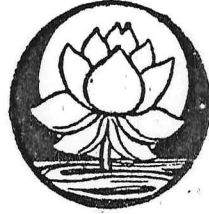


IMMORTALITY

(“Paramamrita” by Mukund Raj, translated
into English by Swami Pranav Tirtha.)



With Introductory Notes
by
Swami Swayamjyoti Tirtha

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("Paramamrita" by Mahatma Gandhi translated
into English by Swami Prasad Das)



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CONTENTS

Foreword	v
Translator's Note	i
About the Author	5
How the chapters go	19
Valedictory	...	...	...	62
Other beliefs routed	...	...	...	65
The Aphorism explained	...	...	...	69
Exit the material body	...	...	...	73
The subtle body goes	...	...	...	78
Away with the causal body	...	...	...	84
And the Fourth too	...	...	...	88
By passing the Void	...	...	...	91
Concentrated Meditation	...	...	...	94
Phenomena Debunked	...	...	...	98
Ignorance evicted	...	...	...	104
Self-Delights	...	...	...	109
Secrets of Liberty	...	...	...	111
The last word	...	...	...	116
Appendix I The Aphorism	...	...	...	121
Appendix II The States—				
Individual and Collective	...			124

FOREWORD

Shree Mukund Rāj, a renowned Saint and Seer-poet of Mahārāstra, has written in Marāthi, a small treatise bearing the name of "Parmāmrita," (the Supreme Nectar). It is translated into Gujarāti by Swāmi Shree Swayam-jyoti Tirtha, the editor of the "Utthān", a Gujarāti Monthly devoted to the propagation of Adwaita Vedānt, and the Gujarāti translation is published by the "Utthān Kāryālaya." This booklet is the English version of the Gujarāti translation. It includes also the English rendering of the two prefatory notes attached by Swāmiji. It is placed before the general public for the benefit of those who know English but are not conversant with either Marāthi or Gujarati.

Though no definite data are available, according to traditional belief Shree Mukunda Rāj seems to have flourished sometime in the twelfth century.

This small work clearly shows that the author Shree Mukund Rāj, is a staunch adherent of the Adwaita philosophy of Shree Sankarāchārya (Absolute Monism). According to the leading tenets of this school of thought, there is but one Unchanging Reality, as the substratum of this phenomenal world of name and form. The nature of this Reality is Existence Absolute, Knowledge Absolute, Bliss Absolute, (Sat, Chit, Ānand). The visible world is a mere appearance within this all-including, all-transcending substance, and its existence does not in any way affect the intrinsic nature of the Absolute Truth. The individual soul is one with Brahman, (the Absolute Reality). The realisation of this unity is the goal of life, as eternal happiness can be attained only when this fact becomes a matter of personal experience. The only test of knowledge, according to Vedānt, is knowledge by identity. Other sources are merely subsidiary. Spiritual knowledge consists in Being and Becoming. Mere intellectual conviction is not knowledge. It is only an indirect apprehension.

There are various modes of approach to this Supreme Reality, (Ātman or Brahman). The paths vary according to individual temperament but the objective remains the same.

Shree Mukund Rāj advocates self-introspection and self-analysis for the achievement of this ideal. The self must separate itself from the various sheaths in which it

is entangled at present (physical, mental and causal) by a concentrated volitional effort. The subject-object relationship must cease altogether and the self must ultimately have the experience that it is one undifferentiated continuence and its innate law of Being is Infinite Knowledge, Infinite Bliss, Infinite Existence.

This composition is indubitably a priceless possession and those aspirants who are devoted followers of the Adwaita philosophy and who are inclined to follow the Yoga of the Intelligent Will, will derive from it great help and inspiration.

Malsar
24-II-'53

Swami Adwaitanand

TRANSLATOR'S NOTE

The original of this little work is named PARAMĀ-MRITA. It is a Marāthi classic by Shri Mukunda Rāj, the first poet-saint of Mahārāshtra. It is a powerful dissertation on the Advaita philosophy of Shankarāchārya; it is also a practical guide to God-realisation meant for the use of the duly qualified aspirant. This little work can well be called the crest-jewel of the diadem of transcendental philosophy—the Kohinoor of the Vedanta crown. To earnest seekers of the Golden Fleece of the absolute Three-in-one (*-Sat-Chit-Ananda*) its value is immeasurable. There are few things in the whole span of vedantic literature to compare with this little classic in forceful lucidity of exposition, practicality of the means described and effectiveness of the argument employed. Every word in it breathes superb self-confidence born of personal experience which thrills the seeker and lifts him out of himself.

Swami Shri Swayamjyoti Tīrtha of the Jnāna Sādhana Āshrama (Ajol, North Gujarat) some time ago prepared a carefully edited Gujarāti translation of this little book after some research work in a number of editions. The publication at once caught on among spiritually minded circles in Gujarāt and soon ran into a couple of editions.

I have here translated that publication along with Swamiji's two prefatory notes into English, I cannot say

with what success. The hurdles have been many. For the vedānta terminology is a tricky business for the translator in search of exact English synonyms which are mostly not there at all. To cite but two instances: How shall you translate the facile term 'Ātman,' and convey at each place the appropriate shade of meaning which in the original the reader tends to grasp instinctively? And what will you do with the protean 'Antahkarana'? But, as the simple archer Hubert told King John, "Sire, a man can but do his best;" and this I have attempted, for I am quite anxious that seekers of spiritual delights ought not to miss this masterpiece of practical Vedānta, and that lack of knowledge of Marāthi, Gujarāti or Hindi need not come in the way of its message reaching those to whom the medium of simple English is more convenient. And so, here goes, for what it is worth.

One thing more. The Vedānta principle is not wedded to any particular form of God-belief, sect, cult or denomination. Vedānta is the way to be true to yourself—a philosophy of life, the manner in which the follower of any religion can and should perfect his particular belief, and LIVE it. Vedānta will help you to grasp the essential spirit of your faith whatever it may be, and draw the best out of it for your delectation. Make no mistake about it: a Christian will be a truer Christian if he practises Christianity with the single minded yet intelligent application which Vedānta inculcates; it will make a Muslim a more faithful follower of Islam, a Hindu a far better Hindu. Vedānta is rationalisation—intellectual,

moral and mental honesty. It is an attitude of purity and sincerity in thought, word and deed. It is the way of faith, not blind but firmly fixed on reason and discernment. The name and form, or lack of it, which you choose to give to your favorite God-concept does not matter a bit, for Vedānta is a philosophy which covers all religious or even irreligious beliefs.

The Brahman of Vedānta is like a crystal glass, clear and transparent. It has no tint of its own. It will, therefore, take on the hue of any liquid that is poured into it. And it will do so without affecting its own impartial transparency; nor will it interfere in any way with the natural colour of its contents. On the contrary, the fine crystal will protect the contents, preserve its pristine hue, beautify it, polish it, and enhance its value—make it altogether more true to itself. It provides the rationale to religious beliefs.

If the reader applies this scientific philosophy to his favourite faith, he will find that he understands it better and follows it more intelligently than ever before.

PLEASE REMEMBER that the pages of this book are not to be rushed through; every word in it must be realised. This is not that sort of thing which one reads as one runs. Every sentence in it must be conned and ruminated over and over again with attention; before the full meaning and import of one sentence has sunk in, you must not hurry to the next. In short THIS BOOK IS ABOVE EVERYTHING ELSE A BOOK FOR DEEP MEDITATION AND CLEAR EXPERIENCE. Every

time you so read it, new revelations of Truth will come to you.

I have appended two explanatory notes of my own to this book. If they are thoroughly mastered first, the body of the book will be much easier to follow.

And so, with salutation to the *Guru*—the Master who is no different from the Godconcept itself, and with love for all men and things as well as for what is neither men nor things, I conclude.

Pilgrim, Proceed !

Ajol,

Jan. 1, 1950

Swami Pranav Tirtha

* ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Philosopher-poet Mukunda Rāj is believed to be the first poet of Mahārāshtra and is said to have flourished in or about the eleventh century of the Christian era. He is the author of a book named 'VIVEKASINDHU' written in the declining years of his life; the other book ascribed to him is the one under translation 'PARAMĀMRITA' said to have been written with a view to instruct a king named Jayatpāla into the mysteries of transcendentalism.

There is nothing very unusual in the fact that nothing definite is known about the life and work of Mukunda Rāj, and that research scholars have not been able to fix his period with any degree of certainty. It is said that in one of the couplets of VIVEKASINDHU he has made a reference to himself, but it is not found in any of the available copies of that poetic work. The nearest possible conjecture is that he lived about a hundred years before the celebrated saint-poet Jnāneswar. But then neither Jnāneswar nor any of the other contemporary author-saints has made the slightest reference to Mukunda Rāj. Again, the language used by Mukunda Rāj in his compositions is much simpler than that of Jnāneswar. This seems to militate against the theory of Mukunda Rāj preceding Jnāneswar.

Another disturbing factor is that no such king as

* Prefatory note in Gujarati by Swami Swayamjyoti Tirtha.

Jayatpāl is traceable in history. The only thing certain about Mukunda Rāj is that his mastery over words and expression and his astonishing gift of elucidating the most abstruse ideas into simple and easily understood language stand unrivalled in the whole field of religio-philosophical literature. His language is the language of personal and intense experience; and therefore goes straight to the heart. His method of preaching is artistic and effective. Is not this quite enough for all practical purposes? If the scholars cannot fix his time, what does it matter in respect of a seer who has the whole eternity at his feet? One thing is certain that the artistry of his life, so full of wonderful experience, his masterful learning and his deep insight into transcendental secrets and mysteries must have evoked in the people of his time feelings of great reverence and devotion.

There is a collection of devotional poems by Samarth Swami Rāmadās; it contains a reference to a king named Jayatpāl, and there is also a hint that this king had something to do with Mukunda Rāj.

A touch of legend makes all biographies kin. This is particularly the case with lives of saints and saviours. Vagueness and mystery have always held the human mind in thrall since the very beginning of things. It is the same to-day in this so-called enlightened age, even in the year of grace 1950, in the most civilised societies in the world. That which the human mind cannot understand, the human mind stands in awe of, and respects. Round the world's prominent figures in any sphere of life there

rapidly gathers a halo of legend; the ordinary man-in-the-street may not know much about the facts of life of a popular hero, but he can reel off with ease a number of marvellous legends that have grown round him, BECAUSE normal human mind likes its hero to be connected with something wonderful, which in his case a legend provides. This accretion of legend is naturally more pronounced in the case of figures of the distant past, for there has been so much time for it to take root and spread its hazy foliage, so much so that the lives of a very large number of ancient heroes of romance or religion as we know them now, consist of nothing but a number of miraculous and mythical traditions loosely strung together by an almost untraceable thread of facts of a very dubious nature.

Mukunda Rāj is comparatively speaking not an ancient figure, according to the Indian standard by which that which is ancient for the Western world is reckoned almost recent in this country. Yet so strong is the tendency of legenderising our leaders that much of what is handed down to us by way of the life story of this man of God is of a delightfully mythological nature. All that the stories relate may not be true in detail, but there is not the slightest doubt that the spirit of the stories, the essence which they seek to convey to us, is faithfully and perfectly presented by them. For it is the special genius of our people to convey limpid truths by imagery, figure of speech and an accumulation of tradition which does not bind you down to an incident in a matter-of-fact way but leaves plenty of scope for imagination. If approached in

the proper spirit, this method of presentation has much to commend it. The stories, therefore, which reverential tradition has woven round the hallowed name of this wonderful God-man (—for is not the knower of Brahman but Brahman Itself?—) are brimming over with a message of wondrous import for those who have eyes to see it. Others bye-passing them, will miss the core of the story and go empty handed.

The popular story of Mukunda Rāj goes as under.

Once upon a time there lived a Gandharva named Malaya. He was inordinately fond of women. On one occasion while he was dallying in sportive mood with a number of bathing beauties, sage Nārada happened to pass that way. He saw the Gandharva in an unpresentable state, and completely oblivious to his presence. In fact passion-blind Malaya took no notice of the sage even when their eyes met. The sage was naturally incensed at this insensate behaviour of the Gandharva; he felt that to overlook this sort of conduct on the part of such a responsible person would be setting a very dangerous example to ordinary people who always tend to imitate the ways of the great. He therefore pronounced a curse on the offender: "Thou hast behaved like a beast; a beast therefore shalt thou become. Thou shalt be born on the earth as a horse."

Thus chided the Gandharva came to his senses. He repented of his folly and pleaded hard for mercy. The compassionate sage relented and told him how the curse would dissolve: "You will be born in the stables of king

Jayatpāl, and you will be released from the curse by the touch of a mighty Yogin named Mukunda Rāj when the suitable moment comes."

And so the Gandharva was duly born as a pedigree steed in Jayatpāl's stables.

This king was very religiously minded and a great devotee. He was deeply read in scriptures; his charities were boundless and his austerities and religious practices were a bye-word in his time. But despite all this, he had failed to realise God, though the scriptures promised such consummation for suitable aspirants.

This failure to get to grips with God made him extremely restless. As soon as he came to know of any monk, ascetic or man of learning passing through his kingdom, he was wont to send for him at once and ask him, "How can I achieve God-realisation?" The replies he got were of course, various and varied according to the nature of the learning or trend of devotion of his visitor, but the king carefully followed up the instructions given by every one of them. He thus consulted hundreds of authorities, but with no result. Not one of them could bring peace to his tormented heart. There could be no peace for an aspirant short of realisation. And the scriptures clearly state that the spiritual knowledge requisite for God-realisation can come only from the lips of experienced saints.

Why, then, could none of his numerous visitors bring the longed-for result to his soul? Were they not the pundits, the saints, the men of knowledge and experience

they glibly claimed to be? Were they all pretenders? The king was enraged. If these false prophets exacted undeserved homage and emoluments from credulous people, well, it was high time, he decided, that they were exposed and duly punished. He, therefore, started digging a lake, and arresting all those whom he believed to be spiritual pretenders and professors of deceptive legerdemain, he compelled them to work there with spade and pickaxe.

The hosts of saints and monks and learned men who had never handled a spade before had to work under painful conditions. This state of affairs had not lasted long before the serene figure of Mukunda Rāj came upon the scene in course of his rambles. Some say that he was only twelve years old at the time, some say that he was older. But that is beside the point. Any way, the people saw this man of knowledge, the very image of godliness, radiating on all sides the light of his masterful personality, a divine figure of resplendant saintliness; and they crowded round him and warned him. They said "If you enter this town, the king will ask you to secure for him realisation of God, and in case he is not satisfied he will put you also to the spade as he has done to so many others."

Mukunda Rāj was amused. He went to the site of the proposed lake, and was filled with a great sadness when he saw so many holy men labouring there. He came to know the facts, and asked the guards to take him to the king without delay. He also asked the Brāhmanas

to accompany him, which of course they dared not do for fear of the whiplash of the guards. In the end, they gave way to the sweet insistence of the stranger and laid down their tools. And lo ! marvelous to relate, the spades and the pickaxes got up of their own accord and started digging and shovelling all by themselves as if strong and intelligent hands wielded them ! The guards stood transfixed in wonder and of course said nothing when they knew this to be the will of this young miracle worker.

Mukunda Rāj reached the king's presence in due course in company with the holy men. The guards who accompanied them appraised the king of the wonderful happenings at the lake site. He was of course overjoyed at the advent of such a divine visitor and hastened to meet him. He prostrated himself at the holy man's feet and welcomed him with appropriate ceremonies.

Mukunda Rāj admonished his host : " O king ! Do you know the import of your actions ? You have arrested Brāhmanas and sages and ascetics and put them to manual work of the lowest kind. Do you know that actions such as this will burn up all your merits and singe the very roots of your royal dynasty ? It is up to you to honour, revere and nourish men of learning and piety, not torture them. By your conduct you are inviting death and destruction upon your self as well as upon the whole race of Kshatriyas. You will be damned in this life, as well as the next. "

Jayatpāl poured his heart out. " Sir, all these fellows claim to have had the experience of *Ātman*. Yet

none of them has been able to guide me to it. These are pretenders, and therefore, fit only for jail and hard labour. For pride of learning deserves nothing less."

In a way the king was right. But treatment of this nature was surely not calculated to turn them into men of God. The proper course was to send all these Brāhmanas to a suitable master and give them facilities for seeking the requisite knowledge which was their natural avocation. Forgetting the discrimination and discernment due to his status the king had done a great harm by submitting them to such conditions. Probably that is what Mukunda Rāj thought.

Mukunda Rāj was not merely a philosopher. He was also a man of tact and judgment, and a deep insight into human nature. He knew the secret of merit and sin. He thus addressed king Jayatpāl :

"O king, you may rest assured that the knowledge of *Ātman* will come to you. But not before you carry out my behests. You cannot have it your own particular way. You must first submit to discipline. If a person is not able to give you a glimpse of *Ātman* at your will and pleasure and on your terms, his failing deserves to be condoned, and he ought to be given a chance to improve his attainments in that respect. If on the contrary you cut him off from what is his natural right and life's work, he will forget what little he now knows ; and that will be all your fault. Moreover, you cannot bully spiritual gifts out of anyone. You can only hope to approach them by humble service, faith and reverence. You cannot sit on

the throne and arrogantly command the Brāhmanas to produce *Ātman* in the court ; for this *Ātman* is too subtle, too fine for speech or even thought. If you really are in earnest, you must approach your mentor in the spirit of discipleship, abjure all pride of prowess and knowledge and dedicate yourself completely at the feet of saints and seers. Only when you succeed in winning their pleasure and their confidence in your fitness to receive the message, can you hope for their favour. Your attitude then may succeed in kindling the sacred spark in their hearts, and then only there can be a possibility of its being transmitted to you. If the ground for realisation is not prepared in your own heart, no amount of violence can wrest the sacred secret from a saint and hand it over to you. It will never lodge in your heart. You must, therefore begin by releasing all these good men, making suitable amends for the grievous wrong you have done them and paying them all the respect that is due to honoured guests. ”

The king was really in earnest ; he was only carried away by over-enthusiasm. He was therefore amenable to reason, and he at once carried out the instructions of Mukunda Rāj.

