Supreme Spirit or liberation.

⁶ "Prakṛiti," that is, the inferior nature of the Deity (Chap VII. v. 4).

⁷ "Puruṣa," the superior nature of the Deity, or consciousness.

⁸ "Emanations," such as buddhi and the rest.

⁹ "Qualities," modifications of nature appearing as pleasure, pain, and delusion.

their being both the nature of the Deity, and is the manifestation of His will. This is the most important thing to impress upon the mind.

The beginningless union of consciousness with matter is due to the free and absolutely unconditioned will of God alone; it is otherwise called illusion or false knowledge, because it is not an object to which the pronoun "this" can be applied, and because it is extinguished on attainment of liberation. The essential nature of will being independence of conditions, the dissolution of the illegitimate union between matter and spirit is also the outcome of the Divine will. This union and disunion do not show any changeableness in the will of God, for the very essence of change, which is Time, does not exist except by the union of Prakriti and Purusha. Hence it is clear that no one can attain liberation or true knowledge of the Deity by mere lapse of time. To accept the doctrine of a progressive development for the immortal Ego is to accept death in preference to life. The Ego is essentially immortal, and therefore at every instant free from the conditions of time. The free growth of this faith is the attainment of the eternal life. This, however, can never take place so long as the lie is given to it openly by unrighteousness of conduct and want of resignation, which has its origin in the belief that the Ego is transitory and limited by personal desires.

Bondage and liberation are really nothing but the two aspects of the Divine will, uniting and disuniting Prakriti and Purusha. The difference between the Sāṅkhya philosophers and the orthodox Brāhmanical teachers lies in the fact that the former ascribe to Prakriti the power of uniting with and disuniting from Purusha; and although she is unconscious, she appears as though conscious by reason of this power of uniting herself with Purusha.

The orthodox sages attach a different meaning to the term Prakriti. The revered commentator says, "Prakriti is the power of the Deity to create objects; the illusive power consisting of the three qualities." And as no creation can take place except by the union of Prakriti and Purusha, therefore Prakriti is not independent, but is subject to the will of God. The Sāṅkhya philosophers demur to this, and say that Prakriti is "the rootless root."

The others say that Prakriti, being unconscious, cannot be the First Cause, because such a tenet would be opposed to such Vedic texts as declare creation to be caused by a conscious power.

The Sāṅkhya philosophers reply that such texts do not impugn

the truth of their doctrines, because by union with Purusha, Prakriti appears as conscious.

The orthodox school rejects this exposition as being too cumbrous and roundabout. But the seeming difference on this point between these two schools altogether disappears when we reflect over the teaching of the Sāṅkhya school on this point. It holds that the union between Prakriti and Purusha is due to ignorance, which is destroyed by right knowledge, and that, as a great Sāṅkhya authority declares, "Verily, no one is bound, nor is released, nor migrates: but resting in many forms, Prakriti herself migrates, is bound, and is freed" (Sāṅkhya Kārikā, Aph. LXII).

This aphorism removes the apparent conflict between these two schools upon a very important point, — the real nature of the Ego. On a cursory view of the Sāṅkhya system, it would appear as if it held that the Ego is essentially possessed of the three attributes, cognition, will, and action, at one time, but that at another time, that is to say, on liberation, it is divested of these attributes. It also seems to hold that the distinctness of personalities is due to real distinctness of egos.

But upon a careful examination of this system as a whole, these apparent tenets give way before very different conclusions. It then becomes plain that this school, in common with orthodox Brāhmanism, admits the indescribability of ignorance, and does not understand it as mere negation of knowledge; it also teaches the essential attributelessness of the Ego, and the consciousness of the First Cause. Nor does it leave any doubt that in truth the Sāṅkhya school does not maintain the apparent multiplicity of Purushas to be an ultimate reality. (See Sāṅkhya Kārikā, Aphs XVII. and XX.) The difference of teaching as to the order of the evolution of principles is immaterial, since both lead to precisely the same final result.

