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No 11.

Kanda Puranam of Kachiappar.

The little of this holy book that I read now and then rather as a pastime than as a holy duty created in me such a zeal and reverence for it that I have been prompted to write this humble tribute before I may pretend to know it sufficiently well. I therefore request the learned readers to excuse my faults.

Here are few good things in this world which are recognised as such by the majority of those who come across them. The holiest man is considered mad, the highest philosophy dreamy, honesty folly, and forgiveness cowardice. Such is Kanda Puranam in a place where it is best known and the most familiar work. This is due to the inefficiency of those who expound it, fools rushing in where angels fear to tread. Besides, no religious truth is understood by anyone who has not a humble and pious heart. I pen the following however as I can only be afraid of falling short of the praise that is due.

Kachiappar, whose name I will not stain with any epithet, understood that it was the pleasure of god that he should write this purana. It was pointed out to him that he could get the materials for the work from the sanskrit Skanda Purana which is one of the ten Siva Puranas. Again, it was daily revised by *Chit*. The work has thus the highest authority, and Kachiappar's greatness and holiness may be imagined. These two touches of the *Sat* have to be proved. The sign of divine touch is absence of faults and imperfections; and the onus of proof rests with those who question it. The little knowledge that I possess of the work enables me to say that no one can question anything in this work and I have not heard of any charge made that has not been answered.

What gives the highest value to the work in the amount of electricity with which it is charged, or perhaps which it generates, a force which corresponds to the magnetic power of men. While example and precept are the two educating influences generally known, the vast power wielded by personal magnetism is not so well known, probably because it is a rarity. These three influences may be found in their corresponding forms in books. Kural and Naladiyar teach by precept, and Periapuranam by example. Kandapuram mainly influences by the electric power of the author. I do not here mean to disparage other works, but this may not be their greatest greatness. It attracts all those who come in close contact with it and makes them move in the right direction. Few who see it rightly can withstand its force. The story of Kandapuram might be written by any poet not possessing the zeal, but would die with time instead of growing. Words and thoughts which send a thrill and make the hair of the reader stand on its end abound in this work, and make him feel rather than know.

A mistake often committed with respect to this work is to include it in literature. It is as far from poetry* as Nannool or Sivagnanasiddhiar. In fact it is the contrary of poetry in that it is less slow than ordinary histories even. Essentially, it ranks with Tiruvachakam and Devaram although the clothing of poetry is second to few other poetical works. The muse comes uninvited to subserve the holy purpose and naturally is more helpful to its devotees. Though few things are as graceful as the divine Tiruneerū or as sweet-scented as the highly medicinal musk, it would be want of sense to mention them among their virtues. The Sirappoopayiram of Tirukovayar is applicable to this work with more or less force in some points. The work is encyclopædic.

The main current in the work is the Siddhanta religion, the religion of Bhakti and Gnana. The religion is clearly and concisely stated in Kasipar Upadesapadalam which may be regarded as the text on which the whole work is founded. Kasipar states the philosophy, infers from it the line of action (*marga*), and illustrates it by the life of Markandeya. This procedure enables us to understand that the knowledge of religion is only a means—though not the only means—that practice is the end of a man's life and that this (practice) is acquired by worship. (Many young men who make it a fashion to learn religious philosophy without trying to act up to it will find from this how erroneous their way is.)

The consort of Kasipar, in her native spirit and true to her name, condemns his teaching, and impresses on one the greatness of material prosperity, thus laying the foundation for the advanced teaching undertaken later by Sukra. Sukra comes with the "fearful hurricane of Mayavadam," the so called Vedanta. Sukra's precepts condemn themselves. He says, "They are fools who say

* [We do not agree with the writer. It is the essential province of poetry, to awaken the feelings and inspire the heart. Hence the magic of Devaram and Tiruvachakam.—ED.]

'Do what is right, do not do sinful acts which are wrong.' Kachiappar makes an ass of Sukra, so absurd is Mayavadam made from his mouth. No religion is so cruelly treated. The evil of aiming at material prosperity is shown by the utmost misery of Soorapadma's latter days.

The Lokayata religion is condemned by Manmata himself, the high-priest or rather the lord of the religion ; and the chief beauty is that while Brahma and other great exponents of Saivism are made to support him against their own convictions. He condemns himself. This is a characteristic of Kachiappa who finds pearls in stinking oyster. The occasion itself is such.

