

## CHAPTER II.

THE QUEST OF THE REAL—BRAHMAN AND MAYA,  
THE SELF AND THE WORLD-FICTION.

" A presence that disturbs him with the joy  
Of elevated thoughts ; a sense sublime  
Of something far more deeply interfused,  
Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,  
And the round ocean, and the living air,  
And the blue sky, and in the mind of man ;  
A motion and a spirit that impels  
All thinking things, all objects of all thought,  
And rolls through all things."—WORDSWORTH.

" Nature itself plainly intimates to us that there is some such absolutely perfect Being, incomprehensible to our finite understandings, by certain passions which it hath implanted in us, that otherwise would want an object to display themselves upon ; namely, those of devout veneration, adoration, and admiration, together with a kind of ecstasy and pleasing horror."—CUDWORTH.

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Fixity amidst  
the flux of  
things.

LOOKING behind them and before them, the Indian sages, meditating in the solitude of the jungle, find that the series of lives through which each sentient thing is passing is flowing forward without a pause, like a river. Is the river to lose itself at last in the sea ? The sum of all the several series of lives, and of all the spheres through which the living soul proceeds, is also in perpetual flow. The sum of migrating forms of life, and of the spheres through which they migrate, is the ever-moving world. Everything in it is coming into being and passing out of being, but never is. The sum of lives and of the spheres of living things is not real, for it comes and goes, rises and passes away, without ceasing, and that alone is real that neither passes into being

nor passes out of being, but simply is. To be is to last, to endure. What is there that lasts? CHAP. II.

Every one of the countless modes of life that perpetually replace each other is a new form of misery, or at best of fleeting pleasure tainted with pain, and nothing else is to be looked for in all the varieties of untried being. In every stream of lives there is the varied anguish of birth, of care, hunger, weariness, bereavement, sickness, decay, and death, through embodiment after embodiment, and through æon after æon. Evil thoughts, evil words, and evil deeds push the doer downward in the scale of sentiencies, and into temporary places of torment. Good thoughts, good words, and good deeds push the doer upwards into higher embodiments, and into temporary paradises. It is the same wearisome journey above and below, miseries and tainted pleasures that make way for new miseries, and no end to it all. Good no less than evil activity is an imperfection, for it only prolongs the stream of lives. Action is the root of evil. Is there nothing that rests inert and impassive, untouched with all these miseries of metempsychosis?

Repose and peace amidst the miseries of life.

Again, the scenes through which the sage finds himself to be migrating are manifold and varied, and present themselves in a duality of experience,—the subject on the one side, the object on the other. The more he checks the senses and strives to gaze upon the inner light, when he sits rigid and insensate seeking ecstasy,—the more this plurality tends to fade away, the more this duality tends to melt into a unity, a one and only being. A thrill of awe runs through the Indian sage as he finds that this pure and characterless being, this light within the heart, in the light of which all things shine, is the very Self within him, freed from the flow of experiences for a while by a rigorous effort of abstraction. A perfect inertion, a perfect abstraction, have enabled him to reach the last residue of all abstrac-

Unty amidst the plurality of experience.

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tion, the fontal essence, the inner light, the light beyond the darkness of the fleeting forms of conscious life.

These are found at intervals in sleep without a dream.

Times there are, moreover, when he wakes from sleep unbroken with a dream, and is aware that he has slept at ease, untouched for a space with the miseries of metempsychosis. ( Dreamless sleep, like ecstasy itself, is a transient union with the one and only being that perdures, and does not pass away as all things else are passing, that is inert and untouched with the miseries of migration, that is beyond the duality of subject and object, and beyond the plurality of the things of experience. Dreamless sleep is, like ecstasy, an unalloyed beatitude; it is a state in which all differences are merged, and for the sleeper the world has melted away. His very personality has passed back into the impersonality of the true Self; and if only this state could be prolonged for ever, it would be a final refuge from the miseries of life.

They are found permanently in union with the characterless Self.

Thus, then, that which only is, while all things else come and go, pass, and pass away; that which is untouched with the hunger, thirst, and pain, and sorrow that wait upon all forms of life; that which is one while all things else are many; that which stands above and beyond the duality of all modes of consciousness, is the Self, the one Self within all sentiencies, the spiritual principle that permeates and vitalises all things, and gives life and light to all things living, from a tuft of grass up to the highest deity. There is one thing that is, and only one—the light within, the light in which these pleasures and pains, these fleeting scenes and semblances, come and go, pass into and pass out of being. This primordial light, this light of lights, beyond the darkness of the self-feigned world-fiction, this fontal unity of undifferented being, is pure being, pure thought, pure bliss. It is thought in which there is neither thinker nor thing; bliss without self-gratulation, bliss in which there is nothing that re-

joices and nothing-rejoiced at; the unspeakable blessedness of exemption from vicissitude and misery. "All things live upon portions of its joy." "Who could breathe, who could live, if there were not this bliss within the ether in the heart?" It is not an empty abstraction; that the Indian mystic in his hour of ecstasy knows well. It is positive and self-affirming; for, says Śankarāchārya, the last residuum of all abstraction is not nonentity but entity. It is the object<sup>1</sup> of the notion "I," and is present to every soul. It is above and beyond<sup>2</sup> all modes of conscious thought. "Words turn back from it, with the mind, not reaching it." It can only be spoken of as "not this, not that," spoken of in negatives, and by unsaying what is said. "It is thought," says the Kena Upanishad, "by him that thinks it not; he that thinks it knows it not; it is unknown to them that know it, known to them that know it not." It is at once necessitated to thought and withheld from positive conception: *cognoscendo ignoratur et ignorando cognoscitur*.

which is the object of the notion "I."