The school usually called Theistic Sāṅkhya differs from the orthodox philosophy as to the nature of the First Cause. It maintains that although the Supreme Spirit is the Creator, and has other functions, he is yet eternally pure and unconditioned, while the Blessed Lord teaches that the Supreme Spirit is really actionless and absolute, — the phenomenal manifestations being the outcome of the relation between the two natures or powers.

Here, also, on reflection, it will be seen that the difference is formal and non-essential. This difference may also be found between the Old Testament and the New. Jehovah the Creator is

Absolute, — "I am that I am," — while in the New Testament the Deity does not create except through His Son, who is not included in the procession of beings. As the union of Prakṛiti and Puruṣa is not caused in time, the Son is eternally in the bosom of the Father, "whom no one can see" on account of His absolute majesty.

This last conception is in perfect accord with orthodox Brāhmanism, in which Īṣvara stands for the Son. Īṣvara is possessed of all powers, yet is not absolute; because whenever any power is exercised he is the exerciser of that power, and is thus conditioned by it, while the Father "judges no man." Light will be thrown on the limitations of the Son by the will of the Father through such declarations as these. "Verily, verily I say unto you, the Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do; for what things soever He doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise. For the Father loveth the Son and sheweth him all things that Himself doeth, and He will show him greater works than these, that ye may marvel. . . . For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son" (John v. 19, 20, 22).

"I can of mine own self do nothing, as I hear, I judge: my judgment is just, because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father that has sent me" (John v. 32).

"And when all things shall be subdued unto Him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all" (1 Cor. xx. 28).

It is to be noted here that the word Son is expressly rejected by the father of orthodox Brāhmanism of modern times — the revered Sankarāchārya — owing to its implication of a derived and yet independent reality. The Spirit of God, consciousness, is the real nature of the Son as of all creatures. The only real nature of the universe, animate and inanimate, is the Supreme Spirit.

In so far as the Father of the universe is said to do anything, it is done by His mere being, and without even the least liability to being conditioned as the exerciser of power. In order to indicate the absoluteness of the Deity, it is often said that all things are done by His Word. The Word of God eternally uttered contains within itself the totality of phenomenal manifestations. The universe is nothing but the meaning of this Word.

There is a class of interpreters who put a different construction on this nineteenth verse by rendering the original word for beginningless as "not the beginning," in the sense of the ultimate; but

this is not to be accepted. Because if God, as Himself, is taken as the First Cause of all things, then Prakriti and Purusha must have been created by Him. Consequently, before their creation God's lordly power would have been absent, and this power being absent, He could not have been the Lord. If the Deity creates, as Himself, without these two instruments, then this universe would have been as real as Himself, and eternal life would have been a mere alternative expression for annihilation; there would have been no bondage or liberation, and all revealed Scriptures and doctrines would have been purposeless and void.

By admitting the co-eternity of Prakriti and Purusha, and the independence of the Absolute Deity, and His identity with consciousness under whatever apparent conditions manifested, all this is avoided. The same truth may be stated by saying that the will of God is the mysterious union between matter and spirit, which are respectively His false or exterior and real or interior nature. The wise words of the great commentator are "God being eternal, His two natures must also be eternal, because they form His divinity. Through them He creates, preserves, and destroys the universe."

Another misconception must also be removed. It is not reasonable to think of any cause prior to Prakriti and Purusha, for that only leads to a *regressus in infinitum*. The truth is, that to deny the eternity of the powers of God, called Prakriti and Purusha, is to deny the existence of God, because God without His nature and His independence of nature is nothing. It is distinctly to be stated that God really or interiorly is the Absolute.

20. In the production of cause and effect, the cause is said to be Prakriti:¹ in the production of experienter-ship of pleasure and pain, Purusha is said to be the cause.²

"Cause" may here be interpreted in two ways; either as meaning the five senses, five organs, manas, ahankāra, and buddhi, or as

¹ "Cause is said to be Prakriti," that is, the initiating cause of all action in the universe. "Is said" refers to Kapila, the divine sage, with whom were born righteousness, knowledge, dispassion, and power. The Blessed Lord says, "Among the perfect I am Kapila" (Chap. X v. 26).