When the moment for the king's initiation came, by a pre-ordained fate Mukunda Rāj led him to mount the very Gandharva horse which was tethered there. The king unhesitatingly complied. And the moment he put his feet in the stirrups Mukunda Rāj seized a whip and gave a smart cut which hit the mount as well as the rider.

The effect was astonishing. Both man and beast stood stock-still as if transfixed. Both of them forgot their own selves, forgot everything and fell into a deep trance. The Brāhmanas and holy men who had gathered there marvelled at this and fell at the feet of this godlike child whose mere touch brought to man and beast a full realisation of their immortal self.

Well, this is the story. What does its shape or form matter? Its kernel is alright. History records no such king in Mahārāshtra. Yet since Mukunda Rāj himself has left a record of his name, it is quite possible that some prominent citizen of that name lived at the time, and that he has been referred to as a king probably because of his kingly wealth and demeanour. Moreover a similar incident is well known in connection with king Janaka. The great ascetic Ashtāvakra had taught him Brahmajnāna in similar circumstances and thereby secured his father's release. The same story has been apparently held good enough for application in the case of Mukunda Rāj also. And why not? What matters is the message of the story and there is nothing wrong with it.

Even if we were to reject this story, because of its impossibility on grounds, among others, of historicity, no harm is done to the essential greatness of Mukunda Rāj himself. His stature does not depend for its dimensions on any fabulous or historical prop and support. The two poetical creations of his are immortal monuments to the glory of his godliness. The PARAMĀMRITA with its limpid style, its expressive language, its persuasive logic

and its direct form of address clearly indicates that it was designed as a sermon for a suitable personage who was to be moulded into the shape of a vessel fit to receive the divine message of Brahman on Vedantic lines; a message proving the utter singularity of the Absolute through a disseration on the three bodies, the three states, the ten perceptive senses, the four-fold *antahkarana*, etc. The whole process is laid down with the precision of personal experience. The strength and confidence in his words are so convincing that a receptive reader will at once come under their spell and feel himself carried body and soul through each of the stages that are successively described by the author in his irresistible manner. That ought to be enough for our purpose.

The VIVEKASINDHU mentions one king Sārandhar, but history records no such king in that century. There is difference of opinion also about the birthplace of Mukunda Rāj, and two places claim the honour, one is the village Jogaiche Ambā, and the other a village named Ambhor on the banks of the Bāna Gangā. The hills near the former village have a spot where they say that the remains of Mukunda Rāj were interred. Ambhor is well known as the village which contains the *samādhi* of his ultimate *guru* Harināth. Ambhor is situated near Chhindwārā in Berar. The *samādhi* of Raghunāth who was the direct *guru* of Mukunda Rāj is located near Chhindwārā, and there is a local tradition that the *samādhi* of Mukunda Rāj is to be found in the ruins of an old fort near a small village named Khadelā in Betul district. Thus, almost every item connected

with the birth, life and passing of the author is a matter of doubtful conjecture, in the land of his birth itself.

Mukunda Rāj has deigned to say a word or two about himself and his *gurus* in the VIVEKASINDHU. He declares that he had a vision of the Lord at Ambhor, on the Bāna Gangā. He also mentions Harināth and Raghunāth, and his own caste, viz., Deshastha Brāhmana of the Vājasneyi Mādhyandini recension of Yajurveda. The implication seems to be that Shree Harināth must have been a householder of great learning and spiritual stature.

Mukunda Rāj enthuses over Shree Hariuāth to the extent of stating that Shree Harināth performed a sacrifice which so pleased Lord Shankar that He Manifested Himself to His devotee and granted him a boon to the effect that no one in his succession of disciples would ever lack in the knowledge of Brahman. It is averred that Shree Harināth went into trance at the very spot where Lord Shankar appeared to him, at the very moment of the manifestation. The others who were participating in the sacrifice were so frightened by the awful Presence that they fainted right away. They thought that some super-devil had sprung from the sacrificial flame, and that Shree Harināth was also frightened into immobility. But after twenty-two days of trance he came round to normal. Mukunda Rāj speaks of this with ecstasy.

Mukunda Rāj is reputed to have composed four volumes in the *ovi* form of poesy, viz. VIVEKASINDHU, PARAMĀMRITA, MULASTAMBHA and PAVANA-

VIJAYA; also a number of scattered poems, hymns, etc. Only the first two of these compositions are traceable at present.

The author is a staunch adherent of the Advaita principle of Shree Shankarāchārya, and he has in one place claimed to have recorded the words of Shree Shankar himself in Marāthi. He lays great store by symbolic worship and says: "If it is not possible to keep the mind steady without recourse to some kind of symbolic support to lean on, that is, if it is found impracticable to maintain a constant state of harmony with the formless abstract principle, the aspirant must worship a qualified God-form, meditate on Him, render unto Him, complete ritual service in a spirit of complete self-dedication, and give himself up totally to the Lord of creation."

The life story of Shree Mukunda Rāj may thus be merely a bundle of loose legends and no more, but these stories tell us eloquently of his experience of Godhead in full measure. A glance at this book is enough to convince us of this fact. The way he shows, and the manner in which he shows the way, to the duly qualified aspirant to contemplate and concentrate on the Infinite in such an abstruse field as Vedānta is a revelation by itself. If the aspirant cares to follow up the instructions sincerely and earnestly, there is not a shadow of a doubt that he will have the blessings of this word-body of Shree Mukunda Rāj in ample measure.

One thing more; Mukunda Rāj speaks in the fourteenth chapter of the need of devotion to the *guru* with

great emphasis, and says that only by such devotion, by maintaining the sacred secrecy of the Doctrine, and by service to the *guru* alone may these spiritual heights be scaled, and in no other way. This is true to the letter. The knowledge of Brahman never comes through mere reading of texts. Mukunda Rāj calls this knowledge "the statement of the *guru*-seed," meaning the secret of the *sadguru*. A clean mind does not come about without a proper *guru*-tradition; without a clean mind the radiation of the sacred lore of Brahman will not penetrate into the heart-recesses; as the rays of the sun or the moon do not light up a cloud-laden sky, so also the sun of *Ātman*-knowledge is not able to illuminate a heart laden with mercurial and lethargic tendencies. The disciple can find the way to success only through single-minded devotion, complete faith and surrender to the *guru*-ideal and an all-out effort to win his favour. This will cleanse the heart out and make it a fit receptacle to receive and contain what will come through the *guru*'s compassion. And that is the state in which the individual soul rests in complete harmony, becomes one with the Eternal, the Infinite, the Absolute, where all is peace, and joy, and knowledge that hath no name, for it is beyond name.

The proof of the pudding is in its eating. And so, let us go straight to the fountain-head, and hasten to grasp the key to Immortality which is here offered to you on a plate.

HOW THE CHAPTERS GO

The original title of this book, viz., PARAMĀMRITA, literally means Nectar Supreme. It tells you how YOU are the Infinite Immortality itself. It is no mere figure of speech to describe the message in such terms, for so in fact it is. Its language is the language of experience; it flows easily, naturally, from the ineffable joy of the ultimate Bliss. The expression is so apt and effective that no student who has equipped himself with the Four Preparatory Instruments (*Sādhana*) will fail to win for himself a revivifying shower of knowledge from this work, which is indeed the essence-body of its author. All that he has to do is direct his thoughts along the channels opened out to him here, and try, not merely to think but actually *live* those thoughts. But remember the condition—the Instruments; they are the vigil which alone will entitle you to win your spiritual spurs.

The chapter subjects follow, each its predecessor, in normal sequence. The aspirant expects to delve into the realms of realisation by introversion and cultivation of a sense of self-sufficient solitude; he aspires to experience within himself the One-and-Only, the Absolute self-form, by forgetting the multitudinous world set-up in its dualistic entirety. The process by which this may be achieved is methodically arranged in these chapters. Let us give them a once-over as a sort of a foretaste, an appetiser.

CHAPTER I

This chapter is valedictory. The author makes his bow, in accordance with spiritual injunctions, to the all-merciful Master (*Guru*) who is well-established in the Supreme, and without whose blessing progress on the path of experience is not possible. In course of the valediction he hints at the shape of Brahman, at the oneness of the knower of Brahman with Brahman Itself, at the implicit connotation of the individual soul (*Jiva*); and after a word about the non-divisibility of *Jiva* and *Shiva* (— the Individual and the Absolute soul-selves), he gives a brief preliminary dissertation on the aphoristic *mahā-vākya* (— great phrase —) *Tat-tvam-asi* — That Thou art. He lightly skims the surface of this subject here, because the ensuing chapters will go more deeply into it.

CHAPTER II

The only Fact is the fact of the One, the whole, the Without-a-second, the eternal Brahman. This fact must be firmly rooted in the mind of the aspirant. To clear the decks for this, he must be convinced of the fictional nature and uselessness of all other ways of thought. This chapter, therefore, controverts heretical doctrines. The point is that the aspirant's mind must be disabused of all the doctrines and their broods of dogma which raise the spectre of duality, in an effortless, natural manner. In this art, Mukunda Rāj excels by his simple and easy method of approach which essentially differs from other writers in the field of transcendentalism. He avoids the complications of verbal strategy. Since he intends to enter into a more detailed exposition of the great aphorism *Tat-Twam-asi* in the next chapter, he just touches it here in an introductory way. The individual soul and God-head, and the special attributes of both are briefly expounded. Existence, Intelligence and Beatitude (*-Sat-Chit-Ānanda*) are explained. The pointlessness, the futility of even meticulous observance and pursuit of incantations, magical charts, divers forms of worship, purificatory baths, etc. without the attainment of final emancipation is driven home by aptly cogent argument. This established, the author concisely and precisely points out that the only utility of these processes lies in their inherent ability to cleanse the mind of worldly dross. He

then advises the seeker to learn the secrets of Vedānta direct from the *guru* himself, and thus win his spiritual knighthood by finally arriving at the Absolute. The author concludes this discourse by making it quite clear that this ultimate stage consists of the unification of *Jiva* with *Ishwara*—the individual soul with the cosmic.

CHAPTER III

The *Mahā-Vākya* "That Thou art" is clearly explained here. The primordial Mahā Māyā is tri-qualitative, in which are rooted all the differentiations seem to prevail in worldly practice. *Shabala* (-qualified-) Brahman is none other than Brahman conjoined with this Māyā; the pure consciousness or knowledge, the bliss perfect which lies beyond the Māyā is the individual soul, the *Twam*, i. e. Thou, in its pristine purity. The presiding geniuses of the three qualities are *Brahmā*, *Vishnu* and *Rudra*. They ultimately merge into the all-powerful *Sarveswara*, Godhead, which pervades everything, which is pure, free from nescience and beyond the pale of wishful actions. The bodies-gross (*Sthula*), subtle (*Sukshma*) causal (*Kāraṇa*) and super-causal (*Mahā-kārṇa*); the states (*avasthā*)-the waking (*Jāgrata*), dreaming (*swapna*), deep sleep (*sushupti*) and the fourth which transcends these three as their witness (*turiya*); the presiding geniuses or subject symbols of these states -*Vishwa* (cosmos), *Taijas* (light), *Prājña* (अज्ञ ignorance in excelsis) and *Pratyagātman* (pervading soul)—all this is but the myth of creation and therefore named *Shabala* Brahman (qualified Absolute). The only worthy goal, therefore, is the perfectly pure, untainted Essence which lies beyond and above Maya. The author deftly teaches this fundamental fact, and launches into a detailed exposition of the mysterious forms of *Shabala* Brahman

in order to hammer home the truth that unadulterated Brahman in the one target to be aimed at, a real man's job, worthy of MAN in his Maker's image, This knowledge of diversity is necessary, for unity can be approached only through the knowledge of its apparent diversity. In conclusion the author makes it clear that the difference between *Jiv* and *Iswara* is merely that of attributory appellation, but not of the essence. Or, in other words, of degree, not of kind. Having done this, the writer guides the seeker through the partial knowledge of Māyā-besmirched worldiness into the peerless perfection of self-knowledge.

CHAPTER IV

Here we enter into a consideration of those matters which must be rejected if introversion is to be attained. The first thing which we must get rid of on this road is the state of waking, the gross body which functions in that state, and its symbolic subject, *Vishva*. You cannot enter the portals of the psycho-physical or subtle body without withdrawing the mind from the purely physical or gross *vishva* plane. And unless you enter the subtle state, you cannot slam shut the ubiquitous doors of the various perceptive senses and sit down squarely for concentrating your attent exclusively on your ideal. The seer here metaphorically takes every limb of your physical body apart and makes you thoroughly acquainted with each of them, so that knowing each, you are in a position to eliminate them individually and collectively from the mind by rendering them impotent to disturb you at the time of meditation. A clear account is given of the senses of perception, organs of action, their spheres of activity, and the activities themselves. The proportions in which composition of this physical body is shared by the five gross elements are dissected for open inspection, its six changes (*vikāra*) are enumerated. And finally, the author declares that all these are OBSERVABLE phenomena, objects, and therefore, different from their observer, the subject "I" which is but a symbol of that out-and-out knowledge-form which is separate even from the observer. Despite the physical body apparently becoming the doer of

actions as well as their knower, this "I" is enabled to exist as disembodied knowledge only by virtue of that knowledge or pure consciousness (*chaitanya*). Action and movement are the spheres of the vital breath (*prāṇa*), while consciousness is like the heat which pervades the wood; it is the very shape of *Ātman* itself, yet distinctly separate and different from everything. That Pure Consciousness must be known and accepted as the goal of attainment and knowledge. Thus the writer introduces the subject-matter of his theme to the duly qualified seeker.

CHAPTER V

Now comes the elimination of the psycho-physical or symbolic (*sukshma* or *linga*) subtle body. Elimination really means merger into the Essence Supreme, of all that is cognisable by perceptive senses and the mind, by looking at it from the philosophic view-point. To that end, the teacher having first explained away the material, proceeds to expound the secrets of the subtle body. So irrepressible are the subtle perceptive senses and the mind, that they pop up with all their broods of dualistic worldiness like a jack-in-the-box, even when you have closed the vistas of the physically perceptive and active senses, sat down firmly and started to explore the working of the Elusive Pimpernel called the shadow or subtle body. You might have just managed to lose track of the external world; but the torrential activity of the mind is so immeasurably more expansive, more aggressive, more mercurial, more elusive and therefore more irresistible than the other, that it immediately launches before the mind's eye a barrage of filmic visions in rapid succession—good, bad and indifferent—and chokes the mental horizon with the dust of their insistent clamour. These manifestations themselves are also energised by the Energy (*chaitanya*), enlightened by the Light and enlivened by the Existence (*sattā*) of *Ātman*. They are in fact no more than its Visible forms. To give point to this attitude we are taken into a detailed description of their workings. The secrets of the five breath-forms and their

doings are laid bare. The four principal functioning modes (*vrittis*) of the internal sense-group (*antahkarana*) viz. mind (*manas*), discernment (*buddhi*), memory (*chitta*) and ego (*ahamkāra*) are introduced. The vibrations of this fourfold yet single *antahkarana* constitute their functioning. Ceaselessly they heave up from the *antahkarana*, like ripples on the surface of an ocean. We are informed that the motive power behind their emergence is the mass of longings and desires which have accumulated in accordance with sense-experiences of previous existences and firmly embedded themselves in the mind-soil; call it the sub-conscious if you like. When these waves of moods and modes subside, these plunging steeds of desires become quiescent and the curtain finally rings down on this endless drama of sense-objects: only then would it be possible to realise what a timeless, incomprehensible, indescribable and marvellous power this centrifugal explosive phenomenon called Mind is. All this racket is carried on by what is known as *Māyā*, ignorance, nescience, Nature or the Unmanifest (*avyakta*); for in fact, in the *Ātman* which is of the form and essence of knowledge, there is neither tremor nor desire, neither phenomenon nor witness, neither knower nor knowable, neither doer nor deed. Whatever is seen is but an illusion, a will-of-the-wisp, a mirage, an airy nothing. As soon as and only when we discard this unreality, what remains at the end of this process of merger called elimination is the "I", as "I" basically is one, partless, without a second.

CHAPTER VI

So far, we have been told something about dualities and trilogies. Any layman can understand what he is told about the states of waking and dreaming, and the functions of those states; for they are matters of his daily comprehensible experience. All that he perhaps lacks is a knowledge of the instruments (*karana*) such as the senses, their objects, the breath-group, the mind-group, etc. which are at work in those states; for these, being comparatively in back-stage, are most likely beyond his ken.

But now we come to the causal body which lies still further back-stage behind the two entities with which we have dealt so far, viz., the material and the subtle bodies representing the waking and dreaming states respectively. This is a little difficult to seize. Our books declare definitely and conclusively that the root-cause of the manifestation and disappearance of the discernible world, of this entire universe and all the worlds, this, that and the other — in short, of the whole medley of creation, is some unmanifested state, an unknown quantity. Wherever duality functions, there is the state of manifestation; where it does not, the unmanifest state prevails. This known state is the seed from which the other states sprout; it is their root, their cause. The source of production is the cause, and what is produced is the effect. If this simple definition is properly understood, it will not be difficult to find out what Vedānta wants to convey when it speaks of

causes and effects. We generally say of sleep that nothing remains in that state. But the books call that state the CAUSAL BODY, for it is the cause, the seed, the root, the very fountain-head of the states of dream and wakefulness. For mere vacuity also is not *Ātman* in its pure form. When the difference between the cause and its effect is recognised, we realise that there is a state of unmanifestedness, of darkness, which prevails in the causal body representing dreamless sleep. That unknown state is nescience, or *avidya*, ignorance par excellence. When we say that "I" do not know myself, or that there was nothing like wakefulness or dream in that deep sleep, the very consciousness of those negations is the visible form of ignorance. That ignorance is the causal body; and the knower of that ignorance is the *Ātman* in its pure state. So long as we continue to qualify that entity and enclose it within the limits of "I"-ness, the mind is loth to turn its attention to the search of the pure and ultimate Truth.

