The Real Awakener



The Light of Lights

Words of Sri Aurobindo – 41

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Vedanta's Final & Single Answer to All the Questions

"Vedanta's final & single answer to all the questions of philosophy is contained in a single mighty & ever-memorable phrase, So 'ham. I am He or more explicitly or to the question of the inquirer अहं ब्रह्मास्मि, I am Brahman. Cutting through all tremors & hesitations, scorning all doubt or reserve it announces with a hardy & daring incisiveness the complete identity of man & God. This is its gospel that the individual Self who seems so limited, thwarted, befouled, shamed & obscured with the bonds & shackles, the mud & stains of earthly life and the pure, perfect and illimitable Being who possesses & supports all existence, to Whom this vast and majestic Universe is but an inconsiderable corner of His mind and infinite Time cannot end and infinite Space cannot confine and the infinite net of cause and effect is powerless to trammel are equal, are of one nature, power, splendour, bliss, are One. It seems the very madness of megalomania, the very delirium of egoism. And yet if it be true?

And it is true. Reason can come to no other conclusion, Yoga ends in no less an experience, the voices of a hundred holy witnesses who have seen God face to face, bring to us no less wonderful a message." (337)

Selections from the Kena and Other Upanishads (CWSA 18)

1. Selections from Katha Upanishad

a. The First Cycle; Second Chapter

"न सांपरायः प्रतिभाति बालं प्रमाद्यन्तं वित्तमोहेन मूढम् ।
अयं लोको नास्ति पर इति मानी पुनः पुनर्वशमापद्यते मे ॥६॥

6. The childish wit bewildered and drunken with the illusion of riches cannot open its eyes to see the passage to heaven; for he that thinks this world is and there is no other, comes again and again into Death's thraldom.

श्रवणायापि बहुभिर्यो न लभ्यः शृण्वन्तोऽपि बहवो यं न विद्युः ।
आश्चर्यो वक्ता कुशलोऽस्य लब्धाऽऽश्चर्यो ज्ञाता कुशलानुशिष्टः ॥७॥

7. He that is not easy even to be heard of by many, and even of those that have heard they are many who have not known Him, – a miracle is the man that can speak of Him wisely or is skilful to win Him, and when one is found, a miracle is the listener who can know God even when taught of Him by the knower.

न नरेणावरेण प्रोक्त एष सुविज्ञेयो बहुधा चिन्त्यमानः ।
अनन्यप्रोक्ते गतिरत्र नास्त्यणीयान् ह्यतर्क्यमणुप्रमाणात् ॥८॥

8. An inferior man cannot tell you of Him; for thus told thou canst not truly know Him, since He is thought of in many aspects. Yet unless told of Him by another thou canst not find thy way there to Him; for He is subtler than subtlety and that which logic cannot reach.

नैषा तर्केण मतिरापनेया प्रोक्तान्येनैव सुज्ञानाय प्रेष्ठ ।
यां त्वमापः सत्यधृतिर्बतासि त्वादृङ् नो भूयान्नचिकेतः प्रष्टा ॥९॥

9. This wisdom is not to be had by reasoning, O beloved Nachiketas; only when told thee by another it brings real knowledge, – the wisdom which thou hast gotten. Truly thou art steadfast in the Truth! Even such a questioner as thou art may I meet with always.

सर्वे वेदा यत्पदमामनन्ति तपांसि सर्वाणि च यद्वदन्ति ।
यदिच्छन्तो ब्रह्मचर्यं चरन्ति तत्ते पदं संग्रहेण ब्रवीम्योमित्येतत् ॥१५॥

Yama speaks:

15. The seat and goal that all the Vedas glorify and which all austerities declare, for the desire of which men practise holy living, of That will I tell thee in brief compass. OM is that goal, O Nachiketas.

एतद्ध्येवाक्षरं ब्रह्म एतद्ध्येवाक्षरं परम् ।
एतद्ध्येवाक्षरं ज्ञात्वा यो यदिच्छति तस्य तत् ॥१६॥

16. For this Syllable is Brahman, this Syllable is the Most High: this Syllable if one know, whatsoever one shall desire, it is his.

एतदालम्बनं श्रेष्ठमेतदालम्बनं परम् ।
एतदालम्बनं ज्ञात्वा ब्रह्मलोके महीयते ॥१७॥

17. This support is the best, this support is the highest, knowing this support one grows great in the world of the Brahman.

न जायते म्रियते वा विपश्चिन्नायं कुतश्चिन्न बभूव कश्चित् ।
अजो नित्यः शाश्वतोऽयं पुराणो न हन्यते हन्यमाने शरीरे ॥१८॥

18. That Wise One is not born, neither does he die; he came not from anywhere, neither is he anyone; he is unborn, he is everlasting, he is ancient and sempiternal, he is not slain in the slaying of the body.

हन्ता चेन्मन्यते हन्तुं हतश्चेन्मन्यते हतम् ।
उभौ तौ न विजानीतो नायं हन्ति न हन्यते ॥१९॥

19. If the slayer think that he slays, if the slain think that he is slain, both of these have not the knowledge. This slays not, neither is He slain.

अणोरणीयान्महतो महीयानात्मास्य जन्तोर्निहितो गुहायाम् ।
तमक्रतुः पश्यति वीतशोको धातुप्रसादान्महिमानमात्मनः ॥२०॥

20. Finer than the fine, huger than the huge the Self hides in the secret heart of the creature: when a man strips himself of will and is weaned from sorrow, then he beholds Him, purified from the mental elements he sees the greatness of the Self-being.

आसीनो दूरं व्रजति शयानो याति सर्वतः ।
कस्तं मदामदं देवं मदन्यो ज्ञातुमर्हति ॥२१॥

21. Seated He journeys far off, lying down He goes everywhere. Who other than I is fit to know God, even Him who is rapture and the transcendence of rapture?

अशरीरं शरीरेष्वनवस्थेष्ववस्थितम् ।
महान्तं विभुमात्मानं मत्वा धीरो न शोचति ॥२२॥

22. Realising the Bodiless in bodies, the Established in things unsettled, the Great and Omnipresent Self, the wise and steadfast soul grieves no longer.

नायमात्मा प्रवचनेन लभ्यो न मेधया न बहुना श्रुतेन ।
यमेवैष वृणुते तेन लभ्यस्तस्यैष आत्मा विवृणुते तनूं स्वाम् ॥२३॥

23. The Self is not to be won by eloquent teaching, nor by brain power, nor by much learning: but only he whom this being chooses can win Him, for to him this Self bares His body.

नाविरतो दुश्चरितान्नाशान्तो नासमाहितः ।
नाशान्तमानसो वापि प्रज्ञानेनैनमाप्नुयात् ॥२४॥

24. None who has not ceased from doing evil, or who is not calm, or not concentrated in his being, or whose mind has not been tranquillised, can by wisdom attain to Him.

यस्य ब्रह्म च क्षत्रं च उभे भवत ओदनः ।
मृत्युर्यस्योपसेचनं क इत्था वेद यत्र सः ॥२५॥

25. He to whom the sages are as meat and heroes as food for His eating and Death is an ingredient of His banquet, how thus shall one know of Him where He abideth?" (109-13)

b. The First Cycle; Third Chapter

आत्मानं रथिनं विद्धि शरीरं रथमेव तु ।
बुद्धिं तु सारथिं विद्धि मनः प्रग्रहमेव च ॥३॥

3. Know the body for a chariot and the soul for the master of the chariot: know Reason for the charioteer and the mind for the reins only.

इन्द्रियाणि हयानाहुर्विषयांस्तेषु गोचरान् ।
आत्मेन्द्रियमनोयुक्तं भोक्तेत्याहुर्मनीषिणः ॥४॥

4. The senses they speak of as the steeds and the objects of sense as the paths in which they move; and One yoked with Self and the mind and the senses is the enjoyer, say the thinkers.

इन्द्रियेभ्यः परा ह्यर्था अर्थेभ्यश्च परं मनः ।
मनसस्तु परा बुद्धिर्बुद्धेरात्मा महान्परः ॥१०॥

10. Than the senses the objects of sense are higher; and higher than the objects of sense is the Mind; and higher than the Mind is the faculty of knowledge; and than that is the Great Self higher.

महतः परमव्यक्तमव्यक्तात् पुरुषः परः ।
पुरुषान्न परं किंचित्सा काष्ठा सा परा गतिः ॥११॥

11. And higher than the Great Self is the Unmanifest and higher than the Unmanifest is the Purusha: than the Purusha there is none higher: He is the culmination, He is the highest goal of the journey.

एष सर्वेषु भूतेषु गूढोऽऽत्मा न प्रकाशते ।

दृश्यते त्वग्रयया बुध्द्या सूक्ष्मया सूक्ष्मदर्शिभिः ॥१२॥

12. The secret Self in all existences does not manifest Himself to the vision: yet is He seen by the seers of the subtle by a subtle and perfect understanding.

यच्छेद् वाङ्मनसी प्राज्ञस्तद्यच्छेज्ज्ञान आत्मनि ।
ज्ञानमात्मनि महति नियच्छेत् तद्यच्छेच्छान्त आत्मनि ॥१३॥

13. Let the wise man restrain speech in his mind and mind in his self of knowledge, and knowledge in the Great Self, and that again let him restrain in the Self that is at peace.

उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।
क्षुरस्य धारा निशिता दुरत्यया दुर्गं पथस्तत् कवयो वदन्ति ॥१४॥

14. Arise, awake, find out the great ones and learn of them; for sharp as a razor's edge, hard to traverse, difficult of going is that path, say the sages." (114-116)

c. The Second Cycle; First Chapter

"अङ्गुष्ठमात्रः पुरुषो मध्य आत्मनि तिष्ठति ।
ईशानो भूतभव्यस्य न ततो विजुगुप्सते । एतद्वै तत् ॥१२॥

12. The Purusha who is seated in the midst of ourself is no larger than the finger of a man. He is the lord of what was and what shall be; Him having seen one shrinketh not from aught nor abhorreth any. This is the thing thou seekest.

अङ्गुष्ठमात्रः पुरुषो ज्योतिरिवाधूमकः ।
ईशानो भूतभव्यस्य स एवाद्य स उ श्वः । एतद्वै तत् ॥१३॥

13. The Purusha that is within is no larger than the finger of a man; He is like a blazing fire that is without smoke, He is lord of His past and His future. He alone is today and He alone shall be tomorrow. This is the thing thou seekest." (119)

d. The Second Cycle; Second Chapter

"न तत्र सूर्यो भाति न चन्द्रतारकं नेमा विद्युतो भान्ति कुतोऽयमग्निः ।

तमेव भान्तमनुभाति सर्वं तस्य भासा सर्वमिदं विभाति ॥१५॥

15. There the Sun cannot shine and the moon has no lustre; all the stars are blind; there our lightnings flash not, neither any earthly fire. For all that is bright is but the shadow of His brightness and by His shining all this shineth." (123)

e. The Second Cycle; Third Chapter

"भयादस्याग्निस्तपति भयात्तपति सूर्यः ।
भयादिन्द्रश्च वायुश्च मृत्युर्धावति पञ्चमः ॥३॥

3. For fear of Him the fire burneth, for fear of Him the sun giveth heat, for fear of Him Indra and Vayu and Death hasten in their courses.

इन्द्रियेभ्यः परं मनो मनसः सत्त्वमुत्तमम् ।
सत्त्वादधि महानात्मा महतोऽव्यक्तमुत्तमम् ॥७॥

7. The mind is higher than the senses, and above the mind is the thought, and above the thought is the mighty Spirit, and above the Mighty One is the Unmanifest.

अव्यक्तात्तु परः पुरुषो व्यापकोऽलिङ्ग एव च ।
यं ज्ञात्वा मुच्यते जन्तुरमृतत्वं च गच्छति ॥८॥

8. But highest above the Unmanifest is the Purusha who pervadeth all and alone hath no sign nor feature. Mortal man knowing Him is released into immortality.

अङ्गुष्ठमात्रः पुरुषोऽन्तरात्मा सदा जनानां हृदये सन्निविष्टः ।
तं स्वाच्छरीरात् प्रवृहेन्मुञ्जादिवेषीकां धैर्येण ।
तं विद्याच्छुक्रममृतं तं विद्याच्छुक्रममृतमिति ॥१७॥

17. The Purusha, the Spirit within, who is no larger than the finger of a man is seated for ever in the heart of creatures; one must separate Him with patience from one's own body as one separates from a blade of grass its main fibre. Thou shalt know Him for the Bright Immortal, yea, for the Bright Immortal.

मृत्युप्रोक्तां नचिकेतोऽथ लब्ध्वा विद्यामेतां योगविधिं च कृत्स्नम् ।
ब्रह्मप्राप्तो विरजोऽभूद् विमृत्युरन्योऽप्येवं यो विदध्यात्ममेव ॥१८॥

18. Thus did Nachiketas with Death for his teacher win the God-knowledge; he learned likewise the whole ordinance of the Yoga: thereafter he obtained Brahman and became void of stain and void of death. So shall another be who cometh likewise to the science of the Spirit." (124-127)

2. Selections from Mundaka Upanishad

a. Chapter Two : Section II

"धनुर्गृहीत्वौपनिषदं महास्त्रं शरं ह्युपासानिशितं संधयीत ।
आयम्य तद्भावगतेन चेतसा लक्ष्यं तदेवाक्षरं सोम्य विद्धि ॥३॥

3. Take up the bow of the Upanishad, that mighty weapon, set to it an arrow sharpened by adoration, draw the bow with a heart wholly devoted to the contemplation of That, and O fair son, penetrate into That as thy target, even into the Immutable.

प्रणवो धनुः शरो ह्यात्मा ब्रह्म तल्लक्ष्यमुच्यते ।
अप्रमत्तेन वेद्धव्यं शरवत् तन्मयो भवेत् ॥४॥

4. OM is the bow and the soul is the arrow, and That, even the Brahman, is spoken of as the target. That must be pierced with an unfaltering aim; one must be absorbed into That as an arrow is lost in its target.

मनोमयः प्राणशरीरनेता प्रतिष्ठितोऽन्ने हृदयं संनिधाय ।
तद्विज्ञानेन परिपश्यन्ति धीरा आनन्दरुपममृतं यद्विभाति ॥८॥

8. A mental being, leader of the life and the body, has set a heart in matter, in matter he has taken his firm foundation. By its knowing the wise see everywhere around them That which shines in its effulgence, a shape of Bliss and immortal.

भिद्यते हृदयग्रन्थिश्छिद्यन्ते सर्वसंशयाः ।
क्षीयन्ते चास्य कर्माणि तस्मिन्दृष्टे परावरे ॥९॥

9. The knot of the heart-strings is rent, cut away are all doubts, and a man's works are spent and perish, when is seen That which is at once the being below and the Supreme.

हिरण्मये परे कोशे विरजं ब्रह्म निष्कलम् ।
तच्छुभ्रं ज्योतिषां ज्योतिस्तद्यदात्मविदो विदुः ॥१०॥

10. In a supreme golden sheath the Brahman lies, stainless, without parts. A Splendour is That, It is the Light of Lights, It is That which the self-knowers know.

न तत्र सूर्यो भाति न चन्द्रतारकं नेमा विद्युतो भान्ति कुतोऽयमग्निः ।
तमेव भान्तमनुभाति सर्वं तस्य भासा सर्वमिदं विभाति ॥११॥

11. There the sun shines not and the moon has no splendour and the stars are blind; there these lightnings flash not, how then shall burn this earthly fire? All that shines is but the shadow of his shining; all this universe is effulgent with his light.

ब्रह्मैवेदममृतं पुरस्ताद् ब्रह्म पश्चाद् ब्रह्म दक्षिणतश्चोत्तरेण ।
अधश्चोर्ध्वं च प्रसृतं ब्रह्मैवेदं विश्वमिदं वरिष्ठम् ॥१२॥

12. All this is Brahman immortal, naught else; Brahman is in front of us, Brahman behind us, and to the south of us and to the north of us4 and below us and above us; it stretches everywhere. All this is Brahman alone, all this magnificent universe." (139-141)

b. Chapter Three: Section I

"द्वा सुपर्णा सयुजा सखाया समानं वृक्षं परिषस्वजाते ।
तयोरन्यः पिप्पलं स्वाद्वत्त्यनश्नन्नो अभिचाकशीति ॥१॥

1. Two birds, beautiful of wing, close companions, cling to one common tree: of the two one eats the sweet fruit of the tree, the other eats not but watches his fellow.

समाने वृक्षे पुरुषो निमग्नोऽनीशया शोचति मुह्यमानः ।
जुष्टं यदा पश्यत्यन्यमीशमस्य महिमानमिति वीतशोकः ॥२॥

2. The soul is the bird that sits immersed on the one common tree; but because he is not lord he is bewildered and has sorrow. But when he sees that other who is the Lord and beloved, he knows that all is His greatness and his sorrow passes away from him.

यदा पश्यः पश्यते रुक्मवर्णं कर्तारमीशं पुरुषं ब्रह्मयोनिम् ।
तदा विद्वान्पुण्यपापे विधूय निरञ्जनः परमं साम्यमुपैति ॥३॥

3. When, a seer, he sees the Golden-hued, the maker, the Lord, the Spirit who is the source of Brahman,[1] then he becomes the knower and shakes from his wings sin and virtue; pure of all stain he reaches the supreme identity.[2]

प्राणो ह्येष यः सर्वभूतैर्विभाति विजानन् विद्वान्भवते नातिवादी ।
आत्मक्रीड आत्मरतिः क्रियावानेष ब्रह्मविदां वरिष्ठः ॥४॥

4. This is the life in things that shines manifested by all these beings; a man of knowledge coming wholly to know this, draws back from creeds and too much disputings. In the Self his delight, at play in the Self, doing works, – the best is he among the knowers of the Eternal.

सत्येन लभ्यस्तपसा ह्येष आत्मा सम्यग्ज्ञानेन ब्रह्मचर्येण नित्यम् ।
अन्तःशरीरे ज्योतिर्मयो हि शुभ्रो यं पश्यन्ति यतयः क्षीणदोषाः ॥५॥

5. The Self can always be won by truth, by self-discipline, by integral knowledge, by a life of purity, – this Self that is in the inner body, radiant, made all of light whom by the perishing of their blemishes the doers of askesis behold.