Next comes for the test, rather incidentally, from the sacred lips of Tateeshi, *the religion of karma, professed by the Rishis of Tarakavanam. As religion is meant to guide us in our actions, and as the greatest intellectual giants have professed all the great religions, the surest test of religion is the fruit of following it and not arguing. This was what Sambandaswamy and Manickavachaka swamy did, and this is the method which commended itself to Kachiappar. The Tarakavana story, impure in the eyes of impure men, is an indispensable part of fundamental religious knowledge. The proof of the existence of God, and of the helplessness of a soul which is impenetrable to His Grace is most convincing and unanswerable. Here is the rock on which the karmic religions are readily and inevitably wrecked. Those who thought that they cared for no God found themselves quite helpless before the hollow phantom of a female.

Vaishnavaism is considered in a very palpable manner. Daksha was the President founder of this religion. This is the

* Religions akin to Buddhism.

† As God exists everywhere, He can have no motion from place to place. Therefore, wherever we hear of personal divine intrusion, we must understand it to be a phantom, of course divine.

only religion whose principles are not fully discussed; for, the only difference between this and Saiva Siddhanta relates to the nature of the Supreme Brahman.

Siva represents the Highest Brahman, and the worship of any other than the Highest God cannot lead to the Highest Palan, and was doomed to failure as in Daksha's sacrifice. Cf Gita IX. 22 to 24.

The work thus considers all the chief religions in a popular way, shows that Siddhanta is the straight path and leads all sympathetic followers to happiness pure and everlasting. To crown all, the method of attainment of Mukti is treated in the beautiful and sustained allegory of Valliammai Tirumanapadalam.

The history contained in it is vast and embodies all knowledge necessary for a man's well-being here and hear-after. There are several short tragedies and comedies in it with Soorapadma* tragi-comedy in the centre, each tragedy condemning several vices and each comedy upholding several virtues. What makes the work unique is not the impressive manner in which ethical and religious principles are taught, but the ethical and religious tonic which it gives for keeping man in a healthy state for steady growth. While most other works make the reader know, this makes the reader act.

I shall close this short essay with a liberal translation of four typical stanzas in the first part. As the translation robs the stanzas of the force of expression and the vast treasure lying hidden in their depths, they are also given.

Manmata tells Brahma, "Of course, I win laurels for my victories over Vishnu and other gods, (yourself included). But, is it possible to dart the arrow and defeat the Supreme Being who wears the Ganges on his head."

மாலை முதலாகிய வானவர்தம், பாலேயடல்வரகை படைப்பதலால்,
கெளைச்சிகுடிய மேலவன்மேற், கோலேவினன் வென்றிடல் கூடுமதோ

* It is called tragi-comedy, because he died and with it attained eternal bliss.

Indra's son says, "Desiring to enjoy life under the shade of the honey-dripping kalpaka tree, I have incurred great suffering. Thus, I see that even Swarga life is hollow; I have also seen the passing away (transitoriness) of other places of enjoyment, (as Vaikunta and Satyaloka). I, your servant, pray only for your everlasting home (of mukti).

தண்டேன் துவிக்குஞ் தருகிழற்கிழ் வாழ்க்கைவல்கிக்
கொண்டேன் பெருங்துயரம் வான்பதமுங் கோதென்றே
கண்டேன் பிறர் தம் பதத்தொலைவுங் கண்டனால்
தொண்டேன் சிவனே நின்கிருல் பதமேவேண்டுவனே.

Veerabahu Deva says (to Soorapanma to give him an idea of the greatness of Subrahmanyam.)

"Eh! Simpleton, you thought much of yourself in having obtained some of the simple solid worlds. Those who are favoured with but a little of His Grace become rulers not only of all the worlds of the five forms of existence (commonly known as solid, liquid, burning (or stellar), gaseous, and ethereal), but also of the worlds of all other forms of existence.