The seeker will find it hard to transgress this state and make his way beyond. The first thing he must do when he embarks on meditation is to firmly close the doors of his senses in order to forget the existence of the material world. He must then sit firm and motionless; and turning his mind inward, he must enter into the working of his subtle physical body. He must multiply a thousandfold the attachment and attraction which he has for things mundane, and transmute that feeling into a love supreme, or an unreasoning, unique, senseless, concentrated sense or self-dedicating devotion; with that motive-force he must turn the tide of his mind-currents

and direct it at some image symbolic of Brahman. That image may take the form of some deity or of a divine person (*avatāra*), or it may be a picture of great saint. The mind current is thus diverted to such a symbol as a result of cultivating an aversion for all sense-objects, and the attention is exclusively riveted on that idealistic Brāhmic symbol to the extent of complete identification with it ; this technique is called *PRATYĀHĀRA* in Yogic parlance. The unwavering fixture of the mind in the ideal is called *DHYĀNA* ; and the firm establishment of such meditative concentration is called *DHĀRĀNA*.

But even this *DHYĀNA* is a state of duality. Moreover, the mind and the breath (*prāna*) activity cannot dwell in *DHYĀNA* for ever ; with the result that when the aspirant emerges from it, he tends to regard that state as the summum bonum the goal ultimate ; he rests satisfied in that subtle form of duality. He convinces himself that his God has been realised, in fact actually seen ; he works himself up into a frenzy of ecstasy, wakes up, sings, dances and wins a reputation among the laity as a *Bhakta*—in tune with the Infinite.

But from the view point of firmly placed faith in *advaita*, this is not *The* state. For it is but the seed and the root of duality of the states of dream and awareness of the gross and the subtle ; it is the causal state pervaded by darkness and by nothing else. Its only fruit is sleep. Ignorance. Unawareness.

This kind of trance is conceptual (*savikalpa*), a dual role with some concept apart from Brahman to concent-

rate upon; it is but a dualistic exercise of imagination. The pilgrim must pass over and beyond it, to where there is no scope for imagination, no snare of cognisability, plain or complicated. He must try to scale those heights. He must regard all duality as cognisable phenomena; in order to delve deep into the pure sight-from of the seer, the unalloyed knowledge-form of the knower, he must cultivate a distaste for duality which has previously been described and which is but another name for all that can be seen and observed. He must aspire to enter the sanctum sanctorum of that One-and-Only Knowledge absolute, Existence absolute, Bliss absolute, the Reality which is free from the so-called tangibility of the trilogy of the seer, the sight and the seen. He must continue to pray to the entity in which he has put his faith (*Ishta*) for the privilege of a taste of the singular (*nirvikalpa*) state of trance; and praying, he must try to go deeper and ever deeper into his own inmost being.

If he keeps this up, he earns experience of the state which is called *prajñā* (प्रज्ञा intuitive knowledge.) The first step in this attainment is the senses of non-existence of the world and the SUSHUPTI or sleep characteristic of the causal body. The sleep which slips into meditation is to some extent harmonic (*sātwik*). It is somewhat different from ordinary sleep inasmuch as it is not accompanied by listlessness or lethargy while at the same time it contains a modicum of self-awareness. For the reason it would not be wrong to call it yogic sleep. It is superior to ordinary sleep, yet, it is not completely the trance-state of undifferentiated absoluteness [*nirvikalpa*]

But the seeker must obtain further information on this point from those who have had requisite experience thereof. *Bhakti* (sense of dedicated devotion) plays the main part in *DHYĀNA*; and as such its ways, bye-ways and methods of approach are numerous and divers. The seeker must therefore, approach for instruction a preceptor who has accepted for his purpose those instruments which the seeker himself has chosen.

In brief, the sixth chapter says that the sleeping state has for its accompaniment the causal body with the soul in its nescientific (अज्ञ) aspect as its subject. You must therefore completely grasp the implications of this nescience which is its hall-mark; if sleep assails you when you sit in meditation, you must understand that there is no reason for panic at all. All that the seeker has to do when this happens is to go on and on with grim determination, bearing the guru's instructions in mind but remembering at the same time that the effort must be HIS, and HIS ALONE. For the state in which the seeker becomes exalted in an ecstatic condition of the mind and for the moment forgets the dualistic ramifications of the world, is not in fact the Fourth or the without-an-alternative state of the absolute Self, but is merely a thin, rarefied layer of stupefaction or *SUSHUPTI*. It is nothing but a lapse into a condition which is only a healthy kind of swoon. It has for its concomittant a sense of joy. A certain amount of lively energy is experienced after regaining consciousness therefrom. But you must not mistake it for the bona-fide *NIRVIKALPA* trance. For, it would be sheer folly to believe for a

moment that it is possible for any heart to taste the blissful experience of the Ultimate Reality through *dhyāna* or *jnāna* as long as the mind is not swept completely clean of the cobwebs of preferences and prepossessions.

CHAPTER VII

When the ignorance, the nescience or the causal body—the terms by which dualistic and therefore observable phenomena are known—are duly eliminated in course of *dhyāna*, nothing remains as the residue, except pure, absolute consciousness; and after coming round from such *dhyāna* to the state of sensible consciousness you feel your heart, your mind-modes and moods and the sense-groups to be saturated and brimming over with an indescribable, a unique flood of joy; you then experience a state which though conscious, is yet not so, and which is the motionlessness of bliss absolute. Even that nameless beatific condition must have a name to know it by; and so, being apart from, above and independent of the three states, it is called the Fourth or the *Turiya*. That state also represents the feeling in the mind of the aspirant that he is pure knowledge as such and nothing else. The sense of being the despicable “I” of meagre knowledge and limited horizon, of the consciousness of being the individual soul is replaced by the conscious knowledge of being the unadulterated *aham*, i. e. I who holds no truck with the triad of states. Then, even when fully awake, he is inspired by a viewpoint which witnesses nothing but the one-and-only all-pervasive luminous knowledge filling all his horizons. That state of mind is called the super-causal body, or the *Mahākāraṇa Shareera*.

One is conscious of everything gross and material

during the state of Wakefulness; so the physical entity which receives the experiences of that state is appropriately termed the gross or material body; and since in that state the mind enters into everything material and gathers special knowledge thereof, the soul in that sphere of action is known as *Vishwa* (*Vi*-special, wide; *shwa*-that which travels) or the one which deals with the cognisable world. In the state which lies beyond it there is neither undisturbed sleep nor wakefulness; that condition of semi-wakeful sleep is the dream state. In that condition the only active phenomenon is the inner light, or consciousness, the internal knowledge. So the same soul as it seems to perform acts and undergo experiences during that state is termed *Taijas*. But that is not all. There is something beyond it—a condition of things in which there is no awareness either of wakefulness or of dream; not even of one's own self. It is a condition of ignorance, as the experiencer of which the same soul is known as *Prājna* (प्राज्ञ) i. e. one whose *ajnāna* or ignorance is *prakrishta* or especially extended. It is the causal source of the waking and dream states, a fact which entitles it to be called the causal body.

Then we pass on to what lies beyond and away from the domain of these three conditions; you can have a taste of its absolute experience only through *dhyāna*, for it is essentially of the form of formless knowledge to be visualised only by concentration of mind. Your internal sense-group (*antahkarana*) maintains its entity and existence even during that state, but in its pure form of the *Satwa*, the quality of equipoise and undisturbed balance.

If you spread an extremely thin sheet of mica on water surface, its separate existence from water is not discernible to the ordinary eye. This rarefied *sātvic* film of *antahkarana* which exists in this absolute state is of a similar nature, and it is known as the *mahākāraṇa deha* or the super-causal body. That mind-mode is the super-causal which bears witness even during the wakeful condition when one comes round from meditation, to the fact that "I" is neither the three bodies nor the three states, but the absolute gloriously pure knowledge itself.

In this manner the mind developes a new kind of witness-angle which is but the resultant impression of the knowledge acquired by realisation of Self; this angle of vision has destroyed or nullified the impressions left on it by ignorance. But, Mukunda Rāj points out, those impressions of enlightenment also can last but a lifetime; for they too are no more than a mode of the mind, a turn or twist of the *antahkarana*. Therefore, the man of enlightenment must dispel even that super-knowledge and live in a state of complete mental naturalness. Thus, when the original ignorance is destroyed and the knowledge which has recognised that ignorance and destroyed it is itself done away with, when both the lack as well as the existence of knowledge are dispelled, *something* remains which is beyond the senses, beyond speech, beyond the mind, beyond any idea, i. e. *Bhāva* whatever. And that is *Para-Brahman*, the Root, the Ultimate. It can best be described by silence; its visible expression can only take the form of a state of mental beatitude. Only the non-seer may see it, for that is a state of being

supreme, without a second, one and only, partless—something which transgresses the whole trilogy of the seer, the sight and the seen.

When we speak of the *Sat*, i. e. truth or reality, it is in relation to *asat* or non-truth or non-reality; knowledge or activity are mentioned only to indicate their separateness from ignorance, inertness, inanimation; and the reason for mentioning bliss is to demonstrate its otherness from the miserable world of phenomena (*samsāra*) so that the aspirant may turn towards the former. There is no other object in using this terminology. For in fact, *one* needs to be mentioned only where *two* exists; without *two* there can be no *one*. But where there is no two at all, no duality in any shape or form, how will you signify what remains? What name, what term, what sign, what emblem, what symbol may you employ in order to indicate or point out that residuum?

This is how the seeker has to eliminate the super-casual body in the form of the fourth state, the experience of the *turiya* stage. In this way we come to that *thing* which is beyond both knowledge and ignorance; it has to be cognised by experience; and having cognised it, you have to encase the mind in the armour of non-speech.

CHAPTER VIII

All this dissertation might possibly lead to a disturbing thought :—Is, then that Ultimate Thing merely a void, a non-entity, a negation ? Why not then call that thing by its right name, viz., negation where the entire world-duality ends in nothingness ? If we attempt to convey the notion of there being something in it, the least we can say of it is that it is *Sat* (Truth or Existence), *Chit* (Knowledge or Pure consciousness) and *Ananda* (Bliss). Even to say so, even to mention its experience, is to give it a name ; and its description constitutes a connotation or content of its form. If we try to trace the object by its connotations and attribute qualities to it, it immediately assumes a qualified form, takes on a shape, limbs, and becomes describable, so that the *dwaita*, the duality which we were out to exorcise appears to be still alive and kicking. But this is contrary to experience. The rishis have realised duality to be unreal and illusive by experience. That being the case, if it is called negation, Mukunda Rāj promptly says no to it. For how can the *knower of negation* be negative ? That which causes cognition of negation, which witnesses and proves it, can only be enlightenment, knowledge. Therefore, it cannot be nothingness. It is true, it is real, it is a fact. The only rule is that you cannot possibly describe it by the mind-processes or by speech or by any sense-organ ; this fact has to be duly understood. That is all there is to it.

The author then goes on to show how this may be

realised by experience. So far he has proved his point by various devices of reason, by authoritative quotations from the books of knowledge, and by an analysis of the *Mahāvākya* that the ultimate capitalised Reality is the witness of all witnesses, the knowledge of all knowledges, something which depends on nothing at all (*nirālamba*). Now in the ninth chapter he proceeds to show us how this may be experienced, The process followed so far has been that of *shravana* (learning by reading and hearing) and *manana* (reflection).

CHAPTER IX

Now we come to *nididhyāsana* which means repeated meditation in order that the truth may sink deep and take firm root in the mind-soil. Solitude is a desideratum if the supreme Reality is to be experienced and its joy is to be tasted.

The main thing is that there should be no external disturbance of any sort. Neither the mind nor the senses must be allowed to be activated. The seeker must therefore first seek out a quiet spot and force all his mind-trends to converge inwards. He must take a firm seat, shut off the gates of the various sense organs, and practise the art of diving deep into the recesses of the mind; the aspirant will proceed to spring-clean it, that is to say, he will weed out all its unclean thought-growths; he will locate cobwebs of faults and sweep them away with the broom of detachment. He will then remember the thought he has devoted to self-knowledge, and in pursuance of the decision at which he has arrived, he will regard all duality as unreal, hitch his wagon to the lode star of his own real form, concentrate on its subimity.

Rising from the gross to the subtle and from there to the causal and thence again to the super-causal, he will find that even the super-causal will continue to bob up again and again in the well of his mind and there will be a recurring tendency of egoism, of the persistent "I". That tendency must be guided towards the supreme "I"

the "I" of all "I"s, and sublimated therein. A habit must be formed of this process. The unreal character of both the observer and the observed must be well understood; it has got to be realised that both of them are subject to change, and that the essence that underlies all this, the vision, the knowledge, the radiance, the consciousness is the ONLY real thing about it. And that exactly is the pure and impeccable "I". This state of mind must be arrived at, and a determined effort must be made to fix it hard and fast. This is what *nididhyāsana* means.

When the tortoise draws in its limbs, all that can be seen is the convex of its shell; the shape of its limbs is not apparent. Similarly at the time of this *nididhyāsana* all the material as well as subtle senses of perception as well as all the mind-trends must be made to face one way, which is the way of the ultimate Reality of the super-causal body, of the witness-attitude of the impeccable "I". Then you must make up your mind that the root-source, the fountain-head of all manifestations is that Reality and none else; but even that manifestation itself is nothing but restlessness, or restiveness. That too, therefore, must be quashed. This is how experience begins to dawn.

That which remains after completion of this process of elimination is your own real Self; Know It as such; know It as unadulterated knowledge itself, as the pure consciousness.

On coming round from this meditative concentration to the world of mundane existence, you will find a spring

of self-assurance, a sense of steadfast adherence to the essential self-form, or pure joy welling up in the heart. Let the experience be neither stilled nor circumscribed, but let it be wide, far-flung, and all-embracing. To be able to conjure up that mind-state by will-power and keep it active during normal worldly behaviour while experiencing whatever falls to one's lot as a result of the *prārabdha*—such achievement is the effortless natural trance (*samādhi*) of the enlightened aspirant. This trance-like concentration of meditation is brought about by certain processes; the *samādhi* of knowledge comes from thought. The *dhyāna samādhi* must be built up and experienced by putting into strait-jacket and thereby immobilising the insistent sense-outlets and their objectives, the mind and its operations; they have to be either frozen up or their activities directed inwards; they must be introverted; they must be merged into the depths of the real self-form; only then the *dhyāna-samādhi* will materialise.

On the other hand the *jñāna-samādhi* or the trance condition resulting from enlightenment has to be cultivated by thought. Even when you are engaged in the activities which happen to have devolved on you as a result of your activated (*prārabdha*) *Karma* involving the perceptive senses and their objects and the processes of the mind, i. e., even when the body is busy functioning as the doer and enjoyer, as a background to it your conviction must all the time remain unshakably firm that nothing but the non-functioning real self-form is the permanent fact about it. All the rest must be mentally plucked out and cast out, if the one eternal Reality is to

be enjoyed. This must be a ceaseless and habitual process. This is the difference between the processes of *Jñāna* and *Dhyāna*, of knowledge and effort; but there is none between the results of the two processes, for the resultant in either case is *swarupa* i. e. essential Self-form alone.

CHAPTER X

Nididhyāsana is no bed of roses. A number of difficulties assail the aspirant as he sits down to it. The mind has, in course of numberless past existences formed the habit of roaming at sweet will all over the gamut of sense-objects; it is no joke, therefore, now to compel it to flow down a single conduit towards the basic self, and stand no nonsense. A slippery, crooked, restless mind reeking with passions and levity will take not a few hours, nor a few months nor even a few years, but a cycle of many existences to cleanse itself and submit to discipline. Steadiness in this spiritual study is possible only when the mind has developed an abiding aversion for wordly things, detachment towards objects of the senses, and instead of the delusions of "me" and "mine" a deep attachment to God and a firm faith in the Word.

Mukunda Rāj therefore sounds a note of warning here. You have sat down to meditate. Visions have ceased to appear. But utter darkness takes their place. Thou, the seer, hath turned wise, and all-knowing; thou hath dismissed sights; and thou now sayeth that darkness has assailed thee because thou canst not realise that the seer and the sight are merely relative ideas and no more.

But the author asks for a little more finesse in thought. Thou hath observed and understood the nature of that ignorance *alias* darkness. That means that "thou" art knowledge itself, i. e., pure enlightenment. Having

realised this play-acting of seer and sight, treat both of them with contempt born of distaste (*vairāgya*) for false things—things of the flesh, of the earth, earthy. And then, look. You will see that what now remains at the end of the fray is nothing but absolute Selfness.

Neither paradise, nor death nor the nether regions with all their countless shapes and forms have a place in that ultimate state; there is no room there for purposing or counter-purposing, nor for memories, nor for mental emanations of any kind.

If even then anything does emanate, it will have "I" as its fulcrum. It will be "I" that will raise its head. Existence of "I" prompts and conjures up the presence of "this." "I" and "this" constitute the duality of seer and seen. The contact between the component parts of this pair means sight, i. e., the act of seeing. And as soon as this act starts functioning, the numberless triologies of doer-deed-doing, knower-known-knowing, enjoyer-enjoyed-enjoying etc. will spring from that one motion and commence their mad, restless death-dance.

For this reason this chapter makes a bid to uproot all that is observable; for what is observable is unreal, illusion; and so, it must be refuted by due discrimination, logical devices and experience, so that the aspirant may be able to fix his faith not on seer or seen but only on sight, or rather on insight. This chapter is designed to help out the processes laid down in the preceding one. Its contents must be carefully studied, reflected upon and thoroughly understood.