Such is the Brahman, the ultimate spiritual reality of primitive Indian philosophy, out of which, in its everlasting union with its counterfeit, Māyā, the self-feigning world-fiction; proceeds the phantasmagory of metempsychosis. Avidyā, Māyā, Śakti, the illusion, the fiction, the power that resides within the Self as the future tree resides within the seed,<sup>3</sup>—it is out of this, overspreading the one and only Self, that all things living, from a tuft of grass to the highest deity, with all the spheres through which they migrate, have emanated to form a world of semblances. They are all alike figments of this inexplicable world-fiction, the cosmical illusion.<sup>4</sup> Personal souls and their environments are fleeting and phantasmagorical, the dreams of

Brahman, the impersonal Self.

<sup>1</sup> *Ahampratyaya* viśhaya, aham-pradapratyayalakṣhitārtha.

<sup>2</sup> *Sarvabuddhipratyayātta*.

<sup>3</sup> *Vaṭakanikāyām vaṭa iva*, Śankara.

<sup>4</sup> *Vivramāyā, vivrajanani kaktiḥ*.

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the spirit of the world;<sup>1</sup> and being such, they may be left behind, if by any means the sage can wake to their unreality, and find his true being in the original essence, the one Self, the only light of life. If only he knows it, he is already this Self, this Brahman, ever pure, intelligent, and free.<sup>2</sup> Pure as untouched by the world-fiction, passionless, inert; intelligent as self-luminous, giving light to all the movements of the minds of living things; free as unembodied, exempt from the miseries of metempsychosis.

Etymology of  
the word  
Brahman.

The original idea of the term Brahman is indicated in its etymology. It is a derivative of the root *brih*, to grow, to increase. Thus the scholiast Ānandagiri, with reference to a passage in which Brahman is identified with one of its manifestations, the breath of life, says, "Brahman is from *brih*, to grow, and every one knows how the body grows by respiration and other functions." And in another place, in his gloss on Śankara's commentary on the Taittiriyaka Upanishad, "The term Brahman comes from *brih*, to grow, to expand, and is expressive of growth and greatness. This Brahman is a vastness unlimited in space, in time, and in content, for there is nothing known as a limit to it, and the term applies to a thing of transcendent greatness." Perhaps the earliest sense of the term was the plastic power at work in the process of things, viewed as an energy of thought or spirit, a power present everywhere unseen, that manifests itself most fully in vegetable, animal, and human life. The cause of all changes in the order of metempsychosis, it is itself unchangeable. It has nothing before it or after it, nothing within it or without it.<sup>3</sup> It transcends space and time, and every kind of object.<sup>4</sup> It is the uncaused cause of all, but in its real nature, and putting the world-fiction and its figments

Brahman  
in Sanscrit.

<sup>1</sup> Jagadātman, i.e., Brahman manifesting itself in *Īvara*.

<sup>2</sup> *Nityaruddhabuddhamukta*.

<sup>3</sup> *Tad etad brahmāpūrvaṃ anāparam anantaram avāhyam.*

<sup>4</sup> *Deśakālavishayātivartin.*

out of view, it is, in the phrase of Śankara's commentary on the Śvetāśvatara Upanishad, "neither cause nor not cause, nor both cause and not cause."

"It is," in the words of the Kena Upanishad, "other than the known and above the unknown." To quote the scholium of Ānandagiri, that which is other than the knowing subject is either known or unknown, and thus the text, by denying in regard to Brahman both the known and the unknown, identifies Brahman with the Self of the knowing subject.

Brahman incogitable and ineffable.

"The eye reaches it not, speech reaches it not, thought reaches it not: we know not, we understand not, how one should teach it: it is other than the known, above the unknown. Thus have we heard of the ancients, who proclaimed it to us.

"That which is not uttered by the voice, that by which the voice is uttered: know thou that that only is the Self, and not that which men meditate upon as such.

"That which is not thought by the thought, that by which the thought is thought: know thou that that only is the Self, and not that which men meditate upon as such."

"Thought," says Śankara in his exposition of this text, "is the internal organ, mind, intelligence. Thought is the inward sense or faculty that co-operates with all the several organs of sense and motion. Thus the text, 'Desire, volition, doubt, faith, patience and impatience, and shame, and thought, and fear,—all this is that inner sense.' The inner sense presents itself only in the form of desire, volition, and the other modifications, and therefore a man cannot recognise with his inward sense the intelligential light that gives light to those modifications. This pure light actuates the inner sense by irradiation; and as this pure light or Self transcends all objects of outer and inner sense, the inward sense is incompetent to approach it. The inward sense can only operate when enlightened by the intelligential.