எதமில்புவியண்டங்கள் பெற்றனமென்றே
பேதையுன்னினை சிறிதவன் றன்னருள்பெறுவோர்
பூதமைந்தினு மேஜையதிற்கினும் புறத்து
மீதுமாமண்டமேவற்றிற்கும் வேத்தியல் புரிவார்.
Simhas says (on a similar occasion),

"Is it an easy affair for you and me if we say that we can state the nature of god whose form is Gnana. Even the Moonivas who are continually in the Mona state have not understood him. He himself has not yet discovered fully His great supremacy.

ஞானந்தானுருவாக்ய நாயகனியல்பை
யானுநீயுமாயுரைத்து மென்றுலஃதெளிதோ
போனந்தீர்க்கலா முனிவருங் தேற்றிலர் முழுதாங்
தானுங்காண்கிலனின்னமுந்தன்பெருந்தலைமை.

S. SIVAPADASUNDARAM PILLAI.

The Inner Meaning of Siva Linga.

Continued from page 310 of Vol. VII.

"Dharikadhara Sakthi bijam Anantha Pankaja Kudmalam—Punya bodha Viraga Bhoothi padam Viloma chathustayam. Gathraka chadana Chadam Kamalam sa Kesara Karnikam Sakthi mandalaSangha yuktham Aham namami Sivasanam."

"Prithvi kandam kalah tathvahntaika nalam granthi granthim suddha vidya sarojam Vamadi sakthigatha kesara karnikadyam."

Tath kandam sathakoti yojanamidam Nahlam parardhantakam grandhibhi koti parardha Paschima sahasram chathurlakshakam—Moorthisthasyacha kotirisvara mayee Thasyarbuda syarbudam Ambojam Mantramayam Sadasiva Vapuhu Dhyananumeyama Sivaha."

The above quotations convey the very same idea. In fact it is clearly asserted in the last verse that Sadasiva's body is a huge "Lotus" whose root (குஞ்சி) extends over 100 crores of yojanas etc. He who is to be contemplated within is to be worshipped outside in Sivalinga—"Jneyassivas—SarvaghataSSarire Dhyeyassa poojyassivalinga madhye." A summary of the Sivalinga pooja is given in chapter 20 of the Vayusamhita, uttara bhaga.

"Asyordhya Chadanam Padnam Asanam Vimalam Sitham, Astapathrani Thasyahuranimadi gunashtakam, kesara incha Vamadya Rudra Vamadi sakthibhibhi Beejanyapicha Thaeva Saktha youthar manonmani karnikapara Vairagym Nablam gnanam Sivatmakam Kandascha Sivadharma karnikantha Thrindali etc."

The above verses convey the same idea as is expressed in our quotation from the padohathi of Srimat Aghora Sivacharya.

We said that certain Mandalas and Vedis are erected during important celebrations of religious festivals, such as Brahmotsava, Linga pratishta or Dikshas. Sages like Aghora Siva, Thriloghana Siva, and Anantha Siva in their treatises on Dikshas and treatises like the Vayusamhita in its second part give lucid explanations as to how mandalas should be constructed. The Mandalas are pictorial representations made on the floor with the powders of precious stones or flour of rice etc. Here is the description of a mandala.

"Pithenojvala karnikamcha rajasah swethena Rakthena vai, Peethanapicha kesarani suklena Pathranicha, Syamenatha dalahntharam sitha Vathi rakthena, koneshvadho suklastruk kapilah sithabha kalithah, keelasu pushpavahihii."

A lotus should be drawn on the floor forming the Karnika with bright yellow powder, the Kesaras with white, blood-red and yellow powders, the petals with white powders as spreading in 4 directions, drawing the middle portion of the petals with green powders. A mandala called Latalingaka is hereunder described.

"Bakthe Vimsathidha Bahissasipadahth Veethee Sithah Dikshujair Dwaraneesa Mukha dyutheenyubhayatho Lingani Pandu drugaihi, Koneshvabdipadair Latah Harithabhah Veethee Chatushshashtibhihi, Padmam Santhi Kaladibhanicha Lath lingodbhave mandale"

"A street of black color should be drawn up on four sides in the form of a square. In the middle of each of the 4 sides of this square, a doorway measuring 4×2 padas (feet) should be drawn up. In the inner side, on each side of such doorway a linga should be drawn up. Thus 8 lingas will be formed at the rate of 2 lingas for each doorway. In each of the corners (angles) of this square a creeper measuring 4 padas should be drawn up. Within this square, above the lingas another street one pada in breadth in green color should be made to run on 4 sides. In the midst of this square a full blown lotus measuring 64 padas should be drawn up. This lotus must contain a karnika measuring 4 padas, pollen round this karnika, measuring one pada should be made to stick up to. Then 8 petals each petal measuring 2 padas, spreading towards the eight directions should be drawn up." Here the square represents a wide tank, the green line representing the waters. The black line represents the tank's bank with stairs thereon. A lotus with creepers here and there is said to rise above the surface of the water.