² "Purusha is said to be the cause." Purusha does not here mean the Supreme Spirit, but the Ego as connected with Kshetra, by the connection called ignorance (avidyā). He is the cause by reason of this connection.

the seven secondary causes; namely, buddhi, ahankāra, and the five subtle elements. The connotation of "effect" will depend upon that given to "cause." If this term is accepted in the former sense, then "effect" would mean the gross physical frame; in the other case it would include the sixteen non-producing products of root-nature as accepted by Sāṅkhya philosophers; namely, five senses, five organs, manas, and five gross elements

These two powers are the cause of the universe; because, without the productive capacity of Prakṛiti, and the cognizing power of Puruṣa, the universe cannot exist. But the universe is the connection called ignorance, existing between the objective Prakṛiti, which contains cause and effect, and the subject Puruṣa.

The experiencing of pleasure and pain is the perceptible universe, which is only another expression for the bondage of the Ego. According to the Sāṅkhya philosophers, Prakṛiti, being unconscious, cannot be the experiencer, but there is no objection to her being the agent, only performing action when cognized by consciousness by relation to her through the mysterious power of ignorance. It is observed that the teats of the cow exude milk when the calf is near; thus by the rational, not spacial, proximity of Puruṣa, Prakṛiti works,—in the same way as a blind man makes his way out of a forest even if a cripple mounts upon his back to direct him.

The experiencership of Puruṣa has been mentioned. To what is it due?

21. Puruṣa seated¹ in Prakṛiti² experiences the qualities born of Prakṛiti: the cause of his birth in good and evil wombs is self-identification with qualities.

The acceptance of the experience of pleasure and pain and indifference existing in Prakṛiti as belonging to the Ego, is the chief cause of birth, disease, and death. The sacred authority declares, "What he desires, that becomes a determination; and what he determines here, that he becomes on passing away."

Two causes of birth are here mentioned,—self-identification with qualities, and Prakṛiti, in which the Ego is seated. Prakṛiti is the material cause, and supplies the material for the construction of this

¹ "Seated," that is, accepting Prakṛiti as the Self

² *Prakṛiti*, in the sense of avidyā, or the binding and not the liberating aspect of Prakṛiti as explained by Sāṅkhya philosophy (See Sāṅkhya Kārikā, Aph. XLIII.) In the latter aspect she is Vidyā, or spiritual knowledge.

"baseless fabric of a dream." Self-identification with qualities is the instrumental cause in this construction.

The mention of the extremes, good and evil wombs, includes birth as a god, a human being, or an animal. The ego, said to vary in one body from that in another body, is celestial, terrestrial, or bestial, according to the attributes with which it is identified. Stripped of the "muddy vesture of decay," it is none of these, but pure consciousness, which is the spirit of God. Upon the birth of a creature upon the earth, the ego does not start from absolute nothingness, but it was in the purpose and design of God from beginningless past time. The purpose and design of God is Prakriti, which is ceaselessly at work. An ego dwells in Prakriti by undergoing endless incarnations until it knows what Prakriti is; in other words, until it knows the Divine purpose of its existence. When this is realized Nīrvāna is attained.

The bondage of the ego is neither essential nor accidental, but false, being due to ignorance or illusion. The ego thus bound is liberated by the realization that in truth it is not subject to such bondage. The thinking principle is the cause of bondage as well as of liberation. When operating in relation to objects it is bondage; when not operating in relation to objects by reason of the perception of their falsehood and the reality of the ego alone, it is liberation.

22. The Purusha in the body is supreme,¹ is upa-drashṭā,² anumantā,³ bhartā,⁴ bhoktā,⁵ Maheçvara,⁶ and also called⁷ Paramātmā.⁸

¹ "Supreme," that is, superior to Prakriti

² *Upadrashṭā*, that is, the innermost in us, as well as the witnessing spirit; in other words, that which is the centre of all, body, mind, and intelligence, and at the same time is not an object, but is absolute consciousness. The term also implies that the spirit is merely the on-looker, and is not concerned about the body and its acts.

³ *Anumantā*, that is, producer of satisfaction in the doer of an act, though not himself concerned in action, still appearing as such, witnessing the work of all, and never forbidding any.