Brahman the light that irradiates the mental modes.

light within, and therefore it is that the expositors of Brahman speak of the mind and its modifications as permeated and objectivised by the Self within." In plain words, when we are told that it is the Self that thinks the thought, we are to understand, in the language of the Indian mystics, that it is the Self that gives the light to the mental modes in which they shine—that is, it is the Self that causes the otherwise unconscious modes to become the conscious modes of mind. To return to the text of the *Kenā Upanishad*.

"That which one sees not with the eye, that by which the eyes see: know thou that that only is the Self, and not that which men meditate upon as such."

"That which one hears not with the ear, that by which the ear is heard: know thou that that only is the Self, and not that which men meditate upon as such."

"That which one breathes not with the breath, that by which the breath is breathed: know thou that that only is the Self, and not that which men meditate upon as such."

Similarly in the *Bṛihadāranyaka Upanishad*:—

"This same imperishable is that which sees unseen, hears unheard, thinks unthought, and knows unknown. There is no other than this that sees, no other than this that hears, no other than this that thinks, no other than this that knows. Over this imperishable the expanse is woven woof and warp.<sup>1</sup>

"As in dreamless sleep the soul sees, but sees not this or that, so the Self in seeing sees not; for there is no intermission in the sight of the Self that sees; its vision is one that passes not away; and there is nothing second to that, other than that, apart from that, that it should see."

What is meant here is that the thought or intelligence with which the Self is one, is something beyond

<sup>1</sup> The expanse is here a synonym for *Māyā*, the self-feigning world-fiction.

the relation of subject and object; <sup>1</sup> it is, in the words of Rāmatīrtha's commentary on the Upadeśasahasrī, an eternal objectless cognition.<sup>2</sup> The Self is said to be omniscient, but the reader must not be misled; this only means that it is self-luminous, that it gives light to all things, and to all the modifications of the minds of sentient beings. Withdraw the light of the Self, the Indian sages say, and the whole process of things will lapse into blindness, darkness, nothingness. The omniscience of the Self is its irradiation of all things.<sup>3</sup> To cite Ānandagiri,<sup>4</sup> "It is not literally, but by a figure that the Self is said to be all-knowing. The cognitions of the everyday thinker in the sensible world presuppose faculties and organs; the knowledge that is the essence of the idea or Self does not presuppose faculties and organs, for in that case it could not exist, as it does exist, in the state of dreamless sleep, in which the functions of the faculties and organs have ceased."

It will be well here to point out once for all that we are to tread warily among these epithets of Brahman. If we are to use the language of European philosophy, we must pronounce the Brahman of the Upanishads to be *unconscious*, for consciousness begins where duality begins. The ideal or spiritual reality of Brahman is not convertible with conscious spirit. On the contrary, the spiritual reality that, according to the poets of the Upanishads, underlies all things, has *per se* no cognition of objects; it transcends the relation of subject and object; it lies beyond duality. It is true that these poets speak of it as existence, intelligence, beatitude. But we must be cautious. Brahman is not intelligence in our sense of the word. The intelligence, the thought, that is the Self and which the Self is, is described as eternal knowledge, without objects, the imparting of light to the cognitions of migrating sentiences. This

Brahman not to be confused with the personal absolute, or Christian Deity.

<sup>1</sup> *Jñātrijñeyabhāvātirikta.*

<sup>2</sup> *Nityam nirvishayam jñānam.*

<sup>3</sup> *Sarvārabhāsakatva.*

<sup>4</sup> *Sarvajñam brahmopacharyate.*

CHAP. II. thought is characterless and eternal; their cognitions are characterized, and come and go. Brahman is beatitude. But we must again be cautious. Brahman is not beatitude in the ordinary sense of the word. It is a bliss beyond the distinction of subject and object, a bliss the poets of the Upanishads liken to dreamless sleep. Brahman *per se* is neither God nor conscious God; and on this it is necessary to insist, to exclude the baseless analogies to Christian theology that have sometimes been imagined by writers, Indian and European. Be it then repeated that the Indian philosophers everywhere affirm that Brahman *is* knowledge, not that Brahman *has* knowledge; that this knowledge is without an object known, and that omniscience is predicable of Brahman only by a metaphor. If we were to misinterpret such knowledge by the word "consciousness," we should still have to say that Brahma *is* consciousness, not that Brahman *has* consciousness or is a conscious spirit.

To return to the text of the Bṛihadāraṇyaka.

Brahman the pure light of characterless knowledge.

"As in dreamless sleep the soul hears, but hears not this or that, so the Self in hearing hears not; for there is no intermission in the hearing of the Self that hears; its audition is one that passes not away; and there is nothing second to that, other than that, apart from that, that it should hear.

"As in dreamless sleep the soul thinks, but thinks not this or that, so in thinking the Self thinks not; for there is no intermission in the thought of the Self that thinks; its thought is one that passes not away; and there is nothing second to that, other than that, apart from that, that it should think.

"As in dreamless sleep the soul knows, but knows not this or that, so in knowing the Self knows not; for there is no intermission in the knowledge of the Self that knows, for its knowledge is one that passes not away; and there is nothing second to that, other than that, apart from that, that it should know."