सत्यमेव जयते नानृतं सत्येन पन्था विततो देवयानः ।
येनाक्रमन्त्यृषयो ह्याप्तकामा यत्र तत्सत्यस्य परमं निधानम् ॥६॥

6. It is Truth that conquers and not falsehood; by Truth was stretched out the path of the journey of the gods, by which the sages winning their desire ascend there where Truth has

[1] Or, "whose source is Brahman"; Shankara admits the other meaning as an alternative, but explains it as "the source of the lower Brahman".
[2] Or, "pure of all staining tinge he reaches to a supreme equality."

its supreme abode.

बृहच्च तद्दिव्यमचिन्त्यरुपं सूक्ष्माच्च तत्सूक्ष्मतरं विभाति ।
दूरात्सुदूरे तदिहान्तिके च पश्यत्स्विहैव निहितं गुहायाम् ॥७॥

7. Vast is That, divine, its form unthinkable; it shines out subtler than the subtle:[3] very far and farther than farness, it is here close to us, for those who have vision it is even here in this world; it is here, hidden in the secret heart.

न चक्षुषा गृह्यते नापि वाचा नान्यैर्देवैस्तपसा कर्मणा वा ।
ज्ञानप्रसादेन विशुद्धसत्त्वस्ततस्तु तं पश्यते निष्कलं ध्यायमानः ॥८॥

8. Eye cannot seize, speech cannot grasp Him, nor these other godheads; not by austerity can he be held nor by works: only when the inner being is purified by a glad serenity of knowledge, then indeed, meditating, one beholds the Spirit indivisible.

एषोऽणुरात्मा चेतसा वेदितव्यो यस्मिन्प्राणः पञ्चधा संविवेश ।
प्राणैश्चित्तं सर्वमोतं प्रजानां यस्मिन्विशुद्धे विभवत्येष आत्मा ॥९॥

9. This Self is subtle and has to be known by a thought-mind into which the life-force has made its fivefold entry: all the conscious heart of creatures is shot through and in woven with the currents of the life-force and only when it is purified can this Self manifest its power.[4]

यं यं लोकं मनसा संविभाति विशुद्धसत्त्वः कामयते यांश्च कामान् ।
तं तं लोकं जयते तांश्च कामांस्तस्मादात्मज्ञं ह्यर्चयेद् भूतिकामः ॥१०॥

10. Whatever world the man whose inner being is purified sheds the light of his mind upon, and whatsoever desires he cherishes, that world he takes by conquest, and those desires. Then, let whosoever seeks for success and well-being approach with homage a self-knower." (142-144)

[3] Or, "minuter than the minute".

[4] The verb *vibhavati* seems here to have a complex sense and to mean, "to manifest its full power and pervading presence".

c. Chapter Three: Section II

"नायमात्मा प्रवचनेन लभ्यो न मेधया न बहुना श्रुतेन ।
यमेवैष वृणुते तेन लभ्यस्तस्यैष आत्मा विवृणुते तनुं स्वाम् ॥३॥

3. This Self is not won by exegesis, nor by brain-power, nor by much learning of Scripture. Only by him whom It chooses can It be won; to him this Self unveils its own body.

नायमात्मा बलहीनेन लभ्यो न च प्रमादात्तपसो वाप्यलिङ्गात् ।
एतैरुपायैर्यतते यस्तु विद्वांस्तस्यैष आत्मा विशते ब्रह्मधाम ॥४॥

4. This Self cannot be won by any who is without strength, nor with error in the seeking, nor by an askesis without the true mark: but when a man of knowledge strives by these means his self enters into Brahman, his abiding place.

संप्राप्यैनमृषयो ज्ञानतृप्ताः कृतात्मानो वीतरागाः प्रशान्ताः ।
ते सर्वगं सर्वतः प्राप्य धीरा युक्तात्मानः सर्वमेवाविशन्ति ॥५॥

5. Attaining to him, seers glad with fullness of knowledge, perfected in the Self, all passions cast from them, tranquillised, – these, the wise, come to the all-pervading from every side, and, uniting themselves with him, enter utterly the All." (145)

3. What is the Brahman?

"Whatever reality is in existence, by which all the rest subsists, that is Brahman. An Eternal behind all instabilities, a Truth of things which is implied, if it is hidden in all appearances, a Constant which supports all mutations, but is not increased, diminished, abrogated, – there is such an unknown *x* which makes existence a problem, our own self a mystery, the universe a riddle. If we were only what we seem to be to our normal self-awareness, there would be no mystery; if the world were only what it can be made out to be by the perceptions of the senses and their strict analysis in the reason, there would be no riddle; and if to take our life as it is now and the world as it has so far developed to

our experience were the whole possibility of our knowing and doing, there would be no problem. Or at best there would be but a shallow mystery, an easily solved riddle, the problem only of a child's puzzle. But there is more, and that more is the hidden head of the Infinite and the secret heart of the Eternal. It is the highest and this highest is the all; there is none beyond and there is none other than it. To know it is to know the highest and by knowing the highest to know all. For as it is the beginning and source of all things, so everything else is its consequence; as it is the support and constituent of all things, so the secret of everything else is explained by its secret; as it is the sum and end of all things, so everything else amounts to it and by throwing itself into it achieves the sense of its own existence. This is the Brahman." (151-52)

4. The Brahman Is Knowable

"If this unknown be solely an indecipherable, only indefinable *x*, always unknown and unknowable, the hidden never revealed, the secret never opened to us, then our mystery would for ever remain a mystery, our riddle insoluble, our problem intangible. Its existence, even while it determines all we are, know and do, could yet make no practical difference to us; for our relation to it would then be a blind and helpless dependence, a relation binding us to ignorance and maintainable only by that ignorance. Or again, if it be in some way knowable, but the sole result of knowledge were an extinction or cessation of our being, then within our being it could have no consequences; the very act and fructuation of knowledge would bring the annihilation of all that we now are, not its completion or fulfilment. The mystery, riddle, problem would not be so much solved as abolished, for it would lose all its data. In effect we should have to suppose that there is an eternal and irreconcilable opposition between Brahman and what we now are, between the supreme cause and all its effects or between the supreme source and all its

derivations. And it would then seem that all that the Eternal originates, all he supports, all he takes back to himself is a denial or contradiction of his being which, though in itself a negative of that which alone is, has yet in some way become a positive. The two could not coexist in consciousness; if he allowed the world to know him, it would disappear from being.

But the Eternal is knowable, He defines himself so that we may seize him, and man can become, even while he exists as man and in this world and in this body, a knower of the Brahman.

The knowledge of the Brahman is not a thing luminous but otiose, informing to the intellectual view of things but without consequence to the soul of the individual or his living; it is a knowledge that is a power and a divine compulsion to change; by it his existence gains something that now he does not possess in consciousness. What is this gain? it is this that he is conscious now in a lower state only of his being, but by knowledge he gains his highest being.

The highest state of our being is not a denial, contradiction and annihilation of all that we now are; it is a supreme accomplishment of all things that our present existence means and aims at, but in their highest sense and in the eternal values." (152-53)

5. The Object Of Knowledge

"Knowledge does not end with knowing, nor is it pursued and found for the sake of knowing alone. It has its full value only when it leads to some greater gain than itself, some gain of being. Simply to know the eternal and to remain in the pain, struggle and inferiority of our present way of being, would be a poor and lame advantage.

A greater knowledge opens the possibility and, if really possessed, brings the actuality of a greater being. To be is the first verb which contains all the others; knowledge, action,

creation, enjoyment are only a fulfilment of being. Since we are incomplete in being, to grow is our aim, and that knowledge, action, creation, enjoyment are the best which most help us to expand, grow, feel our existence."(154)

6. Infinity and Causality

"Infinity is the timeless and spaceless and causeless infinity of the eternal containing all the infinities of space and time and the endless succession which humanly we call causality. But in fact causality is only an inferior aspect and translation into mental and vital terms of something which is not mechanical causality, but the harmonies of a free self-determination of the being of the Eternal.

Truth is truth of the infinite and eternal, truth of being, and truth of becoming only as a self-expression of the being. The circumstances of the self-expression appear to the mind as the finite, but nothing is really finite except the way the mind has of experiencing all that appears to its view. All things are, each thing is the Brahman." (157)

7. Sri Aurobindo on Translating the Upanishads

"This translation of a few of the simpler & more exoteric Upanishads to be followed by other sacred and philosophical writings of the Hindus not included in the Revealed Scriptures, all under the one title of the Book of God, has been effected on one definite and unvarying principle, to present to England and through England to Europe the religious message of India only in those parts of her written thought which the West is fit to hear and to present these in such a form as should be attractive & suggestive to the Occidental intellect. The first branch of this principle necessitated a rigid selection on definite lines, the second dictated the choice of a style & method of rendering which should be literary rather than literal.