⁴ *Bhartā*, that is, the true consciousness which is reflected as the consciousness in the assemblage of the body and the interior faculties, hence, "the supporter."

⁵ *Bhoktā*, the consciousness which, pervading the buddhi as units of consciousness, appears as conscious beings

⁶ *Maheçvara*, "the great Lord" Consciousness as connected with the whole universe "This is the Lord of all, the great master of all things, thus the ruler of worlds," says the sacred text.

⁷ "Called," in the Vedas.

⁸ *Paramātmā*, the ātmā, or spirit as the consciousness in the First Cause. The term is explained in Chapter XV. verse 17.

Know that which thou callest "I" and blindly givest attributes to is the Absolute Emperor of the universe, the Creator, Destroyer, and Preserver of all. The being within thee which experiences objects is the personal ruler of the universe; the true Self is the consciousness which manifests this knowledge, and therefore identical in all but name with the consciousness in the First Cause. Existence as man and its good and evil experiences are entirely false. Die to the falsehood and thou shalt live in truth. The realization or true knowledge of this annihilation before God is liberation or eternal life.

23. Whoso thus¹ knoweth Purusha and Prakriti,² together with the qualities, he, though engaged³ in everything, is not born again.

"Again" refers to the time after the dissolution of the present body. What happens to his beginningless past Karma, as well as to that of the present and of the future time in which the existence of the body continues? The sacred authority says, "His Karma is destroyed by realizing Him who is the superior as well as the inferior nature."

Does death of the body then follow the attainment of spiritual knowledge? No; as in that case no spiritual teacher could have existed, and without spiritual teachers the acquirement of knowledge is quite impossible.

What Karma is it, then, that keeps him alive? The Karma that was in operation at the time when knowledge was attained. It is difficult to understand how this residue is left on the consumption of Karma by the fire of knowledge. The explanation is that all acts done by the sage, after his illumination, are not done by him, because he knows himself to be the unknowable consciousness which is identical with the Absolute and Actionless Spirit. Consequently such acts produce no change or effect in him such as could be the seed of future Karma.

¹ "Thus;" that is, directly realizes Purusha, — "I am he."

² *Prakriti*, owing to this realization he destroys avidyā, together with all its modifications, by vidyā. "As light destroys the mass of darkness, so vidyā, avidyā," says the revered commentator. When the darkness is destroyed there remains no further use for the light, and then the ineffable life in God, the true Self, is found.

³ "Though engaged," etc.; even if he does things that are enjoined or prohibited by scriptural authority.

The stored-up Karma is destroyed because its root, *avidyā*, and desire are destroyed by knowledge and dispassion. But the Karma already in operation is not destroyed, because it is not perceived by the sage, as his body is to him like a shadow, or as one of the illusions created by *avidyā* and previously considered as himself. He now realizes that his body has nothing to do with him, the Ego, or true Self, but as knowledge is no impediment to the operation of illusion in regard to others, so in the case of the body its acts are perceived by them to continue as begun.

An illustration may be given. A man is surprised in the night by a robber, as he thinks. He shoots at the untimely visitor, and instantly sees, by a flash of lightning, that he had mistaken a friend for a robber. He throws down his weapon, but that does not prevent the shot discharged from wounding the friend.

In the first twelve chapters the conception of the individual spirit and of the universal spirit is purified, in this chapter their identity is declared. "Know Me to be even as the *Kshetrajna*." The Blessed Lord now proceeds to unfold the various ways of realizing this life-giving truth

24. By meditation¹ some realize the *âtma* in the heart by the *buddhi*,² others by *Sāṅkhya Yoga*,³ and others again by *Karma Yoga*.⁴

The condition of the very lowest is next considered.

25. Others, again, not knowing this,⁵ worship assiduously,⁶ hearing from others, even they go beyond death,⁷

¹ "Meditation," which consists in withdrawing all the senses from their objects and merging them in the mind, and then the mind in the individual spirit. This is appropriate for the moderately spiritual, who cannot perceive the truth from its simple declaration, but must quiet all disturbing influences by concentration of mind on the scriptural declarations about Truth which is the real nature of the Spirit.