When overspread with the self-feigning world-fiction, the Self is that out of which all things and all forms of life proceed. It is, in the words of the Muṇḍaka Upanishad, that on knowing which all things are known; in the words of the Chhândogya, that by instruction in which the unthought becomes thought, and the unknown known. As the Indian scholiasts say: If we know Brahman we know all things: if we know what clay is, we know what all the variety of pots and pans are, that the potter fashions out of clay; if we know what gold is, we know what all the varieties of earrings, bracelets, and other trinkets are, that the goldsmith fashions out of gold. Thus, to quote the Chhândogya Upanishad:—

“Śvetaketu was the grandson of Aruṇa. His father Aruṇi said to him: Śvetaketu, thou must enter on thy sacred studentship. None of our family, my dear son, is unstudied, a Brahman only in lineage. Śvetaketu therefore at the age of twelve repaired to a spiritual preceptor, and at the age of four-and-twenty came home after going through all the Vedas, conceited, pedantic, and opinionated. His father said to him: Śvetaketu, tell me, my son, since thou art so conceited, pedantic, and opinionated, hast thou asked for that instruction by which the unheard becomes heard, the unthought thought, the unknown known?

Brahman that which being known, all things are known,—the *apxṛ*.

“Holy sir, how is that instruction given? . . .

“His father said: My son, as everything made of clay is known by a single lump of clay, being nothing more than a modification of speech, a change, a name, while the clay is the only truth:

“As everything made of gold is known by a single lump of gold, being nothing more than a modification of speech, a change, a name, while the gold is the only truth:

“As everything made of steel is known by a single pair of nail-scissors, being nothing more than a modi-

CHAP. II. fication of speech, a change, a name, while the steel is the only truth:

“Such, my son, is that instruction.”

Brahman is, as has been already seen, said to be “existent, thought, bliss.” In the Taittirīya Upanishad the Self is said to be “truth, knowledge, infinity.” Śankarāchārya’s remarks on this passage of the Taittirīya will serve also to illustrate the foregoing extract from the Chhāndogya. “Self,” he says, “is truth; Self is knowledge; Self is infinity. A thing is true if it is neither more nor less than it is taken to be. It is false if it is more or less than that. Hence every form of derived or emanatory existence is fictitious, nothing more than a modification of speech, a change, a name, and the clay is the only truth. That which is being found to be the only truth, the words ‘the Self is truth’ negative all modification of the Self. It follows that Brahman is the cause or fontal essence. It operates as such, because it is the reality. Lest it should be supposed that Brahman being that of which all things are made, it must be unspiritual, like the potter’s clay, the text proceeds to say that the Self is knowledge. The term knowledge is abstract, standing as an epithet of Brahman together with truth and infinity. If knowledge meant here a subject knowing, the epithet would be incompatible with the other two. If Brahman were a knowing subject, it would be modified in its cognitions, and how then could it be the truth? A thing is infinite when it cannot be limited at any point. If the Self were a knowing subject, it would be limited by the *cognita* and the cognitions. Another text says: That is the infinite in which nothing else is known, and that is the finite in which one knows something else. As predicated of the Self along with truth and infinity, knowledge is thus an abstract term. The words ‘Self is knowledge’ are intended at once to deny agency and action, and to deny that the Self or Brahman is an

unspiritual thing such as the potter's clay in the familiar example. The same words 'Self is knowledge' might be imagined to imply the finitude of Self, forasmuch as all the cognitions of everyday life are limited or finite. The epithet 'infinite' is added to exclude this idea of finitude. The term infinite is negative, refusing the presence of limits; the epithets truth and knowledge are positive, giving a sense of their own. The knowledge of Brahman is nothing else than the essence of the Self itself, like the light of the sun, or the heat of fire. It is the eternal essence of the Self, and does not depend on conditions foreign to itself, as our experiences do."

These remarks must suffice for the present in regard to Brahman. The several elements of the cosmical conception of the poets of the Upanishads are so closely interfused, that it is not possible with any ingenuity altogether to separate them for convenience of exposition. So far as may be, however, these elements must be exhibited in successive order, proceeding from Brahman to Māyā; from Māyā to the union, from before all time, between Brahman and Māyā; from this union to the resultant procession of migrating souls and of the spheres of their migration, and the hierarchic emanations Ísvara, Hiranyagarbha, and Virāj, severally representing the sums of living things in the three several states of dreamless sleep, of dreaming sleep, and of waking consciousness; and finally reverting to the "fourth," so called in contradistinction to the three states or modes of life, that is, to the original unity of characterless being or Brahman. Brahman *per se* is the principle of reality, the one and only being; Self alone is, and all else only seems to be. This principle of reality, however, has been from everlasting associated with an inexplicable principle of unreality; and it is from the fictitious union of these principles, the one real, the other only a self-feigned fiction, that the spheres and

Brahman the principle of reality. The co-eternal principle of unreality, Māyā, the world-fiction.

## CHAP. II.

the migrating forms of life, the external and internal world, proceed.

Māyā the illusion in every individual soul.