The series of translations called the Sacred Books of the East, edited by the late Professor Max Muller, was

executed in a scholastic and peculiar spirit. Professor Max Muller, a scholar of wide attainments, great versatility and a refreshingly active, ingenious & irresponsible fancy, has won considerable respect in India by his attachment to Vedic studies, but it must fairly be recognized that he was more of a grammarian and philologist, than a sound Sanscrit scholar. He could construe Sanscrit well enough, but he could not feel the language or realise the spirit behind the letter. Accordingly he committed two serious errors of judgment; he imagined that by sitting in Oxford and evolving new meanings out of his own brilliant fancy he could understand the Upanishads better than Shankaracharya or any other Hindu of parts and learning; and he also imagined that what was important for Europe to know about the Upanishads was what he and other European scholars considered they ought to mean. This, however, is a matter of no importance to anybody but the scholars themselves. What it is really important for Europe to know is in the first place what the Upanishads really do mean, so far as their exoteric teaching extends, and in a less degree what philosophic Hinduism took them to mean. The latter knowledge may be gathered from the commentaries of Shankaracharya and other philosophers which may be studied in the original or in the translations which the Dravidian Presidency, ignorantly called benighted by the materialists, has been issuing with a truly noble learning & high-minded enterprise. The former this book makes some attempt to convey.

But it may be asked, why these particular Upanishads alone, when there are so many others far larger in plan and of a not inferior importance? In answer I may quote a sentence from Professor Max Muller's Preface to the Sacred Books of the East. "I confess" he says "it has been for many years a problem to me, aye, and to a great extent is so still, how the Sacred Books of the East should, by the side of so much that is fresh, natural, simple, beautiful and true, contain so much that

is not only unmeaning, artificial and silly, but even hideous and repellent." Now I am myself only a poor coarse minded Oriental and therefore not disposed to deny the gross physical facts of life & nature or able to see why we should scuttle them out of sight and put on a smug, respectable expression which suggests while it affects to hide their existence. This perhaps is the reason why I am somewhat at a loss to imagine what the Professor found in the Upanishads that is hideous and repellent. Still I was brought up almost from my infancy in England and received an English education, so that sometimes I have glimmerings. But as to what he intends by the unmeaning, artificial and silly elements, there can be no doubt. Everything is unmeaning in the Upanishads which the Europeans cannot understand, everything is artificial which does not come within the circle of their mental experience and everything is silly which is not explicable by European science and wisdom. Now this attitude is almost inevitable on the part of an European, for we all judge according to our lights and those who keep their minds really open, who can realise that there may be lights which are not theirs and yet as illuminating or more illuminating than theirs, are in any nation a very small handful. For the most part men are the slaves of their associations.

Let us suppose that the ceremonies & services of the Roman Catholic were not mere ceremonies and formularies, borrowed for the most part from Eastern occultisms without understanding them, – that they had been arranged so as to be perfect symbols of certain deep metaphysical truths and to produce certain effects spiritual and material according to a scientific knowledge of the power of sound over both mind and matter; let us suppose that deep philosophical works had been written in the terminology of these symbols and often in a veiled allusive language; and let us suppose finally that these were translated into Bengali or Hindustani and presented to an educated Pundit who had studied both

at Calcutta & at Nuddea or Benares. What would he make of them? It will be as well to take a concrete instance. Jesus Christ was a great thinker, a man who had caught, apparently by his unaided power, though this is not certain, something of the divine knowledge, but the writers who recorded his sayings were for the most part ordinary men of a very narrow culture and scope of thought and they seem grossly to have misunderstood his deepest sayings. For instance when he said "I and my Father are one" expressing the deep truth that the human self and the divine self are identical, they imagined that he was setting up an individual claim to be God; hence the extraordinary legend of the Virgin Mary & all that followed from it. Well, we all know the story of the Last Supper and Jesus' marvellously pregnant utterance as he broke the bread and gave of the wine to his disciples "This is my body and this is my blood" and the remarkable rite of the Eucharist and the doctrine of Transubstantiation which the Roman Catholic Church has founded upon it. "Corruption! superstition! blasphemous nonsense!" cries the Protestant. "Only a vivid Oriental metaphor and nothing more." If so, it was certainly an "unmeaning, artificial and silly" metaphor, nay, "even a hideous and repellent" one. But I prefer to believe that Jesus' words had always a meaning & generally a true & beautiful one. On the other hand the Transubstantiation doctrine is one which the Catholics themselves do not understand, it is to them a "mystery". And yet how plain the meaning is to an Oriental intelligence! The plasm of matter, the foodsheath of the universe to which bread and wine belong, is indeed the blood and body of God and typifies the great primal sacrifice by which God crucified himself so that the world might exist. The Infinite had to become finite, the Unconditioned to condition himself, Spirit to evolve matter. In the bread and the wine which the communicant eats, God actually is but he is not present to our consciousness, and he only becomes so present by an act of faith; this is the whole doctrine of the Transubstantiation. For as the Upanishad says, we must believe

in God before we can know him; we must realise him as the "He is" before we realise him in his essential. And indeed if the child had not believed in what his teacher or his book told him, how could the grown man know anything? But if a deep philosophical work were written on the Eucharist hinting at great truths but always using the symbol of the bread and wine and making its terminology from the symbol & from the doctrine of Transubstantiation based upon the symbol, what would our Hindu Pundit make of it? Being a scholar & philosopher, he would find there undoubtedly much that was fresh, natural, simple, beautiful &true but also a great deal that was unmeaning, artificial & silly & even to his vegetarian imagination hideous & repellent. As for the symbol itself, its probable effect on the poor vegetarian would be to make him vomit. "What hideous nonsense," says the Protestant, "we are to believe that we are eating God!" But that is exactly what the Protestant himself does believe if he is sincere & not a parrot when he says "God is everywhere", which is true enough, though it would be truer to say everything is in God. If God is everywhere, He must be in the food we eat. Not only is God the eaten, but He is the eater and eventually, says the Vedanta, when you come to the bottom fact of existence there is neither eaten or eater, but all is God. These are hard sayings for the rationalist who insists on limiting knowledge within the circle of the five senses. "God to whom the sages are as meat & princes as excellent eating & Death is the spice of his banquet, how shall such an one know of Him where He abideth?"

Many of the Upanishads are similarly written round symbols and in a phraseology and figures which have or had once a deep meaning and a sacred association to the Hindus but must be unintelligible and repellent to the European. What possible use can be served by presenting to Europe such works as the Chandogya or Aitareya Upanishads in which even the majority of Hindus find it difficult or impossible to

penetrate every symbol to its underlying truth? Only the few Upanishads have been selected which contain the kernel of the matter in the least technical and most poetical form; the one exception is the Upanishad of the Questions which will be necessarily strange and not quite penetrable to the European mind. It was, however, necessary to include it for the sake of a due presentation of Upanishad philosophy in some of its details as well as in its main ideas, and its technical element has a more universal appeal than that of the Chandogya or Taittiriya.

An objection may be urged to the method of translation that has been adopted. Professor Max Muller in his translation did not make any attempt to render into English the precise shades of Aryan philosophical terms like Atman & Prana which do not correspond to any philosophical conception familiar to the West; he believed that the very unfamiliarity of the terms he used to translate them would be like a bracing splash of cold water to the mind forcing it to rouse itself and think. In this I think the Professor was in error; his proposition may be true of undaunted philosophical intellects such as Schopenhauer's or of those who are already somewhat familiar with the Sanscrit language, but to the ordinary reader the unfamiliar terminology forms a high & thick hedge of brambles shutting him off from the noble palace & beautiful gardens of the Upanishads. Moreover the result of a scholastic faithfulness to the letter has been to make the style of the translation intolerably uncouth and unworthy of the solemn rhythmic grandeur and ineffable poetical depth and beauty of these great religious poems. I do not say that this translation is worthy of them, for in no other human tongue than Sanscrit is such grandeur & beauty possible. But there are ways and their degrees. For instance *Étadwaitad*, the refrain of the Katha Upanishad has a deep & solemn ring in Sanscrit because *étad* and *tad* so used have in Sanscrit a profound and grandiose philosophical signification which everybody at once feels; but

in English "This truly is That" can be nothing but a juggling with demonstrative pronouns; it is far better and renders more nearly both rhythm & meaning to translate "This is the God of your seeking" however inadequate such a translation may be.

It may, however, fairly be said that a version managed on these lines cannot give a precise & accurate idea of the meaning. It is misleading to translate Prâna sometimes by life, sometimes by breath, sometimes by life breath or breath of life, because breath & life are merely subordinate aspects of the Prâna. Atman again rendered indifferently by soul, spirit & self, must mislead, because what the West calls the soul is really the Atman yoked with mind & intelligence, and spirit is a word of variable connotation often synonymous with soul; even "self" cannot be used precisely in that way in English. Again the Hindu idea of "immortality" is different from the European; it implies not life after death, but freedom from both life and death, for what we call life is after all impossible without death. Similarly Being does not render *Purusha*, nor "matter" *rayi*, nor askesis the whole idea of "tapas". To a certain extent all this may be admitted, but at the same time I do not think that any reader who can think & feel will be seriously misled, and at any rate he will catch more of the meaning from imperfect English substitutes than from Sanscrit terms which will be a blank to his intelligence. The mind of man demands, and the demand is legitimate, that new ideas shall be presented to him in words which convey to him some association, with which he will not feel like a foreigner in a strange country where no one knows his language nor he theirs. The new must be presented to him in the terms of the old; new wine must be put to some extent in old bottles. What is the use of avoiding the word "God" and speaking always of the Supreme as "It" simply because the Sanscrit usually, – but not, be it observed, invariably – employs the neuter gender? The neuter in Sanscrit applies not only to what is inanimate

but to what is beyond such terms as animate and inanimate, not only to what is below gender but to what is above gender. In English this is not the case. The use of "It" may therefore lead to far more serious misconceptions than to use the term "God" & the pronoun "He". When Matthew Arnold said that God was a stream of tendency making towards righteousness, men naturally scoffed because it seemed to turn God into an inanimate force; yet surely such was not Arnold's meaning. On the other side if the new ideas are presented with force and power, a reader of intelligence will soon come to understand that something different is meant by "God" from the ideas he attaches to that word. And in the meanwhile we gain this distinct advantage that he has not been repelled at the outset by what would naturally seem to him bizarre, repulsive or irreverent.