² *Buddhi*, the purified inner faculties

³ *Sāṅkhya Yoga*, realization of the Ego as distinct from the three qualities which constitute *avidyā*. There is no reference here to the philosophy of Kapila. This is possible to the most spiritual only

⁴ *Karma Yoga*, the dedication of all action to the Deity. Fit practice for those incapable of the others

⁵ "Not knowing this," that is, unable to believe in it from personal examination of the Scriptures, they receive it on the authority of others

⁶ "Worship assiduously," that is, meditate on it constantly.

⁷ "Go beyond death;" that is, escape from conditioned life by slow degrees.

making the hearing of the Scriptures¹ their supreme goal.

26. Whenever the least thing, animate or inanimate, is born, know that to be from the union of the Kshetra and the Kshetrajna.

Unions are usually of two kinds: 1. Like the union of the rope to the water-jar round the neck of which it is tied; 2. Like the union of blackness and an object, together forming a black object. The "union" here spoken of is different from these; it consists in the ascription of the properties of one to the other. The Ego is absolutely different from the non-ego, yet a relation between them is perceived. This is due to the ascription of objectivity to the Ego and of consciousness to the object. This false knowledge disappears when it is perceived that consciousness has no relation to objects. The result of this realization is the disappearance of objects; namely, the universality of the universal spirit and the individuality of the individual spirit, and then liberation is accomplished, suffering is extinguished, and the Truth is known. He who once attains this knowledge is deluded no more, whether he lives or dies, and whatever he may do. He is free as the air, bound by no laws of any kind. (Cf. John iii. 8)

The extinction of false knowledge is further treated of in order to impress us with the fact that this is the supreme consummation of existence.

27. Whoso sees the supreme Lord² remaining equal³ in all creatures, undestroyed in the destruction of them all,⁴ sees indeed.

28. Perceiving the Lord as differenceless, existing equally everywhere, he does not destroy the Self by himself, and therefore goes to the supreme end.

¹ "Hearing of the Scriptures," etc., hearing includes all requisites of proper study. This is the chief expedient for the lowest

² "Supreme Lord," from the standpoint of the consciousness dwelling in "union" with the body

³ "Equal;" although the Supreme Spirit is in all creatures, it still has no differences.

⁴ "Undestroyed in . . . them all," destruction includes all the six changes to which every creature is subject. To be destroyed, a creature must have passed through birth, existence after birth, growth, decay, and change of substance.

The Deity is differenceless since he is the one and secondless consciousness; there is nothing either similar to or different from the Deity. It must not be forgotten that in the Deity the idea that "I am and nothing but I am" does not exist. The meaning of the saying that "the Supreme Spirit is one and secondless" is the negation of such an idea, which would imply a searching for something, and then feeling that the impulse to search finds rest without finding anything. This, being a mental process, is to be negated with regard to the Deity, who is "without life and without mind," according to sacred authority.

The Deity is the plenitude of bliss, is unconditioned consciousness, the absolute perfection, and therefore devoid of all impulse of any kind which, being the invariable sign of want and imperfection, do not belong to the real nature of the Deity.

"Existing equally everywhere" is a paradox, for "everywhere" implies differentiation, and "equally" is the negation of all differences. All that is, is the Supreme, yet the Deity is nothing but the Deity. There is no simile for the wide expanse of the heavens, nor for the waters of the ocean; how much less can there be a simile for the unsearchable God, whose image the universe cannot hold, in search of a perfect representation of whom Brahma is said to be eternally creating and abandoning creation in despair. Here lies the great difference between Truth and Pantheism. The Pantheist says, "Nothing but God is, and He is the Universe." The true devotee says, "Nothing but God is, and He is not the Universe." The great commentator says, "The Supreme Spirit is different from the universe. Besides that Spirit nothing is; that which is different from the Spirit is a false seeming, like a mirage of the desert."

"Does not destroy the Self by himself" It is well known that even the most foolish do not consciously injure themselves. The wise man who knows his identity with God does not seek to kill himself by casting out God.