Māyā may be regarded both in parts and in the whole. Viewed in parts, it is the particular illusion that veils from each form of life its own true nature as the one and only Self. Under its influence every kind of sentient being is said to identify itself, not with the Self that is one and the same in all, but with its counterfeit presentment,<sup>1</sup> the invisible body that accompanies it through its migrations, and the visible bodies that it animates successively. Thus every living thing is a fictitiously detached portion, an illusive emanation of Brahman. Māyā overspreads Brahman as a cloud overspreads the sun, veiling from it its proper nature, and projecting the world of semblances, the phantasmagory of metempsychosis. For every form of life, from the lowest to the highest, from a mere tuft of grass up to the highest deity, its own proper nature is veiled, and a bodily counterfeit presented in lieu of it, by the primeval illusion or self-feigning fiction, Avidyā or Māyā. Hence all individual existences, and the long miseries of metempsychosis, in the procession of the æons without beginning and without end; for the world is from everlasting, and every genesis of things is only a palingenesia. The procession of the æons is often likened to a succession of dreams. The world is often said to be the mind-projected figment of migrating souls.<sup>2</sup> It is, says Śaṅkarāchārya, only an emanation of the internal sense of sentient beings, and this is proved by the fact that the world is resolved back into their inner sense in their intervals of dreamless sleep.<sup>3</sup> As emanating from such illusion, the world of me-

<sup>1</sup> Technically styled its *upādhi*. The totality of Māyā is the *upādhi* of Īśvara. Portions of Māyā are the several *upādhis* of the *jīvas* or migrating souls.

<sup>2</sup> *Sarvam ky antaḥkaraṇavik-*

*āram eva jagat, manasy eva susuk-upte pralayadarśanāt.* Elsewhere the phrase *manovijhṛimbitam.*

<sup>3</sup> *Prapanchosya māyayā vidyamānatvam, na tu vastutvam.*

tempsychosis has an existence, but this existence is unreal. CHAP. II.

Mâyā, viewed as a whole, is the cosmical illusion, the self-feigning world-fiction, that is without beginning.<sup>1</sup> It is said to be "neither entity nor nonentity, nor both in one, inexplicable by entity and by nonentity, fictitious, and without beginning." It is not a mere nothing, but a *nescio quid*. It is an illusion projected by illusion, an unreal unreality, the three primitive elements of pleasure, pain, and indolence<sup>2</sup> in co-equality, overspreading the one and only Self from everlasting. It is the sum of the illusions of all individual souls, as a forest is an aggregate of trees. It is the power, cognitive and active, of Ísvara, the *artifex opifexque mundi deus*, the Archimagus, or Demiurgus, who is the first emanation of Brahman. It is his power of illusory creation, the power out of which proceed all migrating souls and all that they experience in their migrations. Brahman, or Self *per se*, is changeless, but in union with Mâyā becomes<sup>3</sup> fictitiously the basis of this baseless world, and underlies the world-fiction out of which the ever-changing figment-worlds proceed in æon after æon. From the reflection upon Mâyā, the world-fiction, of Brahman, the one and only Self, proceeds the first and highest of all emanations, Ísvara, the cosmic soul, the Demiurgus. Mâyā<sup>4</sup> thus pre-exists with Brahman, but Brahman is not thereby any the less the one and only being, in like manner as the possibility of the future tree pre-exists in the seed of the tree, without the seed becoming any the less a one and only seed. Mâyā is the indifferent aggregate of all the possibilities of emanatory or derived existences, pre-existing together with Brahman, as the possibility

Mâyā the illusion in all souls, the unrealemanatory principle of the world, co-eternal with Brahman.

<sup>1</sup> *Vīśvamâyā, anādimâyā.*

<sup>2</sup> *Trigunātmikā mâyā, gunatrayasāmyam mâyātattvam, sukhatukhamohātmakāśeshaprapaicharūpā mâyā.*

<sup>3</sup> *Vivartyopādāna.*

<sup>4</sup> *Bhāvītaśaririkshasaktimāñ vijam svāsaktiā na sadvītiyam kathyate, tadvad brahmāpi na mâyāsuktīā sadvītiyam.*

CHAP. II. of the tree pre-exists in the seed. Māyā is the ancillary associate of the Archimagus. Māyā, though unconscious, is said to energise in the evolution of the world through its proximity to the inert and impassive Brahman; as the unconscious iron is set in motion through its proximity to the loadstone. Māyā is that out of which, literally speaking, the world proceeds; it is said, by a figure of speech, to emanate from Brahman. Māyā is the literal, Brahman the figurative *upādāna*, or principle out of which all things emanate.

It is Māyā<sup>1</sup> that presents the manifold of experience. The world, with its apparent duality of subject and object, of external and internal orders, is the figment of this fiction, the imagination of illusion. All that presents itself to the migrating soul in its series of embodiments, lies unreal above the real; like the redness or blackness of the sky, which is seen there though the sky itself is never red or black, like the waters of a mirage, like the visions of the dreaming phantasy, like the airy fabric of a daydream, like the bubbles on the surface of a stream, like the silver seen on the shell of a pearl-oyster, like the snake that the belated wayfarer sees in a piece of rope, like the gloom that encircles the owl amidst the noonday glare. All the stir of daily life, all the feverish pleasures and pains of life after life, are the phantasmagory of a waking dream. For the soul that wakes to its own nature these things cease to be, and, what is more, have never so much as been.