Another mode of representing the lata-linga mandala is hereunder given :—

"Ashta Vimsathi bhajithe Vasupadair madhye ambujam Bhagathaha, Pattam syath sithah Veetheekah sasipadath kone latha sapthabhihi, Dwaram Dikshu Munidwayairubhayatho Lingameha Shatsapthabhir Veethee Prahh Bahyapadena Mandalamidam cha Anyam Lathalingakam."

First draw a lotus of 8 padas. Around it draw a pattah (a circular line) measuring one pada. Draw with white powders a square street measuring one pada in width round the circle. The

corners of this square should contain creepers each measuring 7 padas. In the 4 quarters door-ways each measuring 7×2 padas should be drawn. Then on each side of such a doorway draw up a linga."

The Matanga Agama prescribes the Navanabha Mandala during diksha.

"Kshetraissapta paddeekrithe sasipadath Veethee samanthath padair Dikshvashtasucha Pankajahni Paritho Veetheendubhahgenacha, Dwabranayashita Janthara Stithi padair authasthithair jathrakam Padmam Syahth navanabha mandalamidam sreeman mathangoditham."

Select a square spot each side of which should measure 7 padas. Within this, at a distance of one pada from the centre these should be a street a side of which should measure 4 padas. In the eight quarters of this street 8 padmas (lotuses) should be drawn up. Enclose this square street by means of another square. On each side of this latter square construct two doorways, each doorway being formed midway between the two lotuses of the inner square. The other portions of this outer square should be peetahs (raised plots). The following is a description of mandala called Gowrilata mandalam.

"Soothraissaptha dasahthmakairubhayatho gowree hatham Ahwayam Madhye Veda padair Vidikshu ghapadur Bhootha Ambujani nyaseth, Lingam Patta saroja kanta kamalam peetam kramath Dik padair Vashtabhoori Vishaischa kona kalithair bhoothaihi padaihi syllathahm."

Enclose a square spot measuring 17×17 padas by means of cotton strings. In the angles form 4 lotuses, each lotus containing linga, patta, saroja, kanta, kamala and peeta, the linga measuring 4 padas, patta measuring 6 padas, saroja 4 padas, kanta 2 padas, kamala 4 padas and peeta 6 padas. On each side of the sail corner construct a creeper measuring 5 padas attached to the said Lotus. Another mandala by name Bhadra mandala, is described below.

"Kshetre Rudra padeekruthee grahapadair madhye sitham pankajam, kuryath konachathushtayeshtapadakai swarna prabhan swasthekahu Dikshvah-dithya padeshvadholaya layair Lingani peetani thath, Sesham Bhinna Vilomya mathulam Bhadram Supushpam param."

Enclose a square space of 11×11 padas; construct a linga of 9 padas within it. In the 4 angles construct Swasthikas of the color of gold. On the 4 sides lingas with peetahs should be constructed. The lingas should contain of course, linga, pattah, saroja, kanta and kamala and peetah.

Here is the description of another mandala called Umakanthakam.

"Dwahtrimsathpada Bhajitheshu Nalinam Madhye chattushshashtibhihi, thathbahye Thripadaischa peetakamatha Thraikena Veethee Harith, dikshu dwabrahma Rishi dwayairubhayatho Vachah Varairvarsha yuth Lingam bahyapadenas Vidheerithaschitram hi Umakanthakam."

Enclose a square space of 32×32 padas. Form within it a lotus of 64 padas. Round it a ghatra with peeta of 3 padas should be constructed. Near it a green Veethi of 3 padas should be formed. On each side of this Veethidoorways of 7×2 padas should be made. On each side of the doorway lingas containing linga, patta, saroja, kanta, kamala and peetah respectively measuring, 4, 6, 6, 2, 4 and 6 padas should be constructed." "vacha varairvarsha yuth" means "containing va, cha, va, ra, va, and sha."