The unwise, who do not know that the Self is identical with God, are guilty of suicide, and must therefore wander in the utter gloom of unrest. The Scripture says, "Sunless are those spheres, wrapped up in blinding gloom, whither repair after death the creatures who are murderers of the Self," meaning in the above sense.

It has been said that "the Lord is equally everywhere." How can this be harmonized with the observable differences in personalities?

29. Whoso sees every variety of action as performed by Prakriti,¹ and also the Ego² as non-actor,³ he sees indeed.

Not only is the Ego undifferentiated while existing in all things, but also the things themselves are not different from one another, being but various modifications of Prakriti, which is one To show this it is said : —

30. At the time when he recognizes⁴ the distinctions of things as merged in one,⁵ and therefore also the manifestations, then he becomes the Supreme Spirit.

How the absoluteness of the Deity remains unaffected, even though manifested in various forms, is next spoken of —

31. By reason of being causeless,⁶ attributeless,⁷ this, the Supreme Spirit, is changeless, and though in the body,⁸ O Kuntī's son, he neither acts nor is attached.

The Supreme Spirit "neither acts nor is attached" to the result of action or to action itself If the Supreme Spirit is the Ego and does not act, who is the actor? This question the Blessed Lord

¹ *Prakriti*, the illusive power of the Deity, the same that the Sāṅkhya school calls the "rootless root," the unconscious producer of all that is produced

² "Ego," the *Kshetrajña*

³ "Non-actor," that is, unconditioned

⁴ "Recognizes," that is, following the teaching of the Scriptures and the preceptors, he gradually acquires a vivid realization of the truth underlying those teachings, and feels that the truth he realizes is what they taught him.

⁵ "Merged in one" He perceives that all this is the Self, therefore life, mind, expectation, the elements, appearance, and disappearance are in reality but the Spirit In other words, all that appears to exist is really Self appearing in so many forms through the power of illusion, which is also called the creative energy

⁶ "Being causeless" or beginningless, the Ego which is realized as identical with the Supreme Spirit can have no limbs or parts strung together and harmonized into a whole That which has no limbs cannot act except when action is its essential characteristic, as in the case of Prakriti. But unlike Prakriti, the Ego is

⁷ "Attributeless," while Prakriti is the union of the three qualities Therefore the action implied in having different qualities does not apply to the Supreme Spirit; and further, the Supreme Spirit cannot have any action through nature, because there is no nature that can be regarded as peculiarly his, as the great nature is but his power. Therefore the Spirit is changeless

⁸ "In the body," that is, perceived through misconception as connected with the body.

answers, "Nature only acts;" nature being the same as avidyā (Chap. V. v. 14)

The freedom of the Ego from action and attachment is explained by illustrations.

32. As space, though all-pervading, is not attached, by reason of its subtlety, so the *âtma*, though seated in all kinds of bodies, is not attached.

33. As one sun manifests all this world, the *Kshetrajna* manifests all *Kshetras*, O son of Bharata.

The illustration of the sun applies to the unity of the *Kshetrajna* in spite of the variety of *Kshetras*, and also to its want of attachment to conditions. The sun manifests this world with its mountains and valleys, sea and land; but the sun does not thereby become many, nor is the sun defiled by the impurities it brings to sight.

If we take the sun as the Ego, and consider a number of saucers full of water as human beings, then it will be seen that although there is one sun in reality, yet each saucer seemingly has a sun of its own. While the reflected sun is taken for *the* sun, the motion of the water from the breezes will give a seeming motion to the sun. If the saucer is broken and the water runs out, then a man who has never known the sun except by attributing reality to a reflection, will think the sun is destroyed, but not so the man who recognizes the sun in the saucer as merely the reflection of the blessed sun in the heavens. As a child may imagine the sun to be extinguished when clouds prevent his seeing the sun, so when the knowledge within us is veiled by ignorance we imagine non-identity with the Deity.

The chapter concludes with a summary of its contents

34. Those who, with wisdom's eye,¹ thus perceive the difference between the *Kshetra* and the *Kshetrajna*, and also the extinction of the nature of objects,² go into the Supreme.³

¹ "Wisdom's eye," the instruction of Scriptures and preceptors. The Vedas are called the eye of the ancestors, gods and men.