Brahman and  
Māyā eternally  
co-existent.

Brahman and Māyā have co-existed from everlasting, and their association and union is eternal. Apart from Avidyā or Māyā, Brahman is purely characterless and indeterminate,<sup>2</sup> and is not to be regarded as the principle from which things emanate, and again, is not to be regarded as not that principle; nor is it to be affirmed to be both that principle and not that prin-

<sup>1</sup> *Nānātvapratyupasthāpikā 'ridhā.*

<sup>2</sup> Śankarāchārya on Śvetāśvātara Upanishad 1, 3.

ciple at once, nor is it to be denied to be both. Self *per se* is neither *principium* nor *principiata*. When the world is said to emanate from Brahman, we are always to understand that it proceeds, not from Brahman *per se*, but from Brahman reflected upon *Māyā*,<sup>1</sup> or fictitiously limited by the limitations of the world-fiction. *Māyā*, in its totality, is the limitative counterfeit of Brahman,<sup>2</sup> or the power of *Īśvara*, the *Māyāvin*, or Archimagus, or Demiurgus. The limitations of the illimitable Brahman are derived from this limitative counterfeit—its limitations through which it manifests itself as god, and man, and animal, and plant, and so forth. It is through this union from before all time with this inexplicable illusion, that the one and only Self presents itself in the endless plurality and diversity of transient deities, of migrating spirits, and of the worlds through which they migrate. It is through this union that the one and only Self is present in every creature, as one and the same ether is present in many water-jars, as one and the same sun is mirrored on countless sheets of water. It is through this union that the one and only Self permeates and animates the world. In the words of Śankara:<sup>3</sup> “The image of the sun upon a piece of water expands with the expansion, and contracts with the contraction, of the ripples on the surface; moves with the motion, and is severed by the breaking, of the ripples. The reflection of the sun thus follows the various conditions of the surface, but not so the real sun in the heavens. It is in a similar manner that the real Self is reflected upon its counterfeits, the bodies of sentient creatures, and, thus fictitiously limited, shares their growth and diminution, and other sensible modes of being. Apart

Brahman fictitiously limited by *Māyā* is *Īśvara*, and passes into seeming plurality.

<sup>1</sup> *Tad eva chaitanyam māyā-pratirimbitarūpena kāraṇam bhavati.* Anandagiri on the Muṇḍaka Upanishad. *Māyā* is sometimes said to reflect Brahman,

and sometimes to limit Brahman fictitiously.

<sup>2</sup> *Upādhi.*

<sup>3</sup> In the introduction to his Commentary on the *Svetāśvatara Upanishad.*

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from its various counterfeits, the Self is changeless and unvaried." The one and only Self is present in the heart of every living thing, as one and the same face may be reflected upon a succession of mirrors.<sup>1</sup> Such are some among the many images employed by the ancient Indian philosophers, to illustrate the presence of one spiritual essence in all the innumerable forms of living things. Others will be met with in the sequel. With almost the same imagery Plotinus speaks of the one life in all things living, like the one light shining in many houses, as if itself many, and yet one and undivided; the one life shining into and vitalising all bodies, projecting pictures of itself, like one face seen upon a multitude of mirrors. Elsewhere he says that we are one in God, and again other than God, as the solar rays are one with the sun and other than the sun. And with a like simile Fichte: "In all the forms that surround me I behold the reflection of my own being, broken up into countless diversified shapes, as the morning sun, broken in a thousand dewdrops, sparkles towards itself."

The hierarchy of emanations out of Brahman and Māyā.

Māyā, then, has fictitiously associated itself to Brahman from everlasting. In the series of æons, without beginning and without end, the forms of life have at the beginning of each æon emanated in the following hierarchic succession.

Īśvara, the Demiurgus, or world-evolving deity, the universal soul.

First appears Īśvara, the Māyin or Māyāvin, the arch-illusionist, the world-projecting deity, himself a figment of the cosmic fiction, himself an unreality; an unreality for the philosopher intent on the one and only truth, relatively a reality for the multitude, to whom the world exists with all its possibilities of pain. The totality of illusion is the body or counterfeit presentment of the Archimagus, out of which all things emanate.<sup>2</sup> Illusion, the world-fiction, may be viewed

<sup>1</sup> *Ādarśasthamukham iti yadvat.*

<sup>2</sup> *Kāraṇasarīra* = the cosmic body, the body out of which things

emanate, the principle of emanation.

in its several parts in the minds of the migrating sentiencies, or in its totality as the sum of pleasures, pains, and indolences. The Demiurgus, then, is the Self with the totality of illusion as its counterfeit presentment; the Self proceeding into fictitious manifestation, as the worlds and the migrating sentiencies that pass through them. The illusion of each of these sentiencies veils from it its true nature as the one and only Self; the illusion of all sentiencies taken together veils from them all their true nature as the one and only Self. The Demiurgus is identified with the sum of sentiencies in the state of dreamless sleep. His body, the principle of emanations, as the sum of the bodies of living things in the state of dreamless sleep, is the beatific vesture.<sup>1</sup> The Demiurgus is one, the sentiencies are many, as a forest is one and as the trees in it are many; as a piece of water is one and as the drops of water in it are many; and the one Demiurgus and the many dreamless, sleeping sentiencies are one and the same being, viewed now as whole, and now as parts. The same Brahman, the one and only Self, is present wholly in the Demiurgus, and present wholly in each dreamless, sleeping sentiency; as the same ether, one and undivided, is present to the whole forest and present to each and every tree; or as the same sky, one and undivided, is reflected upon the whole watery surface and on each portion of that surface.