CHAPTER XI

In the last chapter we have proved the falsity of the entire world of phenomena and eliminated it from the viewpoint of essential knowledge. One thing however still awaits disposal. You have held commerce with the pervading Inner Being; but what about the nescience, the ignorance which is the super-cause of the universe itself consisting, as it does, of the gross, the subtle and the causal bodies? Something must be done to explain it. So the chapter under review deals with ignorance and its operations.

The argument is that if all exhalations of this *antah-karana* are to be regarded as sprouting from the essential Self-form itself, then the law of cause and effect being identical comes into operation; consequently, ignorance cannot have an independent existence at all. Such existence remains, in fact, unproved. But so long as ignorance which sees reality in all the three factors of the triad of seer-seen-seeing continues to make its presence felt, the mind-eye is not able to concentrate on that core of consciousness which is our root-form, on the enlightenment which is our very own basic constituting real-self; and while experience of that ultimate Knowledge remains absent, how is it possible to denounce as non-existent this ignorance which has a beginning as well as an end, and which therefore being finite apparently exists only in the present, that is to say, between the two time-extremes?

In view of this state of affairs, and in order that you

may debunk all those trilogical states as belonging to ignorance—as mere fancies of non-knowledge, you have come to the decision that the only reality is the ultimate supreme Truth which is not relative and which is without attribute; you have been given a taste of the Supreme Reality through the medium of *nididhyāsana*. So you discover that knowledge and ignorance, sentience and inertia, many and one, change and changelessness and all such opposing notion-pairs are in the final analysis the pastime and idle sport of mental phenomena which are engendered by some power which defies imagination, argument and reason.

To tell the truth, these inspirations of duality, this phenomenal creation of numerous worlds and subworlds have no factual existence at all. What indeed *is*, is an indescribable factor which is neither one, nor two, nor of any other numerical denomination; which has no gender, no emblem, no attribute, no caste, no category and no qualification whatever. It is that which can only be experienced by one's own self, and which admits of no description and detail, for the simple reason that understanding and speech have no access to it. The author explains in this chapter how that Finality may be determined by personal experience.

That experience itself is *the* fathomless happiness; no joy can exceed it; no mental state can excel it. Heigh-ho! There is no such thing as inkling or action, perfection or partialness, to be or not to be; all that you have to do is to get to know your very own self, and be your own witness and proof, so that there can be no ground for suspicion and doubt.

CHAPTER XII

As a result of attaining this state of bliss the radiance of the magnificent enlightenment generated by superconsciousness is bound to permeate your body, penetrate your mental operations and ideas, envelope your sense-perceptions and limbs, and affect your vital life-force itself. This chapter tells us about the reactions caused by this phenomenon. It is common experience that ordinarily speaking, occasions of joy and sorrow or impulses of passions like love, anger, etc. cause tremors, thrills and other effects of a similar nature in the body. But the bliss of which we have spoken far transcends these sentiments in its intensity ; so much so that there is nothing with which it can be compared. When that matchless nectar wells up in the inner being, there is no wonder if its onrush of beatitude thrills the whole system, makes you perspire freely and shakes you up to your foundations.

It is not unusual for the aspirant in this state to be overcome by a surge of sentimental devotion for the GURU or the deity and dance and sing in ecstasy. In one of the methods of breath-control envisaged by *Hatha Yoga* the learner experiences a peculiar kind of perspiration, which if rubbed back into the skin is said to result in increased vital force. Many devotee-saints are reported to have frequently fallen into a frenzy of ecstatic song and dance as a matter of natural course, and at the time the hair on their bodies are reported to have stood erect. Similar experiences are not uncommon even now.

Mukunda Rāj indicates something of a similar nature happening here too. The joy which comes from the experience of the Supreme is akin to that which might be expected to overwhelm a beggar if he were suddenly placed on a kingly throne. The manifestations of the joy of such an experience are of eight kinds, such as perspiration, tremor, etc. In that state the mind along with its brood of modes and moods takes a plunge into the cool depths of the sea of soul-joy and dissolves itself into that nectar.

Such experience transcends speech. The satisfaction of having performed million righteous acts, of acquiring the limitless prowess and imperial splendours of Indrahood are as nought when compared to this happiness which exposes them for what they really are just puerile and perishable nothings.

Mukunda Rāj truly says that only he who experiences that bliss can have an adequate idea of which it is like; those who watch from a distance can only gape and wonder, for it is not given to them to understand or even imagine its marvels.

CHAPTER XIII

You have now got what you wanted ; the knowledge which was sought has been attained ; all that was to be done stands accomplished. You add up your gains and find that you were upto now a prey to discontent, restlessness and uneasiness which racked your mind ; but now the vision of the Supreme has brought to you an ineffable peace, like the thirst-tortured traveller in the desert coming upon a cool spring of fresh water. The mind is no more upset by disturbances and distractions. It has lost the illusions of ego, of the individual circumscribed soul, of the phenomenal world. No longer do acts either of selfishness or altruism hold any element of novelty for such a one. All that is left to him, when he looks around, is compassion for the pitiable ignorance of the masses at large and a feeling of surprise at their surpassing stupidity.

Observance of rules and regulations implies a desire to obtain or arrive at something. But now nothing remains which he might want to know, obtain or do. What rules, then would he need to follow ? Why on earth should he continue to carry the load of inhibitions and exhibitions, of do-s and don'ts, of gospel injunctions and shastric shibboleths ? His physical functions will simply go on in accordance with the impressions which the mind has received in the past with regard to normal behaviour.

He may choose to speak, if he will, merely for discussing the Absolute, if and when perchance seekers of

Truth and other spiritual aspirants happen to come upon him, so that the way may be shown to them.

Without rime or reason he might feel drawn towards loving inquirers drawn to him by past Karmic commitments; a stream of reciprocating love may flow from his own heart. This would be automatic, for the mind has ceased to fabricate fictitious alternatives and options. It no longer plans fresh ideas.

His intellect has been rid of ignorance and worldly cognitions, and now admits only the super-knowledge of the ultimate Self which fills it completely and exclusively. This means that every moment he is wide awake and self-conscious. All his actions happen of themselves, instinctively and without effort, because of his mental soul-alertness and his attitude of detachment for the falsity of mundane affairs in his external behaviour.

Even so, one thing still remains to him. From the physical point of view he sometimes ruminates over his past ignorance; he remembers how he has been salvaged from that mass of opposites. How grateful he feels to the compassionate *gurudeva* who has in his fathomless mercy thus taken pity on him. How he thrills at the memory! With a catch in his voice, overcome by emotion, he faintly murmurs: "Blessed be the *Guru*;" The rest of his days are spent in thinking of the *Guru's* mercy; all his commendable acts are service rendered unto the *Guru*; all his discussions are but hymns to the *Guru's* greatness.

There are some travellers of the spiritual path who miss the wood for the trees and get so completely engrossed

in their introversion, in the devotional pursuit of the object of devotion or in the attachment to the super-ego, that they miss their worldly bearings. They are not able to be wary and attentive in the practical affairs of the work-a-day world. Their dealings tend to chaos, and the ordinary run of people regard them more or less as mentally unbalanced. Not being able to understand the inner workings of their mind, people continue to pursue them with obloquy, allegations and distracting verbiage. The more this sort of thing happens the more its victims are inclined to treat them sometimes with disregard, sometimes with calculated contempt; for they feel fed up and reckless.

The extent of ability or the lack of it to behave normally in mundane matters is determined by the nature of the seeker's inner experiences, on the manner in which his mental make-up has been stamped with the past ways of life and on the impressions of the actions of previous existences which have started bearing fruit in this life. The degrees of differences in these factors constitute and determine the attitudes of the aspirants towards the material world and its practical affairs. This is too fine for ordinary people to grasp, and so the ordinary people go on forming their own conclusions. Let them !

And for that matter, why on earth should it occur to such an advanced student to introduce and interpret himself to the people? Why should he want to make them understand him? He is likely to be obliged to conform to the manner and ways of his own life to the ideas and

usages of the masses, only if he stirs up within himself a pride of knowledge, and a desire to be honoured and worshipped; only when he conjures up a duality in the form of the world and persuades himself that this world being steeped in ignorance is going the wrong way and that it is up to him to reform and save it. In order to bring this about he must submit himself to an unbalanced, egoistic stupid aspiration: "Know me, recognise me as a wise fellow, for I AM a wise fellow."

The *Atman* has always been free and untrammelled; it was overlaid by a film of baseless illusion when confronted with pure knowledge; in the face of the ultimate Reality, tested in the fire of experience, that film has disappeared. That is all. And so the *Atman* is now completely free. It was free before, it is free now; where, then, is the question of being vainglorious about it? There can be no fear of fire feeling warm; and still less of it suffering from cold. By the same token, longings can never contaminate the man of supreme knowledge, for the basis of desire is ignorance, which he has driven out of his system.

He has therefore no consciousness of the duality called the world, much less of the question of its uplift. He is above and beyond the operations of memory, forgetfulness and the like. There is a level of super-knowledge which lies far away on the other side of all such states and conditions; the mind of the blessed enlightened dwells in those regions for ever, until death doth destroy his physical body. He cognises not the world; the credentials of creation are to him as nought, false, presumptuous;

nor does the world notice or know him. Good riddance, either way! He ever remains a mystery to all and sundry. We find that the *Jivanmukta*—the man who is free even in life—is described in various books in contradictory terms, and the question of *prārabdha* is treated in curious ways. The cause of these contradictions and conjectural curiosities lies in the subject of the descriptions himself. The internal experience of the *Jivanmukta* is necessarily such as can be known to him only and to no one else. It is in the nature of things that no one but he may know himself by means of his own self; he has realised ATMAN by *Atman*, and by no other agency. The means he has employed to gain this self-knowledge, is itself that of *Advaita*, i. e., non-dual, absolute. If the means are such, how can you expect the end to be susceptible to a dualistic interpretation or introduction?

CHAPTER XIV

The author winds up his monograph with an epilogue of the "superb nectar" of his experience. What was worth telling, what was necessary to be told to the aspirant for guiding him on to the path of experience and pointing out to him the pitfalls and danger-zones has been duly told. The conglomeration of elements known as the creation (*Prapancha*), the three qualitative categories (harmony, motion and inertia), the five elements, the five sense objects, the pentagons of perception and contact, the five breath forms, the five sheaths, the four bodies, the four states with their respective presiding geniuses—these have been dealt with in detail.

It has been proved by even means of natural human inhibitions and exhibitions that the Supreme Reality is like unto deathless nectar; that it is truth, knowledge, beauty; that such indeed is the real Self-form of every one; and that this Reality is ever free.

The apparent as well as the implied meaning and implications of the great aphorism "That Thou Art" have also been laid bare.

A clear exposition has been given of the manner in which the aspirant may pick out and eliminate from the *shabala* (qualified, mottled, of the second degree) Brahman, its attributive accretions, accept the pure unsullied residue and steer the barque of his mind by the lode star of the inner light with a singleness of purpose.

The author has declared in unambiguous terms that this thing can never be attained without adequate study and cultivation of calculated tastelessness for the world of phenomena.

The ghost of so-called bondage will be laid only when dualistic fancies and contradictory thought processes cease to bubble and boil in the witches' cauldron called the mind, when the sham of opposites is debunked, and when mental operations are firmly and irrevocably linked up with the real self in perpetual and ceaseless union by means of meditative effort and enlightenment (*dhyāna* and *jñāna*.)

Bondage having been disposed of and dualism merged in absolute oneness, in the very moment of their extinction the SWA-RUPA, the real self-form which has always been free becomes freer than ever.

The Upanishad says: "The free is freed." How can this conception be expressed? So this leads to the absolute state of silence incarnate. He who has reached that state of blessed non-speech has travelled beyond the sense of dualism *in toto*. His experience is such as can be visualised only by himself; the point and proof of his experience. the yard-stick of his own self must be his own self.

Such a one is the wise one, the free-in-life, the *Jivanmukta*. The reactions on and in his body of the upsurge of this sense of super-freedom can only be a matter of wonder and conjecture for the commoner. His behaviour in normal worldly matters would also assume varied and strange forms in accordance with the turns and

twists of his *Prārabdha*. He can therefore never be explained and understood in terms of any single fixed category. He may be an adept in social give-and-take, or a dumb-bell; he may appear to be uproarious or quiet; he may be a devotee or yogi; given to meditation or inspired by enlightenment; he may happen to belong to any caste or creed; whatever he may be, the only way to know him and unravel his mystery is to come into intimate contact with him in a spirit of service and humility, with faith and submission. A tally of his external signs and characteristics will always fail to reveal the inner man to the vainly curious eye. This is the considered opinion of the sacred books, and our author agrees with them.

The preceding chapters have exhaustively explained for the benefit of the neophyte the secrets of the means, as well as of the End to which those means are expected to lead. Now the fourteenth chapter exhorts the reader to go on along the road already indicated and take care to be adequately equipped with the accoutrements which have been shown to be necessary for successful termination of this pilgrim's progress.

The reader is advised to seek out the super-experience which can come only through the *Guru's* compassion and favour. Experience can be transmitted or taught only by a man of experience. A blind surgeon will do no good to the patient who wants the cataract to be surgically remove from his eye. Even in normal circumstances the doctor, apart from his two ordinary eyes, would need the help of the third eye of experience if he expects to be reasonably successful. The analogy is applicable in the field of the *Atman*.

Purusha (the spirit) and *Prakriti* (nature), *Jiva* (vital life force or soul) and *Shiva* (atman), *Kshara* (the perishable) and *Akshara* (the imperishable Supreme)—these are the two eyes which every individual possesses. These go in a series of pairs, like the pairs of ordinary optics. But there is something which is inaccessible to these pairs, the Absolute oneness, the ultimate Reality; everything must be experienced in terms of that finality, as so many sportive manifestations of that super-consciousness. The eye which may enable you to succeed in your quest, to win the privilege of witnessing, grasping and enjoying that experience, will necessarily be the Third Eye, the *Shiva* (the beneficent, the blessed) vision. And such divine vision can be grafted on you, or rather, granted to you only by one who has acquired it himself. That is called experience.

None but a *Jivanmukta* who dwells in the trance-like *Samadhi* of self-realisation, and is fixed in the firm faith of the belief “I am SHIVA the Absolute” can kindle the same flame elsewhere. That is called *tradition*. All the sacred books from times immemorial, all religions and sects and denominatory doctrines and men of wisdom have made that unequivocal assertion, and are doing so in the present also.

It is necessary for this super-knowledge to be true to *tradition*, unsullied and pure. It should have been handed down from teacher to teacher in an unbroken chain. The stream of the philosophy of emancipation, of cessation of Karmic activity has come down from days beyond computation, since the beginning of creation. It has been set

in motion by the mind-children of *Brahma* (the creation-concept) like Sanaka, Sanandana and Sanatkumar.

Only that knowledge is true which has been tested in that fiery stream and cleansed of all impurities; the rest is just so much verbiage, meaningless dross, idle chatter.

He himself inherited his experience by way of untarnished tradition. You can get nothing which you do not deserve; and if perchance you do, you will not be able to retain it; if undeserved retention is attempted, it will blow off in a welter of demonstrative rant which can only harm the ranter as well as his audience.

Mukunda Rāj has spoken:—

“Therefore, insist on nothing less than personal experience of that supreme Thing which most indubitably is present here, now and always.

Its realisation must be the life's aim and ambition; and attainment of the aim inevitably presupposes refuge in one, who has become one with *Brahman*, which is the only way to reach the journey's end.”

With this final word of advice, the author pronounces his benediction: “If you will conduct yourself in a manner pleasing to your blessed teacher, if you will serve him, win his approval and treasure his teachings like life itself, you may rest assured that happiness will be yours; eternal joy will be with you.”

Then he writes FINIS with the words “He who experiences this enlightenment, shall look within himself and not fail to perceive there his Master—his own true self.

O seeker of the Eternal Truth ! O aspirant of absolute Liberty ! PARAMĀMRITA-Nectar Supreme, Immortality is now in your hands. Every chapter of it is full of inspiration. The thoughts which are jotted down here are nothing but stray ideas as they occurred during a study of this book, and are meant to be merely introductory notes. I have not loaded it with quotations and citations of authorities ; for the highest authority of them all is Self-experience.

One thing, however, is certain ; that Mukunda Rāj has not digressed the least little bit from the injunctions as well as from the Instruments of knowledge as laid down in the Upanishads. He has thoroughly digested the traditionally acquired wisdom, experienced it within himself, and managed to express, as it were the essence of all scriptures between the covers of this little monograph.

Seeker ! Thy gains from a study of this book will be in proportion to the earnestness and honesty of thy inquiry. The instruments will respond in relation to the effort. Knock, and the door shall open. If the fire of indifference to sense-objects be well and truly lit, the wood of knowledge shall come to thee in plenty, where-with to keep its flame undiminished. For the blessings of Mukunda Rāj fall unsolicited on the heads of conscientious seekers. We, too, pray for thy fulfilment. May thy search be successful, may thy soul-satisfaction be immortal.*

S. SWAYAMJYOTI TIRTHA.

* Original in Gujarati.

IMMORTALITY

CHAPTER I

Valedictory

O Blessed Master. I offer my salutations to you. The highest of all blessings is emancipation *moksha*, and it is a gift which can come only from You. You are like an ocean of mercy ; You are infinite and unfathomable.

You are bliss incarnate, and self-effulgent ; You are the supreme God who bestows the gift of absolute freedom. In form You are without decay, and of shape You have none.

You are free from attachment, and unblemished ; which means that in You there is no vestige of the darkness called ignorance ; nothing can stand in Your way ; and You are all-embracing. There is no god or godling comparable to You, O Master.

Your compassion is the magic that snaps asunder the bonds of material existence and grants discharge from nescience, You are a saviour of souls.

O bounteous One. You may do all that the gods and titans cannot. Really, I do not behold such prowess in any one but You.

To whom but You can I offer my obeissance ? Whose praises shall I sing but Yours ? Hail, hail, O my Lord and Master ! Your greatness is beyond compute.