² "Nature of objects," *avidyā*, the illusive power which brings into existence objects essentially unreal.

³ "Go into the Supreme;" escaping from the wheel of migratory existence, attain *Nirvāṇa*.

Thus ends chapter the thirteenth, called "RIGHT KNOWLEDGE OF THE DISCRIMINATION BETWEEN KSHETRA AND KSHETRAJNA," in the blessed BHAGAVAD GÎTÂ, the sacred lore, the divine wisdom, the book of divine union, the colloquy between the blessed KRISHNA and ARJUNA, and contained in the Bhîshma Parvan of the blessed MAHÂBHÂRATA, which is a collection of one hundred thousand verses by VYÂSA.

By the realization of objectivity and its distinctness from the Ego, which is in reality pure unconditioned consciousness, not different from the Supreme Spirit, all and every suffering comes to an end, and the crown and consummation of being is reached.

Salutation to Krishna, who is that truth which separates the Kshetra from the Kshetrajna.

CHAPTER XIV.

RIGHT KNOWLEDGE OF THE DIVISION OF THE THREE QUALITIES.

ALL that is produced is due to the union of the objective Prakṛiti and the subject Puruṣa (Chap XIII. v. 26). This chapter is intended to show that this union is dependent upon the will of God, and not — as is held by the Sāṅkhya philosophers — that in the production of the universe, with all its functions, Prakṛiti and Puruṣa are independent.

The cause of birth in good and evil wombs is said to be self-identifying attachment to the qualities. This is rendered clear by amplification; the subject is treated by dividing it into six different topics, namely: —

1. Depending upon the Divine will, the confusion of identity between Prakṛiti and Puruṣa, and the attachment of the latter to qualities of Prakṛiti, is the cause of the universe (vv. 3, 4).
2. The different kinds of attachment according to the difference of the qualities to which the attachment is made (v. 5).
3. The different qualities defined.
4. How the Ego is bound by them (v. 10).
5. How liberation from the qualities is gained (vv. 17-20).
6. What liberation implies (vv. 21-27)

THE BLESSED LORD *spoke*:

1. Again¹ I shall declare the supreme,² excellent³

¹ "Again," although the purport of what follows is found in what has been said, it is again presented on account of the great difficulty in properly comprehending the truth.

² "Supreme," that is, relating to that which is the supreme end of existence. This epithet refers to the object-matter of knowledge.

³ "Excellent," that is, yielding the ultimate end of being. This refers to the value of this knowledge to the wise.

knowledge of the wise.¹ Knowing this the sages have attained supreme success from here.²

The reason for declaring the value of this knowledge is to increase the hearer's receptivity.

2. Having taken refuge³ in this knowledge, those who attain to my state⁴ are not born at the time of creation, nor are they pained at the season of dissolution.⁵

According to sacred authorities creation is of three kinds: (1) That which is taking place every moment, (2) That which takes place when all the inferior products of Nature are absorbed into the universal mind; (3) That in which the universal egotism (ahankāra) is dissolved into the First Cause. Here the last is referred to.

It may at first appear as if the declaration of a specific result meant that even in Nirvāna there is a sense of separateness; but this is not so. The specific result is here mentioned only to attract the hearer to the right path. By the figure of speech called understatement, the absolute being, or Nirvāna, is intended to affect the hearer for whom the absolute would be a mere word.

3. My great Prakriti is the womb into which I cast the seed; from that, O Bharata's son, is the birth of all creatures.

"Prakriti" is called "great" because it is all-comprehending; and "my" because I (meaning the Supreme) am not dominated

¹ "Of the wise," that is, the knowledge about to be imparted is not one among the class of qualities beginning with want of consciousness of merit, described in the preceding chapter (v. 7 *et seq.*).