The Archimagus is said to be omniscient, as being the witness of all lifeless and all living forms of existence. As ruling all migrating souls, and as giving to each its dole of pleasures and pains in conformity with the retributive fatality inherent in the process of things, he is Īśvara, the lord. As setting all souls in motion, and thus acting through them, he is the actuator. As dwelling in the heart of each and every living soul, and

Īśvara omniscient, the giver of recompense, the internal ruler.

<sup>1</sup> *Ānandamayakosha*, the wrapper of the migrating soul, that consists of the undifferentenced beatitude of dreamless sleep.

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“The lord of all, himself through all diffused,  
Sustains and is the life of all that live.”

In this last character the Demiurgus, the highest emanation of Brahman, is described in the *Bṛihadāranyaka Upanishad*:—

“That which dwells in earth, inside the earth, and the earth knows not, whose body the earth is, which actuates the earth from within,—that is thy Self, the internal ruler, immortal.

“That which dwells in water, inside the water, and the water knows not, whose body the water is, which actuates the water from within,—that is thy Self, the internal ruler, immortal.

“That which dwells in fire, inside the fire, and the fire knows not, whose body the fire is, which actuates the fire from within,—that is thy Self, the internal ruler, immortal.

“That which dwells in air, inside the air, and the air knows not, whose body the air is, which actuates the air from within,—that is thy Self, the internal ruler, immortal.

“That which dwells in wind, inside the wind, and the wind knows not, whose body the wind is, which actuates the wind from within,—that is thy Self, the internal ruler, immortal.

“That which dwells in the sky, inside the sky, and the sky knows not, whose body the sky is, which actuates the sky from within,—that is thy Self, the internal ruler, immortal.

“That which dwells in the sun, inside the sun, and the sun knows not, whose body the sun is, which actuates the sun from within,—that is thy Self, the internal ruler, immortal.

“That which dwells in moon and stars, inside the moon and stars, and the moon and stars know not, whose body the moon and stars are, which actuates the

moon and stars from within,—that is thy Self, the internal ruler, immortal.

“That which dwells in all living things, inside the living things, and all living things know not, whose body all living things are, which actuates all living things from within,—that is thy Self, the internal ruler, immortal.

“That which dwells within mind, inside the mind, and the mind knows not, whose body the mind is, which actuates the mind from within,—that is thy Self, the internal ruler, immortal.

“That which sees unseen, hears unheard, thinks unthought upon, knows unknown; that other than which there is none that sees, none that hears, none that thinks, none that knows,—that is thy Self, the internal ruler, immortal.”

It must be observed that this conception of the Demiurgus or world-projecting deity is not theistic. He is nothing else than the totality of souls in dreamless sleep, present in the heart of every living thing; himself only the first figment of the world-fiction, resolved into the characterless unity of Brahman at the close of each age of the world, and issuing out of that unity at each palingenesia in the eternal procession of the æons. He is eternal, but every migrating soul is co-eternal with him, a co-eternal and only equally fictitious emanation of the one and only Self. He can hardly be conceived to have any separate personality, apart from the souls he permeates and vivifies; and his state is not one of consciousness, but that of the pure bliss of dreamless sleep. One with the sum of living beings in that state, he is yet said to allot to each of them their portion of weal and woe, but only in accordance with their merits in prior forms of embodied existence. Īśvara is feared by the many, as the deity that retracts them into his own essence at the close of each æon, and that casts the evil-doer into

Īśvara not a personal God but the universal soul

Īśvara the first figment of the world-fiction.

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places of torment; but the perfect sage learns that Īśvara is unreal, and passes beyond all fear of him. Īśvara is no less unreal than the migrating soul; he is the first figment of the cosmical illusion; and both Īśvara and the soul are only so far existent as they are fictitious manifestations of the one and only Self.

Hiranyagarbha, the spirit of dreaming sentients.