It is true however that this translation will not convey a precise, full and categorical knowledge of the truths which underlie the Upanishads. To convey such knowledge is not the object of this translation, neither was it the object of the Upanishads themselves. It must always be remembered that these great treatises are simply the gate of the Higher Knowledge; there is much that lies behind the gate. Sri krishna has indeed said that the knowledge in the Vedas is sufficient for a holy mind that is capable of knowing God, just as the water in a well is sufficient for a man's purpose though there may be whole floods of water all around. But this does not apply to ordinary men. The ordinary man who wishes to reach God through knowledge, must undergo an elaborate training. He must begin by becoming absolutely pure, he must cleanse thoroughly his body, his heart and his intellect, he must get himself a new heart and be born again; for only the twice born can understand or teach the Vedas. When he has done this he needs yet four things before he can succeed, the Sruti or recorded revelation, the Sacred Teacher, the practice of Yoga and the Grace of God. The business of the Sruti and especially

of the Upanishads is to seize the mind and draw it into a magic circle, to accustom it to the thought of God and aspirations after the Supreme, to bathe it in certain ideas, surround it with a certain spiritual atmosphere; for this purpose it plunges & rolls the mind over & over in an ocean of marvellous sound thro' which a certain train of associations goes ever rolling. In other words it appeals through the intellect, the ear and the imagination to the soul. The purpose of the Upanishad cannot therefore be served by a translation; a translation at best prepares him for & attracts him to the original. But even when he has steeped himself in the original, he may have understood what the Upanishad suggests, but he has not understood all that it implies, the great mass of religious truth that lies behind, of which the Upanishad is but a hint or an echo." (163-70)

8. The Necessity of a Teacher and the Grace of God

"For this he must go to the Teacher. "Awake ye, arise & learn of God seeking out the Best who have the knowledge." Hard is it in these days to find the Best; for the Best do not come to us, we have to show our sincerity, patience and perseverance by seeking them. And when we have heard the whole of the Brahmavidya from the Teacher, we still know of God by theory only; we must farther learn from a preceptor the practical knowledge of God, the vision of Him and attainment of Him which is Yoga and the goal of Yoga. And even in that we cannot succeed unless we have the Grace of God, for Yoga is beset with temptations not the least of which are the powers it gives us, powers which the ignorant call supernatural. "Then must a man be very vigilant for Yoga, as it hath a beginning, so hath it an ending." Only the Grace of God, the blessing of triumphant self-mastery that comes from long and patient accumulation of soul-experience, can keep us firm and help us over these temptations. "The Spirit is not to be won by eloquent teaching, nor by brain power, nor by

much learning: but he whom the Spirit chooseth, he getteth the Spirit, and to him God discovereth His body." Truly does the Upanishad say "for sharp as a razor's edge is the path, difficult & hard to traverse, say the seers." Fortunately it is not necessary& indeed it is not possible for all to measure the whole journey in a single life, nor can we, or should we abandon our daily duties like Buddha and flee into the mountain or the forest. It is enough for us to make a beginning." (170)

9. Translations from the Mandoukya Upanishad

"Before which one repeats the Mantra

ॐ भद्रं कर्णेभिः शृणुयाम देवा भद्रं पश्येमाक्षभिर्यजत्राः ।
स्थिरैरङ्गैस्तुष्टुवांसस्तनूभिर्व्यशेम देवहितं यदायुः ॥
स्वस्ति न इन्द्रो वृद्धश्रवाः स्वस्ति नः पूषा विश्ववेदाः ।
स्वस्ति नस्तार्क्ष्यो अरिष्टनेमिः स्वस्ति नो बृहस्पतिर्दधातु ॥
ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः ॥

OM. May we hear what is auspicious with our ears, O ye Gods; may we see what is auspicious with our eyes, Oye of the sacrifice; giving praise with steady limbs, with motionless bodies, may we enter into that life which is founded in the Gods.

Ordain weal unto us Indra of high-heaped glories; ordain weal unto us Pushan, the all-knowing Sun; ordain weal unto us Tarkshya Arishtanemi; Brihaspati ordain weal unto us. OM. Peace! peace! peace!

ओमित्येतदक्षरमिदं सर्वं तस्योपव्याख्यानं भूतं भवद् भविष्यदिति सर्वमोंकार एव ।
यच्चान्यत् त्रिकालातीतं तदप्योङ्कार एव ॥१॥

1. OM is this imperishable Word, OM is the Universe, and this is the exposition of OM. The past, the present and the future, all that was, all that is, all that will be, is OM. Likewise all else that may exist beyond the bounds of Time, that too is OM.

सर्वं ह्येतद् ब्रह्मायमात्मा ब्रह्म सोऽयमात्मा चतुष्पात् ॥२॥

2. All this Universe is the Eternal Brahman, this Self is the

जागरितस्थानो बहिष्प्रज्ञः सप्ताङ्ग एकोनविंशतिमुखः स्थूलभुग् वैश्वानरः प्रथमः पादः ॥३॥

3. He whose place is the wakefulness, who is wise of the outward, who has seven limbs, to whom there are nineteen doors, who feeleth and enjoyeth gross objects, Vaiswanor, the Universal Male, He is the first.

स्वप्नस्थानोऽन्तःप्रज्ञः सप्ताङ्ग एकोनविंशतिमुखः प्रविविक्तभुक् तैजसो द्वितीयः पादः ॥४॥

4. He whose place is the dream, who is wise of the inward, who has seven limbs, to whom there are nineteen doors, who feeleth and enjoyeth subtle objects, Taijasa, the Inhabitant in Luminous Mind, He is the second.

यत्र सुप्तो न कंचन कामं कामयते न कंचन स्वप्नं पश्यति तत्सुषुप्तम् । सुषुप्तस्थान एकीभूतः प्रज्ञानघन एवानन्दमयो ह्यानन्दभुक् चेतोमुखः प्राज्ञस्तृतीयः पादः ॥५॥

5. When one sleepeth and yearneth not with any desire, nor seeth any dream, that is the perfect slumber. He whose place is the perfect slumber, who is become Oneness, who is wisdom gathered into itself, who is made of mere delight, who enjoyeth delight unrelated, to whom conscious mind is the door, Prajna, the Lord of Wisdom, He is the third.

एष सर्वेश्वर एष सर्वज्ञ एषोऽन्तर्याम्येष योनिः सर्वस्य प्रभवाप्ययौ हि भूतानाम् ॥६॥

6. This is the Almighty, this is the Omniscient, this is the Inner Soul, this is the Womb of the Universe, this is the Birth and Destruction of creatures.

नान्तःप्रज्ञं न बहिष्प्रज्ञं नोभयतःप्रज्ञं न प्रज्ञानघनं न प्रज्ञं नाप्रज्ञम् ।
अदृष्टमव्यवहार्यमग्राह्यमलक्षणमचिन्त्यमव्यपदेश्यमेकात्मप्रत्ययसारं
प्रपञ्चोपशमं शान्तं शिवमद्वैतं चतुर्थं मन्यन्ते स आत्मा स विज्ञेयः ॥७॥

7. He who is neither inward-wise, nor outward-wise, nor

both inward and outward wise, nor wisdom self-gathered, nor possessed of wisdom, nor unpossessed of wisdom, He Who is unseen and incommunicable, unseizable, featureless, unthinkable, and unnameable, Whose essentiality is awareness of the Self in its single existence, in Whom all phenomena dissolve, Who is Calm, Who is Good, Who is the One than Whom there is no other, Him they deem the fourth; He is the Self, He is the object of Knowledge.

सोऽयमात्माध्यक्षरमोंकारोऽधिमात्रं पादा मात्रा मात्राश्च पादा अकार उकारो मकार इति ॥८॥

8. Now this the Self, as to the imperishable Word, is OM; and as to the letters, His parts are the letters and the letters are His parts, namely, A U M.

जागरितस्थानो वैश्वानरोऽकारः प्रथमा मात्राप्तेरादिमत्त्वाद्वाप्नोति ह वै सर्वान्कामानादिश्च भवति य एवं वेद ॥९॥

9. The Waker, Vaiswanor, the Universal Male, He is A, the first letter, because of Initiality and Pervasiveness; he that knoweth Him for such pervadeth and attaineth all his desires; he becometh the source and first.