In all these we see that the creepers contain a lotus ; this lotus containing petals, stalk, stamens, ovary etc, known in Sanscrit as kanda, nahla, dala, upadala , karnika, kesara, and linga. The whole linga represents a Grand Lotus and we cannot conceive of a linga without the corresponding petals etc. Those who have the propensity to pull asunder the petals and the stalk etc from the flower can only be pitied and these maniacs are more fit for lunatic asylum than for civilized society, even though such maniacs passed and still pass for great Acharyas and the words or rather the ravings of such fools can have no value.

Let us now see what the Uprnishads have to say about this Linga. If we turn to the Hamsopanishad we see the following:—

" Yeso sow Paramahamso Bhanukoti pratheekahso yenedam Vyaptham. Thasya Ashtadha Vrithir Bhavathi. Poorvadale punye mathihi, Agneye Nidralasyadayo Bhavanti, yamye krowoye mathihi, Nairuthe pape maneesha, Varunyam Krudayahm, vayavye gamanadow Buddhihi, Sowinye Rathipreethihi Aisane dravayahdnam padme vairagym, kesare jagradavastha, karni kayam Swapnam, Linge sushupthihi, padma thyage Thuriyamyada hamso Nade vilino Bhavathi thath Thureeyahtheetham."

This Paramahamsa is shining like crores of suns. His propensity is eight fold. The Paramahamsa's heart is compared to a lotus. The various component parts of the Lotus are described. The petals of this paramahamsa's heart spread towards the eight directions, east, south-east, south, south-west, west, north-west, north and north-east. The east petal is desire to practise virtue. The south-east is desire for sleep and laziness. The south petal is hankering after cruel actions. The south-west is desire to commit sin. The west petal is desire to play. The north-west petal is desire for walking etc. The north petal is desire for amorous acts and the north-east is desire to amass wealth. The padma (lotus apart from the petals) is Vairagya. The kesaras are the waking state—the Karnika (ovary) the dreaming state, the *Linga* the dead-sleep state and the leaving of the lotus, padma tyaga is Thuriya and when the Hamsa merges in Nada, that state is Thureeyahtheetham. Here the heart of this Paramahamsa is likened to a great lotus. Indeed all upanishads, all agamas, all puranas and other works great and small have likened the heart to the Lotus. Why is this so? We cannot attempt to answer this. Suffice it to say that such is the case—Here we are tempted to quote passages which go to describe the heart as a lotus. In all these we request our readers to bear in mind the quotation from the Hamsopanishad.

(To be continued.)

A. RENGASWAMI IYER.

The Physiology of the Nervous System According to the Hindus.

By P. T. Srinivasa Aiyengar Esq.

I. WHAT IS PRANA?

European physiology, notwithstanding its wonderfully rapid development in the nineteenth century, has not been able to make up its mind about the nature of a nervous impulse. How the vibrations of ether and of air that produce the sensations of light and heat and sound, how the solutions of molecules producing taste in the mouth, the gases that cause smell in the nostrils, affect the nerves, and how that effect is transmitted along them, are questions about which nothing has been discovered.

Says Mr. McDougall (in his *Physiological Psychology*, published in 1905): "As to the essential nature of this '(nervous) impulse' we are still ignorant. . . . It is still, and probably for a long time to come will be, impossible to define the nature of the 'nervous impulse' in physical or chemical terms; . . . it is possible that it involves a form or forms of energy with which we have no nearer acquaintance. . . . Every part of each neurone is irritable, i.e., capable of responding to a stimulus with a katabolic change which initiates a 'nervous impulse.' This katabolic change results in the conversion of chemical potential energy into free nervous energy . . . But the process of liberation of energy in the neurone differs from processes of a similar kind that occur outside living tissues in one very important respect, namely, the quantity of energy liberated in the neurone varies with the intensity of the stimulus."