The next emanation in the order of descent is Hiranyagarbha, Prāna, Sūtrātman, the Golden Germ, the Breath of Life, the Thread-spirit. This divine emanation is the totality of migrating souls in the state of dreaming sleep, the sum of the dreaming consciousness of the world. His body is the sum of the invisible bodies, the tenuous *involutura*,<sup>1</sup> clothed in which the soul passes from body to body in the long process of metempsychosis. These invisible bodies are made up of three vestures one upon the other, the cognitional, the sensorial, and the aerial garments of the soul. Within these, as its first and innermost garment, the soul, as one with the Archimagus, is clad with the beatific vesture already spoken of; and outermost of all it has, as we shall presently see, its fifth and last garment, the nutrimentitious vesture, the visible and tangible body of the world of sense, which is born and dies and passes back into the elements, the muddy vesture of decay. Three, then, of these five wrappers clothe<sup>2</sup> Hiranyagarbha. He is called the Thread-spirit, as stringing together all dreaming souls clothed in the invisible bodies that accompany them in their migrations, as pearls are strung upon a thread to form a necklace. He is the sum of souls that illusively identify themselves with their tenuous *involutura*. It is thus that a place is provided in the cosmical conception of the poets of the Upanishads for the Hiranyagarbha of the ancient Rishis,

<sup>1</sup> *Lingasarira, sūkshmasarira.*

<sup>2</sup> The five wrappers of the migrating soul are styled successively in Sanskrit the *ānandamayakosha* (this is the *kāranasarira*); the

*vijnānamayakosha*, the *manomayakosha*, the *prāṇamayakosha* (these three are the *lingasarira*); and the *annamayakosha* (this is the *sthūlasarira*).

the Golden Germ that arose in the beginning, the lord of things that are, the establisher of the earth and sky, the giver of life and breath.

The third and lowest of the progressive emanations is Virāj, Vaiśvānara, Prajāpati, or Purusha. His body is the whole mundane egg, the outer shell of the visible world, or the sum of the visible and perishing bodies of migrating souls. He is identified with the totality of waking consciousness, with the sum of souls in the waking state, and the sum of their gross, visible, and tangible environments. In this divine emanation a place is provided by the poets of the Upanishads for the Purusha of the ancient Rishis, the divine being out of whom, offered up as a sacrificial victim by the gods, the Sādhyas, and the Rishis, the visible and tangible world proceeded. He is the sum of souls that illusively identify themselves with their outer bodies, and thus suffer hunger, thirst, and faintness, and all the other miseries of metempsychosis.

Virāj, the spirit of waking sentience.

The nature of spiritual entity unmanifest and manifest, in its fourfold grades, is set forth in the following lines taken from Śankarāchārya's exposition of the Aitareya Upanishad :—

“ First, there is the one and only Self, apart from all duality, in which have ceased to appear the various counterfeit presentments or fictitious bodies and environments of the world of semblances; passionless, pure, inert, peaceful, to be known by the negation of every epithet, not to be reached by any word or thought.

“ Secondly, this same Self emanates in the form of the omniscient Demiurgus, whose counterfeit presentment or fictitious body is cognition in its utmost purity; who sets in motion the general undifferented germ of the worlds, the cosmical illusion; and is styled the internal ruler, as actuating all things from within.

“ Thirdly, this same Self emanates in the form of

CHAP. II. Hiranyagarbha, or the spirit that illusively identifies itself with the mental movements that are the germ of the passing spheres.

“Fourthly, this same Self emanates in the form of spirit in its earliest embodiment within the outer shell of things, as Virāj or Prajāpati.

“And finally, the same Self comes to be designated under the names of Agni and the other gods, in its counterfeit presentments in the form of visible fire and so forth. It is thus that Brahman assumes this and that name and form, by taking to itself a variety of fictitious bodily presentments, from a tuft of grass up to Brahmā, the highest of the deities.”

Ānandagiri, in his gloss on this passage of Śankarāchārya, adds that the Self fictitiously manifests itself in human and other sentiencies, as well as in the gods, and is thus, illusively, the sum of life.

Brahman *per se*, apart from fictitious manifestation, is the Nirguṇam Brahma of Indian philosophy; that is to say, the Self free from the primordia, Self apart from pleasures, pains, and indolences, the three factors of the world-fiction, the three strands of the rope that ties the soul to the miseries of metempsychosis.

Brahman in its hierarchic emanations as Īśvara, Hiranyagarbha, and Virāj, is the Saguṇam Brahma or Śabalām Brahma of Indian philosophy; that is to say, the Self as fictitiously implicated in the pleasures, pains, and indolences that make up the world-fiction, and are experienced by migrating souls.

To six things there has been no beginning: souls have been passing from body to body, through æon after æon, from eternity; the Demiurgus has co-existed with and in them from eternity; there has been a distinction between the souls and the Demiurgus from eternity; the pure intelligence, the undifferented Self, has existed from eternity; the distinction between the Demiurgus and that Self is from eternity; Māyā, the self-

Six things  
without be-  
ginning.

feigning world-fiction, has feigned itself from everlasting, and the union of Māyā with Brahman is itself eternal. The migrating souls are nothing else than the one and only Self fictitiously limiting itself to various individual minds, these individual minds being various emanations of the cosmical illusion. Self is true; the ever-moving world is false; and the migrating souls that seem to be, and do, and suffer, are nothing else than that one and only Self, clothed in the five successive vestures or *involucra*, the beatific, the cognitional, the sensorial, the vesture of the vital airs, and the nutrimentitious vesture or visible body in the world of sense. To him that sees the truth, all these bodies and their environments will disappear, merging themselves into that fontal essence; and the Self will alone remain, a fulness of unbroken and unmingled bliss.