You completely pervade the universe, as the thread does the cloth. You are here, there and everywhere, yet apart from it all; You remain completely and ever unaffected.

You choose to assume numerous forms possessing various attributes by the force of Your (*Māyā's*) omnipresence. It is You who take on the shapes of *Shiva* and *Shakti* and grant us a glimpse of them.

I cannot see anyone but You; my mind will not accept any one but You. In truth, I have chosen to place my head on Your feet, and Your feet alone.

You are the pure soul; You are self-radiant; it is but Your effulgence which spreads everywhere. O bliss incarnate! O ideal-supreme! I bow to You.

You become the creator-concept and create; as the Protector-concept You protect; and then You take on the functions of the Eliminator-concept and destroy so that creation may start all over again.

You are the witness of everything; You are omniscient; all knowledges are known to You. You are wise. The term That (*Tat*) signifies the all-knowing (*Iswara*), which is You. And the term Thou (*Twam*) means the (individual) soul which again is Your own self and none else. O *Guru*. You are the Lord of everything.

You are conscious of the fundamental real Self-form, and that is why enlightenment radiates from You. And You choose to be called Soul-Supreme, *Paramātman*, because of the attribute of this knowledge.

All this expanse of sentient and inert objects known

as the universe is but the emanation of Your own will. You Yourself have sprouted up everywhere in the form of numberless soul-sparks of Your flaming self.

You are the finite knowledge of various creatures, as well as the infinite knowledge of the whole world put together. You are enlightenment otherwise called the Self which is so dear to the soul and for which the term Thou stands.

You are eternal and spontaneous joy. You have no attachments because of the identity which is manifest between the implied meanings of the terms "That" and "Art" signifying That Thou Art. More than that You are beyond even That and Thou, beyond the literal meanings of the two terms; You are what those terms secondarily imply, which means that You are perfection itself; You are the absolute.

Trying in this way to sing hymns to You, even the Wisdom (*Veda*) and the Word (*shruti*) came to the stage where speech was not; and I am but an ordinary person. What qualification then can I have to be able to describe You?

You are the all-loving Supreme Spirit. You are the Lord of the four kinds of speech (*parā, pashyanti, madhyamā* and *vaikhari*.) O shining one. Please, therefore, light up my intellect so that I may dare to know You.

You are the ocean of mercy. The ignorance of souls is dissipated only when You pronounce a blessing. Having done so, You turn Yourself into a miracle-worker and display the Godhead (*Shivatva*).

CHAPTER II

Other beliefs routed

There is something the knowledge of which may entitle one to employ the various means of spiritual effort; this *something* is to be studied without pause and for ever; it is the place to which the mind has to turn back and in which it must become engrossed and rested.

That thing is SPIRITUAL INSIGHT; Yogis take endless delight in it. I am now unfolding the ways and means thereof.

I turn over the pages of all the scriptures and describe only their bare essence, even as nectar was churned out of the ocean and butter is drawn from curds.

There is nothing else to be done but this. Put aside all other lines of study as well as the various means which conflict with one another.

These mutually conflicting beliefs and opinions and the various schools of philosophy are a source of botheration, so long as a proper interpretation of the Great Aphorism has not been mentally appreciated and experienced.

Who may sound the depths of the distress which continues to lie on the heart, pile on pile, so long as one has not appreciated by means of his very own personal experience the attributeless, real, fundamental self?

The poor hapless soul is engrossed in the struggle of vows, penances, rules and regulations; it is deeply enmeshed in the snare of doubts. How, then, can he swim across the ocean of worldly existence and safely reach the other shore?

Worshipping, bathing, wandering in pilgrimage, charities, incantations, diagrams, offerings, sacrificial rituals, etc., can only give you the privilege of reaping the fruits thereof in paradise or in other worlds in proportion to the extent of your effort.

Emancipation is not possible by meditation or austerities or various kinds of rites and ceremonies so long as spiritual knowledge, the realisation of Self has not been acquired.

So long as the differentiations between Soul and God resulting from qualities being attributed to them are not discarded, so long as their unity remains unestablished and identity is not achieved i. e., experienced, so long as the apparently conflicting distinctions and divergencies observed in the qualified (*shabala*) *Brahman* are not ironed out so that the light of the pure Self may shine unhampered.

From "*shabala*" that part of its connotation which constitutes its primary sense (of possessing qualities and qualifications) must be eliminated (for *Shabala* means *Brahman* self afflicted with ignorance which is *Māyā* and dwelling in the tri-qualitative universe as its cosmic soul and the "soul" is the same, individualised; this subtraction will leave clear the implied sense of the terms Thou and

That which is pure unsullied *Brahman*. Having done this, the unadulterated Supreme must be personally and appreciatively experienced.

So long as this is not done the question of liberation simply does not arise.

So long as the taint of believing *That* to be different from "I" is not erased from the mind, true knowledge is unable to dawn; the target cannot be hit without such enlightenment.

So long as the trident (of That, Thou, and Art) is not properly sized up and its secrets not clearly brought out, you are not entitled to reach that point which lies beyond the three-and-a-half stages of *Omkar*; the dilemma of the perishable (*kshara*) and the imperishable (*akshara*) eternal *Brahman* is not resolved; and the experience of merging completely into *Brahman* in the Third Person (*Purushottama*) cannot be realised.

How can you dream of liberation while you have yet failed to grasp the meaning and content of Truth, Knowledge and Bliss, to understand the mysteries of causality and to acquire the limpid pure self-knowledge?

How is emancipation possible without first hearing the mysteries of Vedānta from the lips of the blessed Master, then meditating on them and finally fixing them firmly in the mind by ceaselessly vigilant practice?

Listen not to any one who strays from the fundamentals of Vedānta and propounds the fetish of some heretic doctrine, but confine yourself to experience in your own self what the Great Aphorism implies.

The first part of the Vedas describes cosmography, and lays down certain dogmatic rules in conformity with it; but the aspirant who aims at the supreme Truth should let them severely alone, and be content to learn from the lips of the Blessed Master the secrets of the final portions of the Vedas (the Upanishads) which constitute Vedānta.

There is a stage where Vedānta has only non-speech to offer; and there is a stage where the student, having known what is to be known, becomes as if he has not known at all. The point where these two meet is the Absolute Refuge, which **MUST** be reached. The contact and union of *Jiva* (soul) and *Isvara* (God) is itself the attainment of the final goal of emancipation. That is where the hurdles of dualism cease to trouble the mind in its onward march.

CHAPTER III

The Aphorism Explained

When the Witness of all witnesses who is the Lord of everything takes into Himself the primordial potency (*Shakti*) and creates, maintains and destroys, He is called *Shabala*, i. e., conditioned *Brāhman* the purity of which is mottled by *Māyā*.

Cast away everything that can be seen, i. e., all objects which are cognisable by senses; after one incognisable something remains as cognition in the abstract; know that quality-of-being-witness to be the pure unconditioned *Paramātman*, the Supreme Self.

All sacred books agree that He is all-knowing and the Lord of everything. He is to be known as Knowledge itself, as Beyond the beyond.

He is the observer of Infinite Potency; His seat has no location, no measurement; He fills everything limitlessly, fully and solidly; no one can know His extent, intent or content.

Know Him alone to be pure; and eliminate the impure conditioned state. It is He alone who is solid knowledge, bliss and the self-evident Supreme Lord.

He is apart and away from the Universe (*Brahmānda*) from *Hiranyagarbha* (*Brahmā*, the creator-idea), from *Māyā* (illusory manifest process of creation), and from

the three bodies (gross, subtle and causal). He is of a different calibre from (-possessed of attributes diametrically opposed to-) *Mahāmāyā* (the divine Energy Potency, the dormant (original Nature)).

He who exists all on His own and as Himself, in and beyond the processes of creation, maintenance and dissolution as well as all the states and stages in which all activity occurs.

He who is apart and different from *Brahma*, *Vishnu*, *Rudra* and the Forth who is this Lord of everything (*Sarveshwara*), He is the unfathomable pure *Brahman*.

Thus regarded, believe the soul (*jiva*) to be free from wrong or no-knowledge, and transcending all actions based on desire.

The gross, the subtle, the causal and the Fourth which is the super-causal body; waking, dreaming, sleeping, and the fourth which is the *Turiya* state; *Vishwa* (the name of the soul in the waking state) *Taijas* (its name in the dreaming state) *Prājña* (its name in the dreamless sleep state) and the omniscient *Pratyagātman* (the all-pervading soul)—all these representative insignia are employed to express *shabala* signifying the term Thou.

When the guinea-stamp of being the life-soul is erased, the gold of solid knowledge from which is the witness of all these attributes manifests Itself and the Pure (*Brahman*) is established.

Shabala has one aspect which consists of the literal meaning as it is understood as soon as the word is uttered;

and it has another aspect of the Pure (*Brahman*) which is its implied meaning. When the oneness, i. e., the singularity of this implied sense is appreciated, realisation or emancipation stands achieved. (Both are gold, but the former is minted gold and the latter gold in the nugget.)

Eyes are two, dual; but the vision is one and singular; so ears are two in number, but audition is only one; the two lips utter the same word.

Similarly the literal meaning of Thou is life-soul and that of That is *Ishwara* (both guinea-stamps); but if these two are analysed, the distinction (i. e., illusion of difference caused by the artificial stamps) pure (unqualified gold) *Brahman* stands realised. That being the case, who would care to indulge in dualistic fancies?

The sky, i. e., space or ether is a partless whole, complete by itself; yet the skies which happen to be imprisoned in pots and palaces appear to be separate from it and from each other; and for that reason they are called the pot-space, the house-space, etc.

But as soon as the pot or the house is broken, the spaces merge immediately into the element, the Great Space, and become the element itself. In the same way as soon as the attributes of the life-soul and the cosmic soul (*Ishwara*) are removed, only the basic real self remains.

With the removal of illusion (*māyā*) and wrong knowledge (*avidyā*) the distinction between the *Jiva* and *Ishwara* disappears, and they unite into singleness. Bear this well in mind, and be happy.

If you peep through glasses tinted with *Māyā* and *Avidyā*, you will notice contradictions between the individual and cosmic souls. You can however get round this optical illusion by abandoning the *māyā*-tinted (*Shabala*) *Brahman*; for then, all that remains will be pure and indivisible *Brahman* as distinctionless as an expanse of water.

Thus should you analyse the Great Aphorism and probe the mysteries of the terms That and Thou so as to resolve both of them into the unity of the term Art.

It is quite true that the various differences of opinion which are seen to prevail owe their existence to a lack of this view-point. That differentiating partial knowledge is known as the operation of *māyā*.

CHAPTER IV

Exit, the material body

Now, *Advaita* is something which is to be understood and meditated upon. At first the dualistic ideology may be allowed to come into play and meditation be based on that view-point. The next stage is to know all about it and then drop it where it stands.

You have now to introvert your vision and start looking at things from this point of view which is quite opposite to other. You must focus the vision, the act of seeing. (no longer on the object as different from the seer but) on the seer himself, and get to know your own real witnessing self which will then reveal itself manifest.

If you try to look beyond this, you will find there nothing that can be seen; it is the stage where one has to dive into the absolutely one solid chunk of indivisible Existence supreme.

I shall now relate to you the knowledge of *Brahman* in which there is no *māyā* or *avidyā*, which has no horizon and which none but one's own self may cognise.

Attention !

You have to secure admission to the Effulgence which is the storehouse of intense and joyous happiness, and for ever get rid of the bother of tripping to and fro.

Listen very attentively to the infallible device by

which this may be achieved so that interminable contentment may be yours.

But before coming to that I shall tell you about the ways and means of recognising the basic self-form of *ĀTMAN*; for who will you meditate upon without knowing this?

In the first place, therefore, it is necessary for you to arrive at an understanding of *Ātman*. The next step is to employ the means of realising it. How is it possible to experience the absolute *it* without such an effort?

Hearken to the device by which you may cultivate the conviction that it is One. I suppose you are at least quite sure that you know what *I am* means; are you not?

You know "I am", but you have no idea of "*who I am.*" How is it that you do not know yourself?

Who are you? What are you? Where do you come from? Where are you bound for? You have come and gone times without number; yet did it ever occur to you to be curious about yourself?

Are you the corporeal body? Or is it that you BELONG to the body? Does the body know you, or do you cognise the body? If you ruminate this question and chew the cud, you will come to understand that you are the seer himself, and this body is only the object of your optical effort.

If you think about it you will find that you are the cogniser of the eternal body as well as of the body which

lies within, and that you are merely carrying that body about with you as just an appendage.

You are wearing this garment made of the five elements, and you are taking it around among the other beings (body-wearers); but do you know anything about that body which you so sedulously lug around with you?

This is the way in which you must exterminate the attribute of observableness, know your self, and give up the delusion of your carnal physical structure being yourself.

You are the one and only knower of all the limbs of your body. You are quite distinct from them; learn to discriminate the one from the other; think this over carefully.

Hair, skin, veins, flesh and bone are hard substances belonging to the earth (solid) category, and you are the knower thereof.

Saliva, urine, blood, fat and semen are liquid substances belonging to the water (liquid) principle and you are the knower thereof.

Hunger, thirst, lethargy, sleep and coition, are processes which operate because of the fire element (heat,) and you are the knower thereof.

Walking, running, remaining stationary, expanding and contracting are the five mercurial qualities of the element air (mobility,) and you of course observe them.

Desire, anger, sorrow, greed and fear are the five

qualities which are characteristic of the (intangible) space element, and you are quite aware of them.

You know the twenty-five sub-divisions of these five elements, which means that they are all objects of your observation; and this visibility is known as the gross body.

It is first born; then it exists, grows, changes, degenerates and finally dies. These processes of birth, existence, growth, change, dotage and death are the six transformations of the material body.

In the same way you know quite well the colour, the name and the form of body. How then can YOU who are ĀTMAN be one with that body which belongs to a different category?

You are the formless *Ātman*; and you know that the body has a shape and a form. You know that 'the fire fills the wood and permeates it completely, yet that fire is separate from the wood—is *in* it, but not *of* it.

By the same token, you, *Ātman*, pervade this Gross body completely, and fill it to the brim, right up to the hair tips. You can realise this at once if you look into the matter carefully.

In spite of this the BODY does not know *You*. You, however, know it; and the act or the fact of knowing it is knowledge; that knowledge is you self, *Ātman*. But you are neither male nor female (—neither *he* nor *she*, nor *it*, for that matter).

The outward activities of the body take place and

the senses experience contact of their objects when *Ātman* is awake.

The entity which entertains the egoistic feeling of possessing a certain name and a particular form is *Vishwa* which is the name given to the doer and experiencer ego of the waking state. YOU are quite distinct from it, possessing entirely different characteristics; you are *ĀTMAN* which knows them all and which is knowledge itself.

So, avaunt imposter number one !

CHAPTER V

The Subtle Body Goes

You hear with the ears, experience the sense of touch with the skin, and observe various forms with the eyes; in the same way—

You taste with the tongue, smell with the nose, pronounce the several letters with the faculty of speech,—

Perform the actions of giving and taking with the hands, move about with the feet, enjoy coitional delights with the limb concerned and excrete the faeces by way of the appropriate organ ;

You stand behind the array of these organs, make your existence known by their instrumentality and provide the motive power to the sense organs. You yourself are made of different mettle from the senses, claiming different characteristics, and being no more than the witness.

The act of hearing, touching, seeing, tasting and smelling are performed by the senses of perception which have five spheres of action.

Word, touch, form, taste and smell are the spheres of operation of the perceptory senses. You are acquainted with the operations of the senses of contact namely, speech, give-and-take, gait, sensual experience and excretion; and you know those senses also.

You alone have the knowledge of the positions occupied by the five breath forms—*Prāna*, *Apāna*, *Vyāna*, *Udāna* and *Samāna*.

You derive inspiration from the five-fold functions of the mind, which are the heart (*antahkarana*), the faculty of thinking (*manas*), discrimination (*buddhi*), memory (*chitta*), and the ego (*ahamkāra*;) and you know them too. Thus you stand four-square, self-projected, from the beginning of certain.

The flickers of the heart (*emotions*) are subtle; and waves of tendencies (*vrittis*) uncessantly heave up on its surface. The One—who-is never-diminished (*akshara*) who knows them all stands self-established.

Say not that the flicker of the *vritti* occurs first and it is followed by its cognition; cognition (meaning knowledge) is in fact there all the time, all by itself, automatically existent.

The flicker of the mind-tendency or mind-mode called *vritti* in the *antahkarana* is itself *manas* or the faculty of thinking which stands for ideas and counter ideas, i. e., cogitation and when it takes a decision that flicker is called *buddhi* or discriminating judgment.

The *buddhi* having come to a decision, grasps an object; the tendency of the mind which keeps harping on that object and follows it up is recollection of *chitta*; and the subsequent activity of the *chitta* is *ahamkāra* or ego—"I do this," "I see that," etc.

The internal sense-group called *antahkarana* thus

functions in a five-fold manner. The self-illuminated *Ātman* knows it. Therefore, *you* are that self-cognisant *Ātman* and none else.

The thread emerges out of the cotton, yet seems different from it. Similarly, *manas*, *buddhi*, *chitta* and *ahamkāra* have sprung from the real *Ātman* self, yet they appear to be different from their progenitor.

So long as the thread retains its twist, it remains as thread; yet it is really nothing but cotton. With the twist or without it, it is fundamentally not something different from cotton.

Or to put it differently, the wave rises on top of the water. Yet it is not something distinct from water. As soon as it subsides, it dissolves, and is merely so much water along with the rest of the fluid.

But the wave does not consist of any substance fundamentally different from water itself. In the same way, once the mind turns back on itself and melts into *Ātman*, it no longer retains an identity of its own but is *Ātman* itself.

The thread so appears because of the twist, and the wave because of the breeze; so also the cause of the uprise of this subtle body which consists of the internal sense-group is *māyā*, a conglomeration of past impressions.