Hindu writers think that this "nervous impulse" is a wave of a subtle fluid, called Prana, in the "subtle body." Prana flows in minute tubes, called Nadis. This flow is conceived as the conduction of a "fluid-wave of pressure in a pipe," exactly as some European physiologists understand a "nervous impulse" to be. A few of these Nadis are visible in the "gross body," e.g., the central canal of the spinal cord and the medulla oblongata, and the ventricles of the brain; but the rest, those that correspond to the nerves are invisible. This Prana has been generally mistranslated as the

"life-principle" of the Vitalists of European biology; but this mistake is due to the fact that, so long as the Prana is flowing in the Nadis, i.e., "nervous impulses" flow along the nerves, an animal lives, and when the Prana stops, the animal dies.

European biology makes the flow of "nervous impulses" depend upon the flow of blood in the blood-vessels, and assumes that the circulation of blood is a condition precedent to nervous action. This is an unprovable assumption, since without nervous action the heart cannot act; the assigning of priority to the flow of blood is a pure assumption, and the Hindu conception of the priority of nervous action is equally valid.

Prana is not a life-principle, but a "nervous impulse," conceived as a flow of subtle matter in nerve tubes, for the Pranas are always located in the Nadis. Prana is also frequently confounded with breath, especially by Hindu scholars. This is again a case of erroneous translation; for breath is air going into and out of the lungs, and Prana is never spoken of as flowing into the lungs but always as flowing in the nerve tubes. The mistake is due to the fact that the breath, in normal conditions, flows at any time through one nostril; and this is attributed by the Hindus to some cause traceable to some fact in the nervous system.

The flow of breath through one nostril at a time is taken as indicating a corresponding flow of Prana in the nerves on which depend the life-processes of the animal; hence the breath in the nostrils (and not in the lungs) is sometimes loosely spoken of as Prana. Moreover, the flow in the Nadis being the conduction of a pressure wave as in a gaseous medium, Prana, the substratum of this wave, is conceived as a gas and spoken of as Vayu.

There are two kinds of Vayu: (1) Panchikrita-vayu, "molecular air," or compound gas, like the air of the atmosphere; and (2) Vayutamatrā, "atomic air," elementary gas, the substrate of the sensation of touch. Prana is similar in nature to Vayu of the latter kind.

As the *Sankhya Pravachana Bhashya* says: "Though the Prana is a transmutation of the internal instruments (i. e., of Buddhi,

Ahamkara and Manas), it is justifiable to speak of it as Vayu, because its motion is similar to that of Vayu, and it is under the control of the Deva Vayu."

The *Brahma-Sutras* (ii. 4, 8) also say : "It is neither air nor a function (of air)"; for in the *Mundaka Upanishad* (ii. 3, 1) it is said "From it is produced the Prana, the mind, and all organs of sense, ether, air, light, water, and earth, the supporter of all."

In explaining this Sutra, Shankara and Ramanuja both point out that Prana is frequently called air, because the substance of Prana is a special, or Adhyatma (noumenal), condition of air. Its essence is not water or fire, but air, though it is not identical with the air (in our lungs or that blowing round us).

I will close this discussion with two quotations which show without a possibility of doubt, that Prana is nothing but what we call nerve-action.

Brihad Up. (i, 3, 19) says : "From whatever limb Prana goes away, that limb withers." Again, Shankara says in *Sutra Bhashya* (ii. 4, 9): "Prana is the oldest, because it begins its function from the moment when the child is conceived."

This can refer only to the nervous action that presides over the vital process of the foetus, and not to breath."

The above quotation from Sankhya Shastra indicates that Prana is "subtle" matter of the grade of Buddhi and Manas. Physical matter, that which can be observed by our senses, is believed by Hindu philosophers to be Panchi-krita, compounded of five ultimate elements called Tanmatras, the objective bases of sensations. Buddhi and Manas are a grade of matter subtler than these and Prana is of this grade.

Vachaspati Mishra says : "The five Pranas, or life, are the function of the three instruments (Buddhi, Ahamkara, Manas), from being present where they are, and absent where they are not."

The Vedanta would make Prana superior to these. Says *Shat-Brah.* (vi. I, I, I) :

"Non-being (Asat) indeed was this in the beginning, they say. What was that Asat (Non-being)? Those Rishis indeed were the Non-being in the beginning. They say : Who are those Rishis? The Pranas indeed or the Rishis."