² "From here," after the dissolution of the body

³ "Having taken refuge," that is, performing all that is needed for the reception of truth, namely, studying revealed philosophy, meditating on it, assimilating it, and then being effaced in the truth thus made manifest

⁴ "My state" does not mean a state similar to mine, because that would be opposed to the identity of the individual and universal spirit which is uniformly taught by the Blessed Lord, "Know me as the Kshetrajña in every Kshetra" (Chap. XIII v. 2)

⁵ "Dissolution," the period of universal dissolution.

by it. *Prakriti* means matter in every form, and is the assemblage of the three qualities, and by true knowledge is shown to be unrelated to consciousness; consciousness is the spirit of God from the standpoint of one who is aspiring to the knowledge of God. Hence the Deity is not touched by the false knowledge from which the aspirant seeks to escape, and without this false knowledge there is no bondage to *Prakriti*. Consequently *Prakriti* depends upon the will of God, by which the power of true knowledge is shaded. It is to be understood that the *Prakriti* of the *Sāṅkhya* philosophers is here spoken of.

The "seed" was for the birth of the creator *Brahmā*, and corresponds to the power referred to in *Genesis*: "the spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." This seed is false knowledge, desire, and regulation of desire. I, the Deity, the lord of the two powers *Kshetra* and *Kshetrajna*, unite the unchanging *Kshetrajna* to object-producing power consisting of the three qualities.

Prakriti and *Purusha* are united by a power called false knowledge, and disunited by a power called true knowledge. The series of phenomena, creation, preservation, and destruction, is the relation between knowledge, true and false. Time is the relation between these three great classes into which existence is divided.

Both true and false knowledge exist. That which is now is the false knowledge; true knowledge is its opposite, and disunites *Prakriti* from *Purusha*. Consequently true knowledge makes *Prakriti* disappear, first as containing *Purusha* and then as separate from *Purusha*. In other words, through true knowledge *Purusha* is independent of *Prakriti*. True knowledge is eternal because unrelated to Time, which touches only the three, which are nature, consciousness conditioned through illusion, and the relation between them, or illusion itself; therefore *Purusha* is eternally unrelated to *Prakriti*. In other words, God is, and through mere being is the ruler of *Prakriti*.

On the other hand, false knowledge is eternal because time is included in it; therefore the universe is eternal, and the bondage of *Purusha* is eternal in the sense of not ending by mere lapse of time. The whole cannot be changed by the relative change of its parts. But true knowledge is the opposite of false knowledge; therefore they cannot co-exist except by destroying each other, leaving a third thing; namely, the *Ego*, which is the witness of both. This realization is liberation.

Purusha, or consciousness, neither is nor is not related to Prakriti, which is the co-inherence of the true and false knowledge, of bondage and liberation. Therefore it is justly said, the Ego is never bound or loosened; that is to say, one who is liberated is not conscious of being liberated after bondage or desiring to be liberated, — the Ego is the Ego *per se*.

4. In all wombs, O son of Kuntī, whatever forms are born, of them the great womb is Prakriti, and I am the seed-giving father.¹

This verse refers to gods, men, and animals. Whatever apparent cause exists there is but one real cause, and that is the union of Purusha and Prakriti. Even the Creator, Brahmā, is an instrument of the Deity. The whole universe may be considered as the objective form of the Supreme Spirit, who really has no form.

The qualities are now described.

5. O thou of mighty arms, sattva, rajas, and tamas, these Prakriti-born² qualities bind³ to the body the unchanging lord of the body.⁴

6. Among them sattva, illuminative on account of its transparency and restfulness, O sinless one,⁵ ties through attachment to happiness and knowledge.

Sattva is transparent in the sense that the all-pervasive consciousness is manifested by it as sunlight is by a transparent medium. Those objects which have the least of this power are considered as unconscious by us. The sattva quality is the most spiritual part of nature. Its manifestations are the higher virtues and spiritual

¹ "Seed-giving father," that is, the fructifying cause

² "Prakriti-born." The perfectly harmonious commingling of the qualities is Prakriti, and as any action takes place, one or other of the three qualities asserts its prominence, in this sense alone are the qualities born of Prakriti.

³ "Bind;" that is, connect it with the experience of pain and pleasure by reason of the error that the body is the spirit, which it is not.

⁴ "Lord of the body," Kshetrajña, the consciousness as connected with the body.

⁵ "O sinless one" Those whose sins have been exhausted through the means prescribed by the Scriptures are alone able fully to comprehend spiritual philosophy.