स्वप्नस्थानस्तैजस उकारो द्वितीया मात्रोत्कर्षादुभयत्वाद्वोत्कर्षति ह वै ज्ञानसंततिं समानश्च भवति नास्याब्रह्मवित् कुले भवति य एवं वेद ॥१०॥

10. The Dreamer, Taijasa, the Inhabitant in Luminous Mind, He is U, the second letter, because of Advance and Centrality; he that knoweth Him for such, advanceth the bounds of his knowledge and riseth above difference; nor of his seed is any born that knoweth not the Eternal.

सुषुप्तस्थानः प्राज्ञो मकारस्तृतीया मात्रा मितेरपीतेर्वा मिनोति ह
वा इदं सर्वमपीतिश्च भवति य एवं वेद ॥११॥

11. The Sleeper, Prajna, the Lord of Wisdom, He is M, the third letter, because of Measure and Finality; he that knoweth Him for such measureth with himself the Universe and

becometh the departure into the Eternal.

अमात्रश्चतुर्थोऽव्यवहार्यः प्रपञ्चोपशमः शिवोऽद्वैत एवमोंकार आत्मैव संविशत्यात्मनात्मानं य एवं वेद य एवं वेद ॥१२॥

12. Letterless is the fourth, the Incommunicable, the end of phenomena, the Good, the One than Whom there is no other; thus is OM. He that knoweth is the Self and entereth by his self into the Self, he that knoweth, he that knoweth.

Here ends the Mandoukya Upanishad.

After which one repeats the Mantra.

ॐ भद्रं कर्णेभिः शृणुयाम देवा भद्रं पश्येमाक्षभिर्यजत्राः ।
स्थिरैरङ्गैस्तुष्टुवांसस्तनूभिर्व्यशेम देवहितं यदायुः ॥
स्वस्ति न इन्द्रो वृद्धश्रवाः स्वस्ति नः पूषा विश्ववेदाः ।
स्वस्ति नस्तार्क्ष्यो अरिष्टनेमिः स्वस्ति नो बृहस्पतिर्दधातु ॥
ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः ॥

OM. May we hear what is auspicious with our ears, O ye Gods; may we see what is auspicious with our eyes, O ye of the sacrifice; giving praise with steady limbs, with motionless bodies, may we enter into that life which is founded in the Gods.

Ordain weal unto us Indra of high-heaped glories; ordain weal unto us Pushan, the all-knowing Sun; ordain weal unto us Tarkshya Arishtanemi; Brihaspati ordain weal unto us. OM. Peace! peace! peace!" (193-96)

10. Selection from the Taittiriya Upanishad

a. Bhûr, Bhuvar, Suvar

"Bhûr, Bhuvar and Suvar, these are the three Words of His naming. Verily the Rishi Mahachamasya made known a fourth to these, which is Mahas. It is Brahman, it is the Self, and the other gods are his members.

Bhûr, it is this world; Bhuvar, it is the sky; Suvar, it is the other world: but Mahas is the Sun. By the Sun all these worlds

increase and prosper.

Bhûr, it is Fire; Bhuvar, it is Air; Suvar, it is the Sun: but Mahas is the Moon. By the Moon all these shining fires increase and prosper.

Bhûr, it is the hymns of the Rigveda; Bhuvar, it is the hymns of the Sâma; Suvar, it is the hymns of the Yajur: but Mahas is the Eternal. By the Eternal all these Vedas increase and prosper.

Bhûr, it is the main breath; Bhuvar, it is the lower breath; Suvar, it is the breath pervasor: but Mahas is food. By food all these breaths increase and prosper.

These are the four & they are fourfold; – four Words of His naming and each is four again. He who knoweth these knoweth the Eternal, and to him all the Gods carry the offering." (210)

b. ॐ (OM)

"OM is the Eternal, OM is all this universe. OM is the syllable of assent: saying OM! let us hear, they begin the citation. With OM they sing the hymns of the Sama; with OM SHOM they pronounce the Shastra. With OM the priest officiating at the sacrifice sayeth the response. With OM Brahma beginneth creation (or With OM the chief priest giveth sanction). With OM one sanctioneth the burnt offering. With OM the Brahmin ere he expound the Knowledge, crieth "May I attain the Eternal." The Eternal verily he attaineth." (212)

11. Selections from the Svetasvatara Upanishad

a. Chapter V, Sloka 14

"भावग्राह्यमनीडाख्यं भावाभावकरं शिवम् ।
कलासर्गकरं देवं ये विदुस्ते जहुस्तनुम् ॥१४॥

14. Shiva the Master of all becomings and not-becomings and from Him this whole creation floweth and it is only one

part of Shiva; but He is not named after any nest of the wingèd Spirit, and the heart alone can apprehend Him. They who know Shiva, the Blessed One, abandon body for ever." (243)

b. The Great Secret of the Vedanta, Chapter VI, Slokas 5 to 23

आदिः स संयोगनिमित्तहेतुः परस्त्रिकालादकलोऽपि दृष्टः ।
तं विश्वरुपं भवभूतमीडयं देवं स्वचित्तस्थमुपास्य पूर्वम् ॥५॥

5. Lo we have beheld Him & He is the Beginning and the Cause of all Causes whereby these elements meet together & form ariseth; the past, the present and the future are this side of Him and Time hath no part in Him. Let us worship the Ancient of Days in our own hearts who sitteth. Let us wait upon God who must be adored, for the world is His shape and the Universe is but His becoming.

स वृक्षकालाकृतिभिः परोऽन्यो यस्मात्प्रपञ्चः परिवर्ततेऽयम् ।
धर्मावहं पापनुदं भगेशं ज्ञात्वात्मस्थममृतं विश्वधाम ॥६॥

6. Time & Form and the Tree of Things, none of these is He for He is more than they & it is from Him that this Cosmos beginneth. We will know this Master of grace & glory for He cometh to us carrying righteousness in His hand & He driveth Sin from its strong places. We will know Him for He is in our Self & immortal & the World's foundation.

तमीश्वराणां परमं महेश्वरं तं देवतानां परमं च दैवतम् ।
पतिं पतीनां परमं परस्ताद् विदाम देवं भुवनेशमीड्यम् ॥७॥

7. We will know this Mightiest one who is far above all the mighty – this summit of the gods & their godhead, King of Kings and Lord of Lords, who towereth high above all summits & greatnesses. Let us learn of God for He is this World's Master & all shall adore Him.

न तस्य कार्यं करणं च विद्यते न तत्समश्चाभ्यधिकश्च दृश्यते ।
परास्य शक्तिर्विविधैव श्रूयते स्वाभाविकी ज्ञानबलक्रिया च ॥८॥

8. God needeth not to do anything neither hath He any organ of doing; there is none greater than He nor do we see any that is His equal – for His power is far over all, only men hear of it under a thousand names & various fashions. Lo the strength of Him and the works of Him and His Knowledge, they are self-efficient & their own cause & nature.

न तस्य कश्चित् पतिरस्ति लोके न चेशिता नैव च तस्य लिङ्गम् ।
स कारणं करणाधिपाधिपो न चास्य कश्चिज्जनिता न चाधिपः ॥९॥

9. He hath no master in all this world, there is none that shall rule over Him. Nor feature nor distinction hath He; for He is begetting cause and sovran over the lords of these natural organs, but Himself hath no begetter neither any sovran.

यस्तन्तुनाभ इव तन्तुभिः प्रधानजैः स्वभावतः ।
देव एकः स्वमावृणोत् स नो दधाद् ब्रह्माप्ययम् ॥१०॥

10. Even as is the spider that out of himself fashioneth his own web, so is God One & nought else existeth but by his own nature covereth Himself up in the threads He hath spun out of primal matter. May the One God ordain unto us departure into His Eternal

एको देवः सर्वभूतेषु गूढः सर्वव्यापी सर्वभूतान्तरात्मा ।
कर्माध्यक्षः सर्वभूताधिवासः साक्षी चेता केवलो निर्गुणश्च ॥११॥

11. One God who alone is & He lurketh hidden in every creature for He pervadeth and is the inmost Self of all beings, He presideth over all work and is the home of all things living. He is the Mighty Witness who relateth thought with thought and again He is the Absolute in whom mood is not nor any attribute.

एको वशी निष्क्रियाणां बहूनामेकं बीजं बहुधा यः करोति ।
तमात्मस्थं येऽनुपश्यन्ति धीरास्तेषां सुखं शाश्वतं नेतरेषाम् ॥१२॥

12. One God & alone He controlleth the many who have

themselves no separate work nor purpose; and He develop peth one seed into many kinds of creatures; the strong-hearted behold God in their own Self, therefore for them is everlasting bliss and not for others.

नित्योऽनित्यानां चेतनश्चेतनानामेको बहूनां यो विदधाति कामान् ।
तत्कारणं सांख्ययोगाधिगम्यं ज्ञात्वा देवं मुच्यते सर्वपाशैः ॥१३॥

13. One Eternal of all these that pass & are not, One conscious in all consciousnesses; He being One ordereth the desires of many; He alone is the great Source to which Sankhya and Yoga bring us. If thou know God thou shalt break free from every sort of bondage.