The twist comes undone; the wave subsides; as soon as these things happen, the twist and the breeze disappear of their own accord. So also with the rise of self-knowledge, *māyā* which is the cause of the subtle body becomes a myth.

As soon as the wave merges into water and the thread into cotton, the illusion of differentiation, (duality) evaporates and what then remains is only the cotton or the water. So also, when the mind turns back and fuses into the real self, false knowledge also called *māyā* or the mirage of dualism and its brood is destroyed.

The upshot of all this is that the internal sense-group which is collectively termed *antahkarana* constituted as it is of imaginative emanations, is called the subtle body, which is the state of dreaming, and is the workshop and storehouse of longings and desires.

The projection of the mind through the port holes of the senses in the form of various activities pervades the heart in the form of the urge of desire (*vāsanā*); the dream state takes its foundation and shape from the semblance of the sense objects heard or seen while the heart is affected by this desire-urge.

The ego or "I" of this state who witnesses this phenomena of dreams proceeding from the reflection of desires is known as *Taijas*; this is the manner in which the radiation of the cognition-principle of *Ātman* (*chit*) known technically by the term *chidābhāsa* and familiarly as *jivātmā* or soul pervades the subtle body and has existence.

Glass of a particular shape and kind has the quality of generating fire because of the rays of the sun coming into contact with it; is not that fire the sun itself? Similarly, the radiation of *Ātman* which exists in the *Antahkarana* is itself the self-luminous *Ātman*.

If in the first place you had lacked the faculty of knowing or the power of cognition there would have been no such thing as a stirring in the mind and what follows it. That is why you must understand the fact that the appearance of all these phenomena is due entirely to the existence of the radiation of consciousness called *chidābhāsa* (*jivātmā*).

If your faculty of primary cognition or ability to know and comprehend suffers eclipse and is destroyed at this stage, there will not be anything left for you to comprehend. In this condition *you* (comprehender) alone will remain extant in your own real fundamental indivisible essential self.

You (as *ātman*) feel the urge; you speak, hear and know the secret meanings of the heart; and in that way *you* witness *yourself*. Think this over and realise it.

The light by which the *antahkarana* shines, i. e., the knowledge by which cognition is generated in the heart and the radiance of *ātman* which thus illuminates the heart is itself you, yourself, and no other; know it to be so.

When this comprehension (i. e., cognition) begins to grow and develop restiveness, sights which in fact are non-existent and are therefore false, start appearing; *Ātman* comes into the foreground as soon as this make-believe cognition is denied and quashed.

When the faculty of that knowledge which is cognition awakes and arises, something (called the object of cognition) pretends to be generated; and of this we seem

to be cognisant. Such phenomena must be treated as mere things of sense-perception and therefore discarded. That which remains after its rejection is *Ātman*.

Everything that becomes perceptible must be treated as null and void; as soon as their anulment is achieved, all that remains is pure consciousness which cognises and experiences itself.

The light shines by its own light which enlightens it. Similarly, knowledge or consciousness is the radiation of *Ātman* which exists by itself, and is its own support.

All discernible phenomena are merely so much mirage, will-o'-the-wisp; no more than illusion. O brother ! Deny its existence; and having cleared it out of your way, observe and mark WHO you are, and WHAT.

CHAPTER VI

Away with the Causal Body

You know the idea : " I cannot understand anything." The fact of your knowing this is itself ignorance. But all that cognition of ignorance is so much eye-wash, merely a delusory notion. How is that so ? On the analogy of the shadow which is of the same shape as the limbs of which it is the shadow.

The self who knows himself is always, and in all ways, existent. If this were not so, on what will you peg the cognition of the state of not knowing as expressed by the exclamation " I do not know ? "

The fact of the matter is that the only obstacle in the way of that of which he himself is the knower is the ignorance of "not knowing." Even then, who is the entity which declares that this state is the cognition of "not knowing ? " Or in other words, what is this knowledge of ignorance ?

When you understand (i. e. know) that you do not understand, such understanding comes, not to your ignorance but to your knowledge. Know him alone, therefore, as *Ātman* to whom that cognition of ignorance occurs.

Your trick of knowing yourself (i. e., remaining yourself as the faculty of cognition) and at the same time

assuming the notion-pose of not knowing has caused all this confusion to become worse confounded.

The idea "I do not recognise, that is to say, I do not know myself, for I am ignorant" is so much ignorance; the idea or knowledge by means of which that ignorance becomes cognisable, is knowledge. This only means that "not knowing" which constitutes ignorance is false and merely so much delusion.

As soon as that non-knowledge becomes known, that non-knowledge is instantly proved to be unreal; and as a result there of the only thing that remains as residue is the radiance of *Ātman*, that is to say, its consciousness, or light, or intelligence.

All this boils down to the conclusion that the assumption "I do not know myself" only means that you know yourself. Why do you needlessly enmesh yourself in the non-existent imagined coils of ignorance and conjure up this struggle for freedom ?

You are the self-effulgent *Ātman*; the ignorance of not knowing is merely a delusion ascribed to it. If you eliminate that false ignorance, all that remains behind is yourself, the self-established deathless self.

How can you reasonably assume that he who knows all this (visible world) does not know himself, his own very self i. e., *Ātman* ? Knowledge of this ignorance is a thing which simply cannot exist.

THAT IGNORANCE ALONE IS THE CAUSAL

BODY; the gross and subtle bodies are its handiwork (i. e., take their birth from it.) Now hark to the description of the characteristics of *sushupti* (deep sleep) which is the begetter of this ignorance.

When the mind performs the ordinary functions related to external objects through the instrumentality of the senses that state is known as waking.

Seizing upon the semblance of the waking state the mind indulges in subtle fancies, which constitute the dream state.

But the one and the same faculty of cognition works in both the waking and dreaming states; when that faculty is completely dissolved so that not a vestige of it remains, that is to say, when the trilogy of knowledge-knower-known is laid to rest, a state comes into existence known as dreamless sleep; which is profound ignorance or non-cognition.

Really speaking that non-cognition itself turns into knowledge or cognition in the waking and dreaming states; but the notion of a contrary nature comes to be assumed on account of ignorance, by virtue of which one forgets the *Atman*-form of one's own self.

When you lose sight of your own self, the ignorance which causes this to happen starts imagining the illusory appearance of the phenomenal world; as a result of this the fault is committed of believing the soul in the state of deep sleep to be "I".

If gold is submitted to the heat of a furnace its impurities are burnt away and only pure gold remains; so when ignorance, i. e., the notion of not knowing is dispelled, the self-born *Ātman* which is one's own real self-form emerges in its purity and becomes manifest.

The faculty which takes upon itself the egoistic feeling arising from this ignorance is called *Prājña*, or the ego of dreamless sleep. All this is a description of the causal body.

CHAPTER VII

And the Fourth Too

All the visible shapes and forms which manifest themselves to the faculty of knowing or cognition dispel them; and having done so, exist by yourself alone in the form of absolute Consciousness.

You yourself are the knower of not knowing, which means ignorance.

Is there any *raison-d'être* for not knowing which is the same as ignorance, after you have known and recognised yourself? You should yourself become the knower and dispel the notion of not knowing.

The state in which ignorance is dispelled, is the state in which absolute knowledge alone exists; looking to it from the spiritual (*ātmic*) view point, the books of authority tell us that this state is *Ātman*.

What difficulty in the form of non-cognition or lack of knowledge can possibly come in the way of understanding and knowing the *Ātman* constituted self for one who is able to understand and know the whole of this perceptible creation with the help of his knowledge or faculty of knowing?

This ignorance in the form of not knowing can be dispelled by the *guru's* advent; and when that happens, one comes to understand one's own self. This state of the mind is called the super-causal body.

To terminate the existence of ignorance, to know one's own self; to recognise *Ātman* (soul) by *Ātman* (one's own self); the witness of the three bodies—gross, subtile and causal; this is the super-causal body. (Because where there is a witness, there is phenomena.)

The condition of mind which is cognisant of the three states of waking, dream and sleep or the witness-motif should be known as the *Turya*. And the watcher of the three corresponding bodies is the super-causal body.

That which believes itself to be the witness of everything is known by the term *Pratyagātman* (the undivided essence, the atman which is in every one, being omnipresent). There is a point at which the cognition of all the four state-ego's, viz., *Vishwa*, *Taijas*, *Prājna* and *Pratyāgātman* shrinks away into nothingness; that point itself is the pure form of Self.

Effect (creation, manifestation) and cause (primordial Nature; Prakriti, unmanifested state), both these claim this witness-state as their cause; that is why it is called the super-causal body. For how will it be possible to know even by the name *Mahākāraṇa*, that which remains in existence when both cause and effect come to an end? (If there is nothing to witness, what and who shall witness it? There can, then, be no witness at all.)

We on our part are the self-projected ultimate (*Para*) Brahman, and our emancipation is of the form and essence of our own fundamental real self; that being so, all that is possible for us to note or understand is the first-personal

pronoun singular of the root To Be, viz. "Am"; that, and nothing else.

Super-knowledge i.e. *Vijnāna* which signifies experience of *Ātman* becomes accessible and the hollowness of the perceptible creation is vindicated when the link with *Ātman* is established and maintained in this way.

Can you cite any one but yourself as a witness of that *Antahkarana* in which the consciousness arises of your being the pure *Ātman* holding no truck with any of the bodies, states or egoistic ideas?

In other words, the cognition of cognition itself, which is knowledge par excellence otherwise called super-knowledge (*vijnāna*) is the pure form of Self; eliminate the act of not knowing as well as of knowing, that is to say of knowledge and ignorance; cleansed of that accretion, *you* yourself are the perfect *Ātman*.

The point at which knowledge dawns is by its very nature Self. Bear in mind that real self-form is to be experienced by this method only.

The point where knowledge reaches its limits, and can go no further is the undoubted form of *Ātman*, which means your very own Self. That is the region which is fully and solidly crammed with boundless blissfulness, it is not subject to diminution and expansion of the nature of ebb and tide.

That which is without horizon and without measure, the quantity or extent of which cannot be specified, is the indestructible, indivisible real Self; know it as your Self by means of your Self (*Ātman* by *Ātman*).

CHAPTER VIII

Bye-passing the Void

If you choose to think of *Ātman* as a mere vacuous void you can of course do so; you may if you like imagine it to be of such a nature and dub it accordingly. But is there any justification for applying that term to something which is able to take cognisance of itself?

None (in his senses) would regard that Power to be a mere void which knows all the voids (i.e., states of non-existence). In the first place a void is that which has no existence; how is it possible for something which does not exist at all to know you and me?

The fact of the matter is that the essential form of self in which in the final analysis no such thing as a visible phenomenon (*drishya*) exists and where even the seer (*Drishta*) of the phenomenon himself disappears—in which that Self shines on eternally, as it has always shone.

No particular form of mental exertion is required in order to recognise the Consciousness which remains as a residue after the sublimation of one's self and after getting rid of the idea of not knowing. This means that there is then no cogniser of that final knowledge nor the knowledge itself?

And for this reason, how is it possible to regard as voidness that (knowledge) which though apparently non-

existent (i. e., void), is yet really the cogniser not only of that void but of everything else besides.

Knowledge conceives the idea of the voidness of a void; but that knowledge merges into the essential form of *Ātman* along with the voidness-idea which it has so arbitrarily conjured up.

This *Ātman* self-form is neither void nor knowledge (i. e., knowing); neither phenomenon nor ignorance (in the form of not knowing) pertaining to anything. It is only the essential Self, meaning absolute UNDERSTANDING (*jñapti*).

That which is continuous, pure and of the form of intense knowledge, which is absolute, omnipresent, indivisible and incognisable Intelligence;--In which all visible shapes lose their existence and in which irrevocable ignorance itself suffers revocation; which is more subtile than subtility itself; THAT is the essence of knowledge.

You yourself are that *Paramātmān* which is the spotless sky of knowledge in which the sky known as void is absorbed (that is to say, void merges into absolute intelligence); which is the witness of its own and which is self-luminous.

You are that independent *Ātman* which needs no support, which stands apart as the witness of everything, which is free from attachment (*māyā*), is endless, limitless and the observer of all that is observable; observe It carefully.

You are the mystic secret of intelligence itself, the refuge of believers, ocean of happiness and absolute *Bliss*.

You are *Ātman*—witness of all witnesses, giver of radiance to radiance itself, storehouse of the beatitude of soul-self, Absolute Entity.

As soon as everything is dissipated into nothingness, that only remains which is pure and enlightened, and where even the quality of being the term Thou (—the sense of individuality) becomes extinct; the term Art (—the word or the idea which decides the existence of *jiva* and *Isvara* and establishes their singular identity) melts away and becomes absorbed along with the term That (—the cosmos idea);

You are that *Paramātmān*. But you have been guilty of frittering away your greatness by yourself, by your own ignorance; how now will you recover that abode of your own very Self and dwell in it again, happily ever afterwards, like the Prince in the Story?

I now propose to speak to you about the implied aspect of self; first sweep your mind clean and then listen attentively. I shall impart to you detailed instructions about the manner in which you have to study this thing constantly.

This is the study by means of which the shape of Self is determined, the pure *Paramātmān* bursts into effulgence in the heart, and the mind by virtue of not straying from the absolute form of emancipation remains absorbed therein.

CHAPTER IX

Concentrated Meditation

The first thing you have to do is to determine your *Swarupa* (the real shape of your fundamental self) as stated before; the next step is to study it with religious regularity every day.

Find out a spot so solitary that your mind will not stir into the slightest activity if you take your seat there; direct all your mind-processes to turn right round and look inward; having done so, sit down for a spell of meditation.

Turn the mind away from objects which senses tend to seek; fix your attention on the *Ātman* which dwells within you; compel your mind to cultivate a distaste for and a disposition to abandon the whole phenomenal creation, everything that is *Anātman* i.e., of a nature different from *Ātman*.

Take your seat with your mind at peace; fold up all the mental stirrings which crowd the outlets of the senses eager for escape into their spheres of operations, and then make your way deep down into the inmost recesses of the heart.

Give up the consciousness of the carnal body; assume the attitude of yourself being the Lord who dwells within; take it for granted that everything phenomenal is non-

existent; and then experience the Super-Intelligence in the mental recesses.

Withdraw the mind by means of logical arguments from the material senses; concentrate its thought-processes; lead it into the *Ākāsha* (space) which fills the heart and which is also known as *Chidākāsha* or Super-Intelligence (*Chaitanya*).

Turn back all the mental projections which try to make a get-away and meander outside; the mind will of itself become steady as this kind of studied effort develops into a habit.

Do not follow the mind into the ways in which by reason of its previous habits it is disposed to wander; on the contrary turn your mind's eye inwards and fix it on what you really are.

As soon as the mind starts thinking of an object and becomes seized of it, hasten to persuade it by means of discriminatory argument that it is all false; only when it is thwarted again and again in this way does the mind give up its tendency to think of sense objects, and decides to fix itself exclusively on the seat of conscience (*antah-karana*.)

When the mind thus becomes firmly fixed, the soul resting in and pervading this cognition (of the mind being so fixed) begins to develop an independent idea : *I am*. Ponder this ego-idea with discriminatory care.

Thinking along these lines you will grasp the fact that the "I"-idea arises in the pure and supportless form of

Self which appears in that state of mind; it rises there, and it subsides there too. It therefore becomes certain that the notion of the soul-idea being the Self has really no locus standi; for the idea of the universal Self being the individual soul also emanates from Self itself, and IS therefore, Self itself.

If the river subsides in its source, and all its waters instead of flowing outwards gather and become stationary there, why should it not then be called the sea? In the same way, if the soul stands still and remains fixed in Brahman which is its own pure Self-form and source (from which it emanates as a vibration), what is to prevent it from identifying itself with that *Brahman* fundamentally and finally?

For this reason, get your thoughts to converge towards the interior; continue to think along these lines; by these means the thought processes will become absorbed into the *Ātman*-self which sits enthroned in the heaven of the heart.

This studious effort has got to be continued with unrelenting assiduity till the carnal cravings and objective movements of your thoughts in pursuit of the external world come to a full stop and you begin to experience this sense of identity with *Ātman*.

Leave alone every phenomenon that makes its appearance and every sense object that presents itself to the mind's eye; steer the mind into the interior; and fortified by firm conviction, continue to exist as *Ātman* which is Intelligence.

If the vision of the seer turns round and concentrates upon its own self, where is the scope for other shapes or forms to continue to exist? That is to say, if the vision is exclusively fixed on one's own self, you naturally lose sight of all other objects.

Everything that has a shape disappears of its own accord, it is all absorbed in its own essence and thereby becomes non-entity. After this has happened, you must behold the form of *Ātman* and experience it as being free of the triumvirate of seer, sight and seen.

At the time of deluge the waters spread out everywhere; when this happens none of the rivers, lakes, wells or even the seas retain any of their shapes or forms. So also the mind-group, their moods, sense objects, desires or any other form of behaviour which smacks of dualism can not continue to exist when this state of mind is brought about. All separate identity is lost in both cases.

All that remains visible of the tortoise when he draws within himself his snout, legs and other limbs is the unbroken expanse of his back.

Similarly, as soon as the mind group along with its train of moods and modes enters into the Dweller within, all that remains is the absolute form of Self itself.

It is alone, by itself, in its own form; nothing else is known. Thus, the Lord of *Ātman* who is absolute intelligence is omnipresent. This is a matter of personal experience.

CHAPTER X

Phenomena debunked

What would you call it but insanity if one remains steeped in stark ignorance because he lacks this understanding, and fondly believes that he cannot understand Brahman?

The idea of being an individual soul generates into his mind the delusion "I know not". He seizes upon this non-existent ignorance and holds fast to it. And then he continues to grope into the darkness of his self-inflicted non-knowledge.

When a man used to the bright light outside suddenly enters a house, the lack of light momentarily gives him the impression of blindness; he loses his sight in spite of his possessing normal eyes.