Brihad. Up. (ii. I, 20) says : "As the spider comes out with its thread, as small sparks come forth from fire, so from that Atma, all Pranas, all worlds, all senses (Devas), all beings come forth. Its (the Atma's) secret name is the 'Truth of truths.' The Pranas are truth. Of them, It (the Atma) is the Truth."

Thus, according to the Vedanta conception, Prana is the highest grade of matter, and the first objective basis of Atma.

II. THE DIFFERENT KINDS OF PRANA.

Prana is a generalised conception. In the body, it is specialised into various kinds of Pranas. They are of three classes ; (1) the Mukhya Prana ; (2) the five Pranas of physical life ; (3) the eleven Pranas of psychical life.

(I) The Mukhya Prana is the chief Prana. It is the first objective manifestation of Atma (the spirit). This latter can be reached only by introspection (Pratyag-drishti). It reveals itself to objective contemplation as Mukhya Prana, the power which underlies the life of each Bhuta, or concrete object of the mineral, animal or vegetable kingdoms. It builds the crystal, and enables vegetables and animals to carry on their life-functions.

It is called in the Vedas Jyeshtha, Shreshtha, Vasishtha, Pratishtha—the oldest, the best, the richest, the best placed, and so on. The great Rishis of the *Rig-veda* are identified with it by ingenious etymologies invented for their names (*vide Aitareya Aranyaka*, ii. I).

It is identified with Brahman, with Indra, and with Prajna in the *Kaushitkai Upanishad*. It is the highest order of material being conceived by the Vaidic teachers. It is called Asat (lit. Non-being, impermanent being, or more properly phenomenon), and as such is the first manifested being, the oldest of the phenomenal manifestations of the universe. It is the presiding life, the binding unity that makes any collocation of atoms into an object.

When the Self-begotten, Svayambhu, thought : " May I become many,"—Mukhya Prana was the objectivization of that Will to become many. It is the life of the universe.

In this cosmic aspect, this Mukhya Prana is called Hiranyagarbha, and described as being "equal to a grub, equal to a gnat, equal to an elephant, equal to these three worlds, equal to this universe." (*Brihad. Up.*, I. iii. 22.)

In the individual man, Mukhya Prana is the objective representative of his Atma.

As Shankara says, in the *Brahma-Sutra Bhashya* (II. iv. 16) : "And only with the embodied soul the Pranas are permanently connected, as it is seen that when the soul passes out, etc., the Pranas follow it."

This we see from passages such as the following : " When he thus departs, the (Mukhya) Prana passes out after him, and when the Prana thus passes out, all the other Pranas pass after it." (*Brihad. Up.*, IV. iv. 2.)

Thus this Mukhya Prana corresponds to the life-principle of European Vitalists, but is different from it, in that Buddhi, Ahamkara, Manas (which European philosophy treats as faculties of the subject, of the ego), are, with us, aspects of this Prana. It is the highest order of discrete being, the material aspect of Sat, the objective concomitant of Prajna.

Says the *Kaushitaki Upanishad* (iii.) : " Indra said: ' I am Prana, mediate on me as the conscious self (Prajnatma).' What is Prana, that is Prajna (consciousness); what is Prajna, that is Prana; for together they (Prajna and Prana) live in this body and together they go out of it. . . . And that Prana indeed is the self of Prajna, blessed, imperishable, immortal."

This Prana resides in the cave of the heart. Prana, being Sukshma, subtle, minute, resides in the subtle body. The part of the subtle body corresponding to the windpipe, conceived as extended to the epigastric region, is the cave where it plays. From the uvula to the centre of the chest, the length of a man's thumb,

it plays in the Akasha atomic matter of the most tenuous kind, and on its play depend the discharge of the vital functions and the display of consciousness in the body.

European physiology teaches us that the vital functions depend upon the beating of the heart and the periodical discharge of the blood from it. But no force—nervous or otherwise—has been discovered which causes the heart to contract rhythmically; so much so, that it is said “that the muscle-substance of which the heart is made, is itself endowed with the power of contracting and relaxing at regular intervals”—a most unsatisfactory conclusion, since all other muscular contraction depends on the action of some nerves.

The Hindu would explain that the rhythmic beat of the heart is the work of this Mukhya Prana. The quotations already given from the Shruti bear this out. It is a much better explanation of the beating of the heart than that of modern physiology, which has practically given up the problem as hopeless.