न तत्र सूर्यो भाति न चन्द्रतारकं नेमा विद्युतो भान्ति कुतोऽयमग्निः ।
तमेव भान्तमनुभाति सर्वं तस्य भासा सर्वमिदं विभाति ॥१४॥

14. There the sun cannot shine and the moon has no splendour; the stars are blind; there our lightnings flash not neither any earthly fire; all that is bright is but the shadow of His brightness and by His shining all this shineth.

एको हंसो भुवनस्यास्य मध्ये स एवाग्निः सलिले संनिविष्टः ।
तमेव विदित्वानि मृत्युमेति नान्यः पन्था विद्यतेऽयनाय ॥१५॥

15. One Swan of Being in the heart of all this Universe & He is Fire that lieth deep in the heart of water. By Knowledge of Him, the soul passeth beyond the pursuit of Death and there is no other road for the great passage.

स विश्वकृद् विश्वविदात्मयोनिर्ज्ञः कालकारो गुणी सर्वविद्यः ।
प्रधानक्षेत्रज्ञपतिर्गुणेशः संसारमोक्षस्थितिबन्धहेतुः ॥१६॥

16. He hath made all and knoweth all; for He is the womb out of which Self ariseth, & being possessed of the Nature Moods He becometh Time's Maker and discerneth all things. And Matter is subject to Him & the Spirit in Man that cogniseth His field of matter & the modes of Nature are His servants. He therefore is the cause of this coming into

phenomena & of the release from phenomena – &because of Him is their endurance & because of Him is their bondage.

स तन्मयो ह्यमृत ईशसंस्थो ज्ञः सर्वगो भुवनस्यास्य गोप्ता ।
य ईशेऽस्य जगतो नित्यमेव नान्यो हेतुर्विद्यत ईशनाय ॥१७॥

17. Lo He is Immortal because He is utter existence; but He houseth Himself in the Lord & is the Knower, the Omnipresent that standeth on guard over this His universe, yea He ruleth all this moving world for ever and for ever, and there is no other source of lordship and kingliness.

यो ब्रह्माणं विदधाति पूर्वं यो वै वेदांश्च प्रहिणोति तस्मै ।
तं ह देवमात्मबुद्धिप्रकाशं मुमुक्षुर्वै शरणमहं प्रपद्ये ॥१८॥

18. He ordained Brahma the Creator from of old and sent forth unto him the Veda, I will hasten unto God who standeth self-revealed in the Spirit & in the Understanding. I will take refuge in the Lord for my salvation;

निष्कलं निष्क्रियं शान्तं निरवद्यं निरञ्जनम् ।
अमृतस्य परं सेतुं दग्धेन्धनमिवानलम् ॥१९॥

19. Who hath neither parts nor works for He is utterly tranquil, faultless, stainless, therefore He is the one great bridge that carrieth us over to Immortality, even as when a fire hath burnt all its fuel.

यदा चर्मवदाकाशं वेष्टयिष्यन्ति मानवाः ।
तदा देवमविज्ञाय दुःखस्यान्तो भविष्यति ॥२०॥

20. When the sons of men shall fold up ether like a skin and wrap the heavens round them like a garment, then alone without knowledge of the Lord our God shall the misery of the World have an ending.

तपःप्रभावाद् देवप्रसादाच्च ब्रह्म ह श्वेताश्वतरोऽथ विद्वान् ।
अत्याश्रमिभ्यः परमं पवित्रं प्रोवाच सम्यगृषिसङ्घजुष्टम् ॥२१॥

21. By the might of his devotion & the grace of God in his

being Svetasvatara hereafter knew the Eternal & he came to the renouncers of the worldly life and truly declared unto them the Most High & Pure God, to whom the companies of seers resort for ever.

वेदान्ते परमं गुह्यं पुराकल्पे प्रचोदितम् ।
नाप्रशान्ताय दातव्यं नापुत्रायाशिष्याय वा पुनः ॥२२॥

22. This is the great secret of the Vedanta which was declared in former times, not on hearts untranquilled to be squandered nor men sonless nor on one who hath no disciples.

यस्य देवे परा भक्तिर्यथा देवे तथा गुरौ ।
तस्यैते कथिता ह्यर्थाः प्रकाशन्ते महात्मनः प्रकाशन्ते महात्मनः ॥२३॥

23. But whosoever hath supreme love & adoration for the Lord and as for the Lord, so likewise for the Master, to that Mighty Soul these great matters when they are told become clear of themselves, yea to the Great Soul of him they are manifest." (245-49)

12. Selections from the Chhandogya Upanishad

a. Chapter I and the First Section, Slokas 1 to 5

"ओमित्येतदक्षरमुद्गीथमुपासीत । ओमिति ह्युद्गायति तस्योपव्याख्यानम् ॥१॥

1. Worship ye OM, the eternal syllable. OM is Udgitha, the chant of Samaveda; for with OM they begin the chant of Sama. And this is the exposition of OM.

एषां भूतानां पृथिवी रसः पृथिव्या आपो रसः । अपामोषधयो रस ओषधीनां पुरुषो रसः पुरुषस्य वाग्रसो वाच ऋग्रस ऋचः साम रसः साम्न उद्गीथो रसः ॥२॥

2. Earth is the substantial essence of all these creatures and the waters are the essence of earth; herbs of the field are the essence of the waters; man is the essence of the herbs. Speech is the essence of man, Rigveda the essence of Speech, Sama the essence of Rik. Of Sama OM is the essence.

स एष रसानां रसतमः परमः परार्ध्योऽष्टमो यदुद्गीथः ॥३॥

3. This is the eighth essence of the essences and the really essential, the highest and it belongeth to the upper hemisphere of things.

कतमा कतमर्क् कतमत् कतमत्साम कतमः कतम उद्गीथ इति विमृष्टं भवति ॥४॥

4. Which among things & which again is Rik; which among things and which again is Sama; which among things and which again is OM of the Udgitha – this is now pondered.

वागेवर्क् प्राणः सामोमित्येतदक्षरमुद्गीथः । तद्वा एतन्मिथुनं यद्वाक् च प्राणश्चर्क् च साम च ॥५॥

5. Speech is Rik, Breath is Sama; the Imperishable is OM of Udgitha. These are the divine lovers, Speech & Breath, Rik & Sama." (250-51)

b. The Vedic Sanscrit

"The Sanscrit has always been a language in which one word is naturally capable of several meanings and therefore carries with it a number of varied associations. It lends itself, therefore, with peculiar ease and naturalness to the figure called slesha or embrace, the marriage of different meanings in a single form of words. Paronomasia in English is mere punning, a tour-de-force, an incongruity, a grotesque and artificial play of humour. Paronomasia, slesha, in Sanscrit, though in form precisely the same thing, is not punning, not incongruous but easily appropriate, not grotesque or artificial, but natural and often inevitable, not used for intellectual horseplay, but with a serious, often a high and worthy purpose. It has been abused by rhetorical writers; yet great and noble poetical effects have been obtained by its aid, as, for instance, when the same form of words has been used to convey open blame & cover secret praise. Nevertheless in classical Sanscrit, the language has become a little too rigid for the perfect use of the figure; it is too literary, too minutely

grammatised; it has lost the memory of its origins. A sense of cleverness and artifice suggests itself to us because meanings known to be distinct and widely separate are brought together in a single activity of the word which usually suggests them only in different contexts. But in the Vedic slesha we have no sense of cleverness or artifice, because the writers themselves had none. The language was still near to its origins and had, not perhaps an intellectual, but still an instinctive memory of them. With less grammatical and as little etymological knowledge as Panini and the other classical grammarians, the Rishis had better possession of the soul of Sanscrit speech. The different meanings of a word, though distinct, were not yet entirely separate; many links yet survived between them which were afterwards lost; the gradations of sense remained, the hint of the word's history, the shading off from one sense to another. Ardha now means half and it means nothing else. To the Vedic man it carried other associations. Derived from the root ridh which meant originally to go and join, then to add, to increase, to prosper, it bore the sense of place of destination, the person to whom I direct myself, or simply place; increase, also addition, a part added and so simply a part or half. To have used it in any other sense than "place of destination" or as at once "half, part" and "a place of destination" would not be a violence to the Vedic mind, but a natural association of ideas. So when they spoke of the higher worlds of Sacchidananda as Parardha, they meant at once the higher half of man's inner existence & the param dháma or high seat of Vishnou in other worlds and, in addition, thought of that high seat as the destination of our upward movement. All this rose at once to their mind when the word was uttered, naturally, easily and, by long association, inevitably.