Or, to take another analogy, even to normal eyes everything appears to be enveloped in darkness at midnight. See that you do not get lost in the darkness of ignorance which is of a similar nature.

During that state of meditation all the objects which happen to be imagined take shape and present themselves to the mind's eye. Erase all such appearance, cultivate a sense of unwavering steadiness and fix yourself firmly in your own self.

If you feel like talking, you must talk only to your-

self; if the mood of preaching seizes you, better preach to yourself; if you look carefully and with a proper sense of perspective, you will find that he with whom you think you are talking, or to whom you imagine yourself to be giving advice simply does not exist there in any shape or form.

The hallowed spot where discrimination which is the mother of enlightenment takes birth is the heaven of the heart; that very *Antahkarana* becomes the *raison detre* of knowledge as well as its possessor.

Once the far-flung universe in its entirety subsides into nothingness along with our body, all that remains behind is the absolute and perfect form of knowledge itself and nothing else. And this thing has no location, no cognition, no recognition nor measurement.

All the three worlds (—the celestial, the mortal and the nether—) which pretend to possess shapes and forms, disappear into thin air, no one knows how and where; and only “I” the one and only *Chidākāsha*, mere intelligence, exists.

The knowledge or cognition of all internal as well as external phenomena becomes null and void; and in that instant, nothing but Self itself, which is free even from the idea of being unitary, remains as the whole and sole residue.

Darkness of non-knowledge disappears, mind and intellect melt away into nothingness and the *atmic* lustre of the sun of Supreme Intelligence bursts forth as soon as this state of mind is attained.

The cessation in this manner of the activities of the material body and the waking state must be followed by elimination of the subtile entity by applying the same methods.

The source and fountainhead of the first eruption of activity is itself innocent of any movement or vibration. Whatever movement takes place, occurs and subsides only in your presence.

You are the cogniser of that movement; you alone are the vital force which gives life to the *Manas* which is the faculty of indulging in what is known as thinking; so also you are the cause and progenitor of intellect (*buddhi*) which is the faculty of determination and decision.

The link of memory (*chitta*) has already been established, and so you become aware of it as soon as it takes birth; ego too is the product of yourself generated by contact with your Self; and so you know it quite well.

This is how you yourself sprout up in the form of this five-functioned (*manas, buddhi, chitta, ahamkāra* and *antahkarana*) phenomenon; where, how and in what manner do you expect to cut itself adrift from you and float away when you talk of abandoning it?

Can you visualise water abandoning the wave? How is it possible for space to dismiss ether? By the same token how do you propose to cast away from yourself this notion of movement which is part and parcel of your own self?

As the wave may subside in the water and as air would be absorbed by the sky, so would this mind-stuff called *Antahkarana* or heart which is your own emanation subside and be absorbed only in you ; for it has nowhere else to go.

Your hands do not separate themselves from the body and fall off when you shake them, for they are limbs of your body. Equally so, the emanations of your mind are your own parts ; in fact they constitute yourself. That being so, how will you manage to shake them off ?

If you entertain the idea of abandoning that emanation you will find that such desire will itself have sprung from that selfsame emanation ; any idea of doing anything whatever will be found on analysis to be an outcome of that very desire ; and further consideration will show you that this desire itself is intellect as well as mind.

When you ruminate it, that idea will be found to be a ripple of memory, *Chitta* ; assumption of egoism, tagging the "I"-idea to it will turn it into *Ahamkāra* ; if you sit quietly and at peace resting calmly in your *Ātman*, the emanation of that calm peacefulness too will be experienced to be merely another form of that very mind-emanation.

If you think that you are really at peace with yourself, how do you account for the cognition of that state of peacefulness and the recognition of such cognition ? Again, what is the breeding ground of thoughts and counter-thoughts ?

Even when the soul comes to a certain decision and adheres to it steadfastly, how is it that it is impelled to think of that decision again and again? Moreover, why and how it acquired the habit of declaring the body to be "I am"?

This proves that the mind-stuff is something which *is*, yet *is not*; appear to be real but is in fact, otherwise. This is the secret of its mysteries. Just think of this: how is it possible for it to generate the "I" idea or ego unless it be the essence of intelligence itself?

Memory dwells in the *Chitta* what else is that memory if not intelligence? Again how can you expect the intellect to be steady without intelligence?

This Intelligence or knowledge is the source and seat of all these mental manifestations; its existence enables the mind to think thoughts; but knowledge in the abstract is itself perfect, all-comprehensive, and so, that is the only thing which is not an emanation of something else.

When you dwell on this all-comprehensive Intelligence, that is to say, when you think of it, faculty of memory which is known by the name *Chitta* loses its rationale, and therefore, its existence; for, to remember it is tantamount to forgetting it; because who would remember whom, when the mental attitude known as memory itself subsides? It is merely Understanding, Intelligence.

When you feel the sensation of having experienced a mental movement, such a movement can be felt only when

it emanates, i. e., comes into apparent existence; but so long as it remains unmanifested it is by its own nature unable to make its presence felt on its own initiative.

Who, then, is this non-manifestation? What is this state of potentiality? It is the absolute Intelligence which remains, absorbed in itself, as the form of the unitary *Atman*.

That is why it is neither knowledge nor non-knowledge; neither existence nor oblivion. It is Self itself, the One and Only.

CHAPTER XI

Ignorance evicted

I know myself in fact; the knowledge of myself takes the form of the idea "I do not know myself." I have the consciousness by means of which I am aware of the ignorance implied by the idea "I do not know myself." and yet I fail to recognise that consciousness; that is real non-knowledge.

There is no scope at all for the existence of non-knowledge as expressed by the idea "I don't know" in the consciousness which remains as a residue when you have made short work of that non-knowledge and done away with it completely.

The soul is not in any way afflicted with notions of knowing or not knowing, i. e., knowledge or ignorance; yet, it is the soul (personal *atman*) itself which manifests these notions and expands them.

In spite of this it does not fall into the trap either of the notion of knowledge or that of ignorance; the bliss of the impersonal Self is fundamental and belongs to itself alone,

It is the beginningless point; nothing came into existence before it; it is merely a movement of absolute and unitary Knowledge, nothing but the abstract quality of Intelligence or Consciousness.

It is the ever untarnished out-and-out Knowledge,

Bliss itself, which stands self-vindicated; it is the pure impersonal Self which is its own shape and form and which is capable of being recognised by itself.

It is not possible to suspect the presence of ignorance—not knowing—in something which is knowledge itself; this *Ātman* stands alone, in its own right and by itself; it contains in itself no element which can be called knowing, i.e., knowledge, or not knowing i.e., ignorance.

It is something which is self-contained all-comprehensiveness; there is no possibility therefore of any other phenomena existing or appearing in it. For it is the omnipresent form of its own Self and is chockful of solid beatitude.

Whatever is capable of being seen, or in other words everything that can be observed, is something secondary—different from one's self; this idea of separateness, of being another and a different identity melts away and is absorbed in this all-embracing impersonal *Ātman*; and then even the idea of knowing is not left behind. For, who can be conceived as the seer or the seen in what is absolute knowledge or Consciousness?

The seer is *Ātman* itself; and it has to witness itself. This is why the word "seeing" has to be somehow made applicable in connection with it. Nothing remains except the seer, the knower, the observer when the very idea of the existence of something which is capable of being seen or known is eliminated.

That which is different and distinct from the three-fold notion of (1) the object of observation, (2) the

observer, and (3) the process of observing is Itself absolute Intelligence, which is consciousness in the abstract, and is one.

As soon as phenomenon, and sight which is the act of seeing, are both eliminated and put out of the way, all that remains is the impersonal self form of *Ātman* which is indivisible and changeless.

The act of seeing also automatically comes to an end as soon as all that constitutes observability which means phenomena capable of being seen suffers extinction. And when that happens, one observes and experiences one's own self for ever, everywhere.

This self-form is eternal and complete; you must develop introversion and by means of it know it as such.

Extinction of the idea of not-knowing or ignorance will carry with it the extinction of the causal body; and then, consciousness will merge into and identify itself with the super-causal body.

No state or condition can have an existence of its own left when the sleeping and the Fourth (*turyā*) states along with their cognising egos as well as the waking and dream states with their presiding faculties have made themselves scarce.

The four bodies also must be done away with by the same method; and having accomplished that, you will come to know the eternal conception of *Ātman*; and then, all that remains is the self-luminous embodiment of consciousness which is its own self and nothing else.

You will be able to appreciate as experience in a spirit of detachment who you really are, what in *fact* you are, only when you take the trouble of casting off the notion of knowing and resting within yourself, alone and entirely by your impersonal self.

When you abandon the notion of cognition, that is to say, when you cease to presume that you are exercising the faculty of knowing, the mental movement (generated by the act of cognition) will also come to an end, and the vibration which had emanated from you will subside in the same place, which is your own self, just as a wave subsides in the water which throws it up.

The cognition (intelligence) which you have thus absorbed into yourself along with its absence (void or non-existence) is yourself, that is to say, your own self-born identity, your unbounded *Ātman*.

That is the point where knowledge or its absence, the act of knowing and not knowing, have no existence; where there is no sound nor silence; neither form nor formlessness.

There is nothing visible in that place, nor is there anything invisible; no such thing as mine or thine; neither memory nor oblivion. It is the pure and simple faculty of memory.

This thing has no tendencies, and no movement. It is neither complete nor defective, neither existence nor its lack; it is merely and entirely nothing but Realisation.

You cannot seize it; nor is it incapable of being

seized. It has no scope even for the conception of "is not". You cannot even assert that it is susceptible to experience. The fact is that you cannot locate it at all.

You must prosecute this sort of study in the heart-space called *Antahkarana* by and within yourself and keep the mind fixed steadily in the motionless essential attitude of your own self; this is what study means.

The first thing to do is to get to know your impersonal essential self, cling fast to it, and live in a state of absorption with it. Do not trade in the give-and-take of mental phenomena; do not indulge in acrobatics of the fancy and throw the mind into a whirl.

The fruits of efforts along these lines will be that the mind will feel restful and the activities of sense objects will subside; the *Chitta* (faculty of sustained thought) will slowly and gradually start enjoying identification with the essential attribute of your own self,

If you happen to lose sight of the self-essence for a moment now and then, you need not worry; for the very next moment It will make Its presence felt and compel attention. It may now disappear of Its own accord and again bring about Its own experience by Its own volition. Continuous and persistently studious effort on these lines will surely bring steadiness to the mind.

Like the steady flame which is not disturbed by the stirring of wind, the mind will be rapt in its own delight as soon as it learns how to enjoy identity with the essence of its own Self. And no one has the ability to gauge the bliss which this condition is bound to bestow on you.

CHAPTER XII

Self-Delights

When the beatific condition of self-experience has been attained as indicated in the previous chapter, there are eight forms of sãttwic emotion such as sweat, tremor, etc., which make their appearance, and the aspirant experineces a feeling which is akin to that of a beggar suddenly acquiring a kingdom.

The faculty of sustained thought becomes absorbed in the Super-Consciousness and all that remains of it is absolute Intelligence-in-the-abstract ; and then you experience the utter bliss of Brahman.

Once you identify yourself with that happiness, the soul is swallowed up by it. No language can convey an adequate idea of it. It is a matter entirely of experience by one's own self.

Like nectar enjoying its own taste, the Self tastes Its own hapiness. And when that happens, who will care to think of the so-called happiness which mundane matters are supposed to give ?

The joy of *Ātman* drenches you with its showers, and perfect happiness is yours. Even the sense of selection which descriminates between right and wrong kinds of knowledge loses its *rationale* and merges its identity into that blessed joy.

Ego is transmuted into the impersonal essential Self of its own; the longing for sensuous objects is laid to rest

and all the senses become replete with satiation without performing any function whatever

The couch is this mighty happiness on which the soul enjoys the embraces of the pretty maid of self-experience ; in other words this is how the individual self reveals in the delights of its own essential self which is simply absolute Consciousness.

Extinction of ignorance brings about the complete absorption and identification of knowledge with the essential Self; and such a yogin, the wise man of experience who is steeped in knowledge, wins for himself full-fledged and undisputed SWARAJ (*swa*=*Ātman*; *rāj*=the bliss of sovereignty.)

Then he revels in the delights of everlasting self-happiness; the objects which are made of different stuff evaporate into nothingness; and all the senses have their satisfaction through the instrumentality of the bliss which is derived from experience of one's own essential self.

No ripple of duality in the form of mental disturbance breaks the surface of the serene tide of supreme joy, and all memory of *karma* (action) is obliterated in the flash of an eyelid.

There are people who take the trouble of performing millions of sacrificial rituals for the privilege of going to heaven ; but the joys of paradise are as nothing when compared to the bliss of Brahman.

The joy of such a man is full and overflowing, it is beyond the power of speech of the most exalted fineness (*-parā vāni*). Who can presume to speak of the beatitude in respect of which speech becomes speechless ? Only experience may understand it ; the looker-on merely stares blankly, uncomprehending.

CHAPTER XIII

Secrets of Liberty

The *Yogin* who in this manner wins the secret of *Yoga* and tastes the complete *Ānanda* (bliss) of self will not be required again to suffer the vicissitudes of another birth.

Such a *Yogin* who has so naturally and completely become one with *Brahman* remains for ever submerged in the *ānanda* of *Ātman* which is of the essence of Consciousness.

He does not bear the slightest trace of the operation of thoughts and counter-thoughts; for he has been the recipient of supreme, measureless and incomparable happiness.

The whole question of adopting or not adopting the means for realisation of *Ātman* comes to an end; there is no longer any scope for doing nor for not doing. He has sublimated himself into the supreme *Brahman*.

That being the case, he no longer stands in need of mind-fixation, meditation, *samādhi* (trance), *āsanas* (yogic postures) and the rest of the eight-fold path of *Yoga*. He remains engrossed in the concentrated joy of the essential form of his own Self.

He wanders at will in the three worlds and he behaves as he pleases; for he is continually conscious of the satisfaction of Supreme Knowledge.

The idea of actions (*Karma*) prescribed for commission or for omission does not occur to him at all; he is not even aware of what merit and sin mean.

The question of results, good or bad, hinders him not. For the *Jivanmukta* has secured his release from all such considerations.

It is not necessary for him to discuss or speak of bondage or liberty. He dwells as a matter of course in contemplation of the indivisible and eternal *Brahman*.

No doubt of any kind can assail him who has secured his release from mental agitation, for all his actions authorised and otherwise, have been destroyed by then.

He has no illusions left, and so he gives no scope to anybody to plumb his depths. He preaches to the people and propagates among them the secret of *Bhakti* or devotional worship; which means that he follows that path only to set an example to the mass of the people.

He practises in his own person the principles of *Bhakti*, *Jñāna* (knowledge) and *Vairāgya* (indifference towards everything non-eternal,) and demonstrates these to the people. Such a *Yogin* becomes a saviour of the people and guides them on to the straight path.

He devotedly ministers to the Blessed Master in a spirit of humble service; and even while so engaged he continues to enjoy the sacred and secret delights of self-realisation. Even then there is no sense of differentiation in his *Antahkarana*, because he knows quite well that *Jiva-Ishwara* are one and the same.

He is always permeated with the overpowering Love of *Paramātmān*, so much so that tears of joy well up in his eyes. He knows nothing either of memory or of forgetfulness, because they are functions of the *Chitta*, and not of *Ātman*. The name of the Blessed Teacher is ever on his lips.

Realising the sameness of the Blessed Teacher and the Lord Supreme by his own experience, he unfailingly pays homage to good men and true, with boundless Love in his heart.

Since the *Sadguru* in the form of the Lord Supreme permeates the whole creation entirely and exclusively he treats all creatures with affection.

His heart is soft and gentle and pure and guileless ; and so his way of life is always and naturally innocent.

He is oblivious to honour, disrespect, scandal, praise or conciliation, his mental processes take their own course in superb patience and fortitude.

He recks not of happiness or misery, profit or loss or of conciliation of these opposites. Such generous hearted *Yogin* is never victimised by anything.

His mental attitude is ever attuned to discrimination. Never losing sight of the essential attribute of *Ātman*, he always remains alert in its contemplation.

Even if and when he is seen to be behaving impishly like a wilful child, it can only mean that he is acting in a manner deliberately contrary to normal human behaviour,

and thereby preventing the world from becoming aware of his knowledge.

In this way, he adopts various kinds of behaviour and never entertains any desire for the fruits thereof. He conducts himself in such a manner that the people of their own accord leave him alone.

Such a king among yogins who is the witness of entire creation (i. e., of the intercourse normal to the state of waking) knows the core of every heart; and yet to ordinary people he appears to be little less than mad.

Despite his residence in the midst of the population he abandons all deliberate actions and lives naturally in a spirit of disinterestedness.

He is perfectly aware that he himself is the one and only Lord of all creation, that he is everywhere because every one is of the essence of God like himself; that is why he refrains from imposing any particular course of conduct on anyone, nor does he ask anybody to perform acts or actions of a fundamentally unreal nature.

He exhibits violence and crookedness, whereupon people look at him and laugh; but his heart is full of the sense of absolute oneness, and so, such treatment has no effect on him at all.

All that he cares for and thinks of is the desire to live in this manner, and having acquired the knowledge of the essential Self enjoy its realisation. He harbours no thoughts either of succouring the world or of abandon-

ing it, for he has completely forgotten the dualistic notion of the separate existence of a world.

The world may or may not succeed in experiencing the joys of *Ātman* yet he will not permit even the idea of telling them about the nature and form of that essential Self to arise in his mind.

The fire of worldly miseries does not single him, for he has passed through and across the opposites. This *Yogin* never acknowledges the existence of this world which is so unilateral (i. e., which is dependent only upon *Māyā* which is but one aspect of Brahman.)

CHAPTER XIV

The Last Word

(Finally, says Mukunda Raj) O aspirant ! Suffer no doubts whatever. The liberated live in both ways sanely as shown in the previous chapter, observing the normal code of worldly behaviour, as well as madly in a deliberate pose of viciousness. However you need not mind all that but go right on with your studies on the lines already indicated.

Basically and fundamentally you are so (– identical with *Brahman*); but such identity has got to be materialised as experience or realisation ; and when that is done you will have become a complete *Jnanin*—the Enlightened.

Is it necessary to exert force in order to make the fruit come away from the branch when it is thoroughly ripe ? No, it falls off of its own accord. When you too have reached that stage it shall be said of you that your ātmic consciousness has duly ripened in your mind.

Till that condition comes about you must continue to contemplate with exceeding love the essential form of your self in the manner indicated before. You may take it for granted that along that path lies the Supreme Reality, waiting for you to react and pick it up.

Make this your daily practice ; do not permit the illusion of worldly existence to taint your mind while so

engaged, develop a curiosity to know the shape of your essential Self, and start employing the means by which that curiosity may be satisfied.

Day in and day out you must listen to IT alone, contemplate IT alone, and retain IT alone by intense meditation. Waste not your life in laziness and levity.

The laggard in this matter will not arrive, even at the end of a whole cycle of ages; such people cannot claim to have been touched by the *Sadguru's* teaching.

So then, there is no need to dilate on this. Make up your mind that the Blessed Master is your very life and soul, and that there is nothing worthwhile but Himself.

Get into the habit of conducting yourself as bidden by Him; do nothing else; that is how you will come into your birth-right of self-possession, without much ado.

Let your conduct be such as will enhance the favour of the Blessed Master; Brother mine! Be careful to do nothing that may cause Him annoyance.

There are no horizons to the greatness of the Master; the Master is the *Parabrahman*, beyond the utmost beyond; I take the trouble of dilating on this in such detail in order to impress it on your mind, because you know nothing whatever about it.

Now, dedicate all you have—body, mind and belongings—to the feet of the Master; there is nothing of any value in the whole wide world except Him.

Know that in the great aphorism *That-Thou-Art*,

the Master is the term That (essence or blessedness) ; and the disciple is the term Thou (the soul) ; that being so, develop and fix in your mind the idea of your identity with His blessed feet.

The Master in the form of the term That is the ocean, and the Thou the disciple is the ripple on it ; eliminate both these terms (—the ideas of *Jiva* and *Shiva*—) and exist only as the changeless *Brahman* Itself.

Be afraid of the Master (that is to say, refrain from behaving in any manner contrary to His wishes for fear of causing Him displeasure), and conduct yourself towards Him lovingly (in a spirit of oneness) ; by so doing you will surely win for yourself identity with the real self of your *Atman*, on the analogy of the weevil and the wasp.

The weevil meditates on the wasp so intensely that in the end it turns into a wasp itself ; in a similar manner the *guru* will grant you *Sayujya* emancipation (identity with Himself) ; and then you will be really happy, and delight always in realisation of your very own self.

Looking at it from the fundamental point of view, there is no bifurcation in *Brahman* ; but this identity is realisable only by means of intense meditation. You will happily secure release from the danger of worldly existence through realisation of the Truth as soon as your meditation secures a firm foothold.

Keep this science a secret; do not blurt it out before

anyone anyhow and at any time. The wisdom which flows from the Master must be realised as experience in your own person.

What would be the use of wasting the word of wisdom on a person who lives merely like a beast? If perchance you notice a commendable inclination in somebody and if you consider him worthy of confidence after duly testing him, please remember that he must also be possessed of the preparatory qualifications enumerated above.

This is the *guru* tradition ; if the disciple has in him due devotion and faith in the blessed feet of the *guru*, then, my brother, it takes very little time for the knowledge of *Ātman* to dawn on him.

In case you make the mistake of revealing this secret in defiance of the method of *guru*-tradition, the result will be emergence of only of pretenders who will claim to have understood the Master's wisdom.

Therefore, lock up this secret in the recess of your heart ; and taste this Supreme Nectar in your own person through the grace of which you will be the crest jewel of the diadem of all yogins.

This *PARAMĀMRITA* is an authoritative book ; it contains nothing but a guide to the highest achievement. The seeker of the knowledge as it comes from the *guru* should ruminate this book.

This is the statement and exposition of knowledge the

seed of which lies in the *guru* ; this is the story of enlightenment by the secret teachings of the Master ; guard it with care, serve the Master's feet, and be happy.

Yogi Mukunda Raj says that he who experiences realisation of this intellectual knowledge will look within himself and be most certainly able to comprehend his very own Self.

APPENDIX I

The Aphorism

The Aphorism *Tat-Twam-Asi* occurs in the Chhandogya Upanishad where sage Uddālaka repeatedly hammers home to his young disciple Shwetaketu the immense idea that fundamentally and essentially the apparently circumscribed human soul is the same as the Super-Soul called God. *Tat*=That, *Twam*=Thou, and *Asi* is the predicate, art.

That stands for God the Super-Soul ; and *Thou* symbolises the human soul. Uddālaka says that the latter is in fact the same as the former. Apparently, this cannot be ; for, the attributes of God are ; unlimited knowledge and power, while the human soul signifies limited and even wrong knowledge, eked out by meagre power and a short life-span. How, then, can these two be identical ?

This is how, in brief, the argument goes : God means Consciousness (*Chaitanya*) plus *unlimited* knowledge and power ; the soul means the very same Consciousness plus limited and unreliable knowledge and power. In both cases the common factor is the essential Pure Consciousness which never varies and which always IS ; while the other attributes are incidental, on the face of it variable, and subject even to extinction.

From the connotation of God, eliminate this

incidental unessential portion which, however imposing it may appear, is but a manifestation, a phenomenon, māyic, illusive. Similarly, from the attributes of the human soul the incidental part which is but a faint echo of the parallel God-at-tributes and therefore still more illusive and *māyā*-begotten. What is the residue in both cases ?

Something which is the essence, the eternal, immutable, absolute Truth and Consciousness (*Sat Chit*) which is identical in both cases, which is beyond and above both *That* and *Thou*, in which both merge, and *because* of which they come to be called *That* and *Thou*.

This only means that the difference between God and the human soul is mainly that of degree and that really speaking both of them are one and the same, – not merely chips of the Old Block but the Old Block Itself – in their eternal aspect, when rid of the mutable accretions which appear to overlay both because of their contact with *Māyā*, the imp of ignorance, the spirit of differentiation.

The all-merciful God who is Knowledge Absolute, who is *Brahman* Itself deals with *Māyā* which is His own *Shakti* or Prowess (assumed wilfully and designedly for a specific purpose) as her Lord and Master, puts her to such uses as He purposefully intends, and withdraws her unto Himself, as and when He pleases, to once again become the One and Only. On the other hand, the human soul is the tool and slave of *Māyā* in the form of accentuated *avidyā* or nescience, is driven hither and

thither on her errands helplessly, and only when he succeeds in freeing himself from her clutches as a result of knowledge through the grace of the *sadguru* does he become Free-in-Life, the *jivanamukta*, like unto *Brahman* Itself.

God frees Himself from his *Māyā* by His own infinite grace. He is the *Guru* of *gurus*, the goal of all guruship, and needs no help from anybody else, for *there is nobody else*. The soul frees itself with the help and grace of the *guru*. Despite this difference in their relationship with *Māyā*, the basic fact of *relationship* remains. When both the Soul and the soul cast off this relationship, each in its own way, what remains is the Essence ; and That is *Brahman*. The idea is that both of them, by casting off a certain portion of their attributes and retaining the remaining common portion, attain identity in the Absolute.

In other words, by abandoning the incidental and therefore unessential portion of *That* (God-attributes) and of *Thou* (soul-attributes), both are the Residue, viz., the One, untrammelled Absolute, the attributeless IT, the nameless, formless, changeless, the capitalised Common Factor – *Brahman*.

The great breath-taking message of the Aphorism, therefore, is that MAN IS ESSENTIALLY GOD ; a brave message of hope, cheer, courage and manliness, a super-call to Man to rise to his highest, his very sublimest. Can any creed, religion, faith or philosophy offer more ? Or, is there anything more to offer ?

APPENDIX II

The States - Individual and Collective

In course of our normal life all of us have to repeatedly pass through three stages of consciousness. We know these stages or conditions as (1) waking or *jagrat*, (2) dreaming or *swapna*, and (3) sleeping or *sushupti*. These are matters of everyday tangible experience. But above and beyond these three there is the Fourth which is not so apparent. That is the Witness or *turiya* or *turya* condition.

While awake you are conscious of the material world, i. e., of the body and all the objects which the five physical senses of speech, touch, sight, taste and smell pursue by their very nature. It is therefore called the gross, physical (*sthula*). As you cognise in that state all that is sensibly graspable, the symbolic name for your soul in that state is *Vishwa*, i. e., the material whole, for the world of gross matter is its main sphere of action.

When you retire for the moment from the physical plane of activity characteristic of the wakeful state, you lay yourself down and lapse into (2), the state of dreams. Here your body is motionless ; your physical senses are inert. Yet the experiences of your wakeful state continue partly and indirectly to agitate your mind as impressions ; and strange to say, though not moving

a single limb, deliberately, you live a life of intense activity, which while it lasts, appears to be as real and factual as the other. There are several other factors too at work in dreams, but space will not permit amplification.

This is because while the physical or gross body is inert, your mental or subtle sense-group is fully active. In the absence of conscious physical movement this internal activity appears to be particularly realistic. The five subtle or internal senses which are the counterparts or originals of the physical senses are alert and at work. What does all this internal alertness and movement consist of? Of mere light, of a radiation which is sent out by the ever-awake Consciousness (*Chaitanya*) and which enlivens and enables these otherwise inert internal senses to function.

This radiation from the soul – *Chidabhasa* – which illuminates the inner sense-group collectively called *antahkarana* is named *Taijas*, which means, pertaining to or of the essence of light, or radiation. - It is by that name symbolic of the dream state in which all the pent-up desires, longings, prejudices, preferences and the vast sub-strata of impressions of previous lives heave up and down, impatiently, for outlet, and are coloured by the activities of the state of wakefulness.

After a time the dream state passes, and you slip into deep sleep, which is (3) on our list. Here both the physical and subtle senses are, for all practical purposes, non-existent. You are not “aware” of anything at all; yet you continue to breathe and “live” automatically

in a swoon-like state of unconsciousness. The seething and surging mass of desires and past impressions which manifests itself more or less in your dreams and which, whether you know it or not, motivates all your physical and mental movements in the waking state, becomes here dormant and potential. It folds itself up into a seed.

This potential seed-state of unfulfilled desires etc. which are the root and cause of all man's mental and physical activities and even of his existence itself is for that reason known as the *Causal* (*Karana*) body of the soul. In that state the soul-*chaitanya* itself takes a holiday. Unhitched for the time being from the load and goad of the karmic urge which, as stated above, is the *raison d'être* of "life" itself, it merges itself or relapses into its own original Self, the *Chaitanya* or Pure Consciousness, which is the *Sat-Chit-Ananda*, Bliss Perfect. And during this sojourn of the soul your body and mind remain inert (– because of the absence of their informing enlivener –) though alive, because of the continued working of the vital breath.

In that state you seem to know nothing. When you wake up from sleep, if you are asked what was happening while you slept, you will very likely say, "I was asleep ; I knew nothing ; I slept very happily." The same soul in this setting of complete unawareness or ignorance is aptly characterised as *Prājña*. This word may mean (*pra* –) completely (*ajna* –) ignorant ; or alternatively it may mean belonging to pure *prajñā* or consciousness.

In deep sleep a man may be said to be completely ignorant, or merely existing as inherent consciousness and no more.

But when you say "I knew nothing", you at the same time admit that you have been very happily asleep, signifying thereby the knowledge of having had a dip into the depths of unalloyed Bliss, the nameless happiness of relapse into its own original Self, "the Peace that passeth understanding." Who is that "I" who knows that you knew nothing, and who at the same time is so emphatically aware of a strange happiness with which no mundane happiness will bear comparison? It is the Witness, the untrammelled soul which for the moment stands apart to go back to its own normal form which is perfect Peace. Like the actor who in-between appearances lays his mask aside, takes things easily and behaves like his own natural self, the Soul during this recess of dreamless sleep shelves its circumscribed *karma*-driven condition of being a human soul, and thus rid of the irksome mask, shines in its original *ātman*-form which ever dwells in the heart-sky and which is called *Pratyagātman*, or *Antaryāmin* the In-Dweller.

This is the super-causal *Mahākāraṇa* body. This is the Fourth, *Turya* or Witness state, above and beyond the other three which are enabled to exist by Its grace.

When body and mind have the required rest, the mass of activated *karma*, directed by the cosmic *Ishvara* spirit becomes once again restive and wants to express itself. The Stage Director imperiously beckons to the

actor to don his mask again and resume his allotted bit of mummery. The insistent clamour of unforgiving duty compels the soul's return journey. How ?

The Witness abandons His peaceful super-causal condition, re-assumes the task of fulfilling the God-directed Law of *Karma*, and once again returns to the state of being the human soul in the causal condition of sleep. Here the seed of latent desires sprouts ; and as the intial manifestation of its afflorescence, you slip back into the mental dream-upheavals ; this gives you your second stage-name, *Taijas*.

And as the karmic urge becomes yet more clamorous, you "wake" up, and go full steam ahead with your material or gross characterisation of the state of wakefulness. You are then allotted the appropriate designation *Vishva*.

This is the *individual* aspect of "created" existence. But created existence has another aspect also, viz., collective or cosmic ; there is the soul in the individual (*vyashti*) and Soul in Its aggregate (*sam*).

The aggregate soul-states correspond to the individual ones.

All life, potential or manifest, sprouted from *Brahman* or *Purusha* ; He is the cause of all causes, the Absolute why and wherefor of all existence ; in fact He is Existence. This corresponds to the individual Witness or super-causal state symbolised by the In-Dweller. It is this Absolute Existence which makes mundane existence

possible, as it is the super-causal Witness-state which makes for all the other three states ; for everybody knows that there can be no phenomenon without a witness, nor can there be a witness without a phenomenon.

First of all this *Brahman* or *Purusha* willed : "Let there be creation ; I am one ; I shall become many." This will-to-become manifest is known by various names such as *Māyā*, *Prakṛiti*, *Shakti*, original unmanifest Nature, Energy etc.

It must be remembered that cosmic life like the individual is a timeless and beginningless process of successive births, with *pralaya* or periodic deluges as rests corresponding to what we call sleep, and a *mahā-pralāya* or super-deluge after every few deluges when creation lapses and rests super-potentially in pure *Brahman*. This last is the counter-part of the individual's "death", after which his soul awaits re-birth to carry its karmic tale farther in due course.

Thus, after a super-deluge, when the due period has lapsed, *Brahman* once again wills that another cycle of "creation" may start, and that Its manifesting aspect or energy which had merged into It be re-activated. When *Brahman* assumes this overlordship over *Māyā*, He is called *Ishvara* the Ruler, or God. In Him the collective *karma*-seed becomes ready to sprout. This corresponds to the causal body of sleep symbolised by *Prājña* in the case of the individual when his particular *prārabdha karma* lies dormant, seed-like.

This Lord God sets his own will called *maya* or Energy to the job of re-creation, i. e., cosmic rebirth. The first indistinct, nebulous, conceptual flicker of creation as it emanates from this Will-to-Creation called God is the mass of inherent and internal Light in its most abstract form, and is named *Hiranyagarbha*, i. e. One who is internally all gold-radiance.

This is the subtle body of creation in the aggregate in which the collective *karma* germinates and presses for physically concrete expression. It corresponds to the dream-state of *Taijas*, which is but an individualised form of *Hiranyagarbha*.

But the Law of *Karma*, not satisfied by mere subtle and ideological existence, presses for its material fulfilment, and "Creation" as we see it develops; and Brahman, known as *Ishvara* with a will to create so as to give scope to all the collective *karma* of previous creations lying unmanifest in the super-deluge interregnum, and again known as *Hiranyagarbha* when It Itself becomes embryonic creation, Itself now becomes creation and is then called *Virāt* which means the Universe. This is the physically or grossly manifest form of what is called creation, the collective Waking State, and runs parallel to the individual *Vishva* which is a synonym for *Virāt* in which activated *karma* becomes rampant.

As long as nescience remains, so long the Law of *Karma*, operates; and as it operates, it creates new desires, calling for new *karma*, which throws up more desires,.....; and thus the merry-go-round continues,

propelling itself, endlessly. Only when a man wins the favour of a *sadguru* who shows him the way-out can he hope for freedom from the mad whirl-gig of this ruthless *kārma*-machine.

This is the creation-concept: the "outward journey" starts from the Absolute, and by stages reaches the human-soul state. To get back to the starting point, and after dropping off attribute after attribute to once more become *Brahman* Itself, it is necessary to reverse the process, merging each state in its predecessor, throwing off the attributes of each state and triumphantly marching back to the one previous to it, with a strong will, with tireless effort with singleness of purpose, and with the *sadguru* as the guide, friend and philosopher, you must resolutely perform the return journey until you who now are and always were pure *Brahman* and nothing less, forget the eons-old illusion of soul-hood, and know yourself once again as the One-and-Only, *Sat-Chit-Ānand*. "There is no other way but this" say the Upanishads. Prick the bubble of illusion with the instrument called Knowledge, and there you are.

You know now *what* you have to do; Mukunda Rāj tells you here *how* you can do it.

There are two main groups of Vedāntic theories of creation; One of them follows the supposed gradual or evolutive process, while the other is that of creation all at-once, as you see it, when you see it, *if you choose to see it at all*. The latter is the most advanced idea, while the

former, going as it does along the lines of the popular cause-and-effect theory, finds more general and "understanding" acceptance. This is what Mukunda Rāj has so ably demolished as a "fable for the amusement of the ignorant which has surprisingly found such widespread credence" as Vidyāranya Swami says in his *Panchadashi*.