OM is a word in instance. When the word was spoken as a solemn affirmation, everyone thought of the Pranava in the Veda, but no one could listen to the word OM without thinking also of the Brahman in Its triple manifestation and in

Its transcendent being. The word, aksharam, meaning both syllable & unshifting, when coupled with OM, is a word in instance; "OM the syllable" meant also, inevitably, to the Vedic mind "Brahman, who changes not nor perishes". The words udgátha and udgáyati are words in instance. In classical Sanscrit the prepositional prefix to the verb was dead and bore only a conventional significance or had no force at all; udgáyati or pragáyati is not very different from the simple gáyati; all mean merely sing or chant. But in Veda the preposition is still living & joins its verb or separates itself as it pleases; therefore it keeps its full meaning always. In Vedanta the power of separation is lost, but the separate force remains. Again the roots gí and gá in classical Sanscrit mean to sing and have resigned the sense of going to their kinsman gam; but in Vedic times, the sense of going was still active and common. They meant also to express, to possess, to hold; but these meanings once common to the family are now entrusted to particular members of it, gir, for expression, grih, for holding. Gáthá, gíthá, gána, gáyati, gátá, gátu, meant to the Vedic mind both going and singing, udgátha meant ascension as well as casting upward the voice or the soul in song. When the Vedic singer said Ud gáyámi, the physical idea was that, perhaps, of the song rising upward, but he had also the psychical idea of the soul rising up in song to the gods and fulfilling in its meeting with them and entering into them its expressed aspiration." (259-61)

c. The System of Four Yugas and the Period of the Chhandogya

"The Chhandogya seems to be the most ancient of the extant Upanishads. It speaks of Krishna, son of Devaki, and Dhritarashtra Vaichitravirya in a tone that would justify us in assuming that it regarded them not as ancient and far-off names but as men who had walked the earth in living memory. The movement of philosophic speculation of which the

Upanishads are the extant record, was an attempt to pass from the old ritualistic *karma* to the freedom of the *jnanamarga*. According to the writer of the Gita, this was not a new movement, but a return to a past and lost discipline; for Sri Krishna says to Arjuna of the true or *sajnan karmamarga* he reveals to him, "This is the imperishable Yoga I declared unto Vivaswan, Vivaswan revealed it to Manu and Manu to Ixvacu told it. Thus was it known to the royal sages by hereditary transmission, till by the great lapse of time this yoga was lost, O scourge of thy foes. This is the same ancient Yoga that I have told unto [thee] today, because thou art my lover and my friend; for this is the highest of all the inner truths."

The Dwapara Yuga was the age of Kuru preeminence and the Kurus were a great practical, warlike, ritualistic, juristic race of the Roman type, with little of the speculative temper or moral enthusiasm of the eastern Coshalas, Videhas, Kashis, Chedis. The West of India has always been noted for its practical, soldierly, commercial bent of mind in comparison with the imaginative and idealistic Eastern races and the scholastic, logical and metaphysical South. According to the Hindu theory of the Yugas, it is in the Dwapara that everything is codified, ritualised, formalised. In the Satya Vishnu descends among men as Yajna. Yajna is the spirit of adoration and sacrifice, and in the Satya yajna reigns in the hearts of men, and there is no need of external ritual, external sacrifices, elaborate law, government, castes, classes and creeds. Men follow the law by the necessity of their purified nature and their complete knowledge. The kingdom of God & the Veda are in the hearts of His people. In the Treta the old perfect order begins to break and Vishnu descends as the *chakravarti raja*, the warrior and ruler, Kartavirya, Parsurama, Rama, and the sword, the law and the written Veda are instituted to govern men. But there is still great elasticity and freedom and within certain limits men follow the healthy impulse of their nature, only slightly corrupted by the first descent from purity.

It is in the Dwapara that form and rule have to take the place of the idea and the spirit as the true governors of religion, ethics and society. Vishnu then descends as Vyasa, the great codifier and systematiser of knowledge.

At the end of the Dwapara, when Sri Krishna came, this tendency had reached its extreme development, and the form tended to take the place of the idea and the rule to take the place of the spirit not only in the outward conduct but in the hearts of men. Nevertheless an opposite tendency had already begun. Dhritarashtra himself was an earnest inquirer into the inner meaning of things. Great Vedantists were living and teaching, such as the rishi Ghora to whom Sri Krishna himself went for the word of illumination. Sri Krishna was the intellectual force that took up all these scattered tendencies and, by breaking down the strong formalism of the Dwapara, prepared the work of the Kali. In the Gita he denounces those who will not go outside the four corners of the Veda and philosophises the whole theory of the sacrificial system; he contemptuously dismisses the guidance of the set ethical systems and establishes an inward and spiritual rule of conduct. To many of his time he seems to have appeared as a baneful and destructive portent; like all great revolutionary innovators, he is denounced by Bhurisravas as a well known misleader of men and corrupter of morals. It is the work of the Kali Yuga to destroy everything by questioning everything in order to establish after a struggle between the forces of purity and impurity a new harmony of life and knowledge in another Satyayuga.

After the destruction of the conservative Kurus and Panchalas at Kurukshetra, the development of the Vedanta commenced and went on progressing till in its turn it reached its extreme & excessive development in the teachings of Buddha and Shankaracharya. But at the period of the Chhandogya it is in its early stage of development." (263-65)

d. The Story of Satyakama Jabala

"The story of Satyakama is one of the most typical in the Upanishad. It is full of sidelights on early Vedantic teaching, Yogic sadhan and that deep psychical knowledge which the writer took for granted in the hearers of his work. So much knowledge, indeed, is thus taken for granted that it is impossible for anyone not himself a practiser of Yoga, to understand anything but its broad conclusions. The modern commentators, Shankara included, have approached it in order to establish particular metaphysical doctrines, not to elucidate its entire significance. I shall take the side that has been neglected; for what to the European inquirer are merely "the babblings of children", bear to the Yogin an aspect of infinite truth, value and significance.

Chapter II

"Now Satyakama Jabala spoke unto his mother Jabala and said 'Mother, I shall go and lead the life of the Brahmacharin; tell me what is my *gotra*.' But she answered him, 'This I know not, my son, of what gotra thou art; resorting to many as a serving woman in my youth I got thee, therefore I know not of what gotra thou art. But Jabala is my name and Satyakama is thine, Satyakama Jabala therefore call thyself.' So he came to Haridrumata the Gautama and said, 'I would stay with my Lord as a Brahmacharin, let me therefore enter under thee.' And he said to him, 'My son, of what gotra art thou?' But the other answered, 'This, alas, I know not of what gotra I am; I asked my mother and she answered me, Resorting to many in my youth as a serving woman I got thee, therefore I know not of what gotra thou art, but Jabala is my name and Satyakama is thine; Satyakama Jabala therefore am I.' And he said to him, 'None who is not a Brahmin can be strong enough to say this; gather the firewood, my son, I will take thee under me, for thou didst not depart from the truth.' He admitted him and put forth four hundred cows weak and lean and said, 'These, my son, do thou follow as a herd,' and he set the cows

in motion and said, 'Return not until they are a thousand.' And he fared abroad with them during the years till they were a thousand."

So the story opens, and simple as it seems, it already contains several points of capital importance in understanding the ideas of the time and the principles of the old Vedantic *sadhana*. Satyakama, as we gather from other passages, was one of the great Vedantic teachers of the time immediately previous to the composition of the Chhandogya Upanishad. But his birth is the meanest possible. His mother is a serving girl, not a *dasi* attached to a permanent household whose son could have named his father and his gotra, but a *parichārika*, serving for hire at various houses, "resorting to many", and therefore unable to name her son's father. Satyakama has, therefore, neither caste, nor gotra, nor any position in life. It appears from this story as from others that, although the system of the four castes was firmly established, it counted as no obstacle in the pursuit of knowledge and spiritual advancement. The Kshatriya could teach the Brahmin, the illegitimate and fatherless son of the serving girl could be guru to the purest and highest blood in the land. This is nothing new or improbable, for it has been so throughout the history of Hinduism and the shutting out of anyone from spiritual truth and culture on the ground of caste is an invention of later times. In the nature of things the usual rule would be for the greater number of spiritual preceptors to be found in the higher castes, but this was the result of natural laws and not of a fixed prohibition. It is noticeable also from this and other instances that it was the father's position that fixed the son's, and the mother's seems to have been of very minor importance. The question about the gotra was of importance, probably, with regard to the rites and other circumstances of initiation. Satyakama must have known perfectly well that he was the illegitimate son of a serving woman, but he wished to know his father's name and gotra because he would have to tell it to

his guru. Even after knowing the worst, he persisted in his intention of taking up spiritual studies, so that he can have had no fear of being rejected on account of his base origin. His guru, impressed by his truthfulness, says, "None but a Brahmin would have the moral strength to make such an avowal." It can hardly be meant by this that Satyakama's father must have been a Brahmin, but that since he had the Brahmin qualities, he must be accepted as a Brahmin. Even the Kshatriya would have hesitated to speak so truthfully, because the Kshatriya is by nature a lover of honour and shuns dishonour, he has the sense of *mana* and *apamana*; but the true Brahmin is *samo manapamanayoh*, he accepts indifferently worldly honour and dishonour and cares only for the truth and the right. In short the Gautama concludes that, whatever may be Satyakama's physical birth, spiritually he is of the highest order and especially fitted for a sadhaka; *na satyad agat*, he did not depart from the truth.

The second point is the first action of the guru after the ceremony of initiation. Instead of beginning the instruction of this promising disciple he sends him out with four hundred miserable kine, more likely to die than prosper and increase, and forbids him to return till he has increased them to a thousand. Wherefore this singular arrangement? Was it a test? Was it a discipline? But Haridrumata had already seen that his new disciple had the high Brahmin qualities. What more did he require?

The perfect man is a fourfold being and one object of Vedantic discipline is to be the perfect man, *siddha*. When Christ said, "Be ye perfect as your Father in heaven is perfect," he was only repeating in popular language the Vedantic teaching of *sadharmya*, likeness to God." (265-67)