The circulation of blood is the chief function of Mukhya Prana only from the point of view of physiology; Buddhi, Ahamkara and Manas also depend upon it. As Madhvacharya explains in his *Sutra Bhashya*, the elements function, and the Vedas, and all this world, came forth from this Prana. This Prana in the man is the analogue of the sun in the cosmos. Pippalada (*Prashna Up.* i) quotes an ancient Rik which says: “Who assumes all forms, golden, the knower of all things, the highest, alone in splendour, the warmer; the thousand-rayed, who abides in a hundred place, the Prana of creatures, the sun rises.” In *Prashna Up.*, iv., these sun is called the external Prana.

It has already been pointed out that the Mukhya Prana is golden, immortal, and called Hiranyagarbha in the cosmos. As the golden Prana is the objective manifestation of the Atma in the body, so the golden Person imagined to be in the sun, is the objective manifestation of the Lord of the solar system. As the Prana supports the life of the body, so the solar energy supports the life of the solar system, of which the sun is the heart.

Says the *Maitrayana Upanishad*, vi.: “He (the Self) bears the Self in two ways; as he who is Prana, and as he who is Aditya. . . . The Sun is the outer Self; the inner Self is Prana. . . . For thus it is said: ‘He who is within the sun is the golden Person, who looks upon this earth from his golden place; he is the same who, after entering the inner lotus of the heart, devours food.’”

Rig-veda (i. 164, 13) makes the same identification. Says a Rishi there : "I saw Prana as a guardian, never tiring, coming and going on his ways (the Nadis). That Prana (in the body being the same as the sun among the Devas) illuminating the principal and intermediate quarters of the sky, is returning constantly in the midst of the worlds."

Either in the body of man or in the body of the solar system, it is the support, the life-giving power of the Lord, his higher nature, by which, according to the *Bhagavad Gita*, "all this universe is upheld."

As Madhvacharya says : "Prana in the body or the cosmos is verily the middle ; for it is between all beings on the one side and the Supreme Lord on the other, and is hence the highest form of discrete Being in the manifested worlds,"

(2) The five Pranas. This Mukhya Prana is differentiated into five kinds, for the purpose of discharging the various functions of physical life. I have already pointed out that European physiology has not yet understood the nature of a "nervous impulse." Hence, it is not likely to admit of a five-fold sub-division of it ; but this is what the Hindus teach. The five sub-divisions of nervous energy connected with organic life are Prana, Apana, Vyana, Samana, and Udana. They are five modifications of Mukhya Prana, that circulate (*syand* is the Samskrit verb used to indicate this idea) in the nerve tubes and keep up the life-functions.

Prana, the first of these, is to be distinguished from Prana used for a nerve impulse in general, or again for Mukhya Prana. This Prana is said to reside in the region between the heart and navel of the subtle body and to rise upwards and cause respiration.

It is curious that physiology also makes normal respiration primarily depend on afferent impulses going along the vagus nerve to the respiratory centre in the medulla oblongata, taking exactly the course that Prana is said to take in Indian books to cause respiration (*vide Starling's Human Physiology*, pp. 388-394).

This Prana is said to be red in colour and bright like a jewel.

Apana is the nervous energy presiding over the functions of the kidneys, the large intestines and the testes, and helps the expulsion of their products. It starts from the region of the semi-lunar ganglion, and corresponds to the nervous impulses starting

from the lumbosacral (spinal) nerves, and circulates through the sympathetic ganglia and nerves connected therewith. This Apana is said to be of Indragopa (cochineal) colour. Prana and Apana rest, as it were, on each other, normally pulling away from each other and thus keeping each other in possession.

Vyana circulates through the seventy-two crores and odd minute Nadis. It maintains the general functional equilibrium of the body. Vyana is also said to abide in the junction of Prana and Apana. It is brought into play when doing "works of strength"; one holds in the breath and compresses the muscles at the lower half of the trunk. According to Gaudapada, by Vyana "internal division and diffusion through the body are effected." It is flame-coloured. It perhaps corresponds to the nervous energy of the vaso-motor system.

Samana presides over the digestion and distribution of the "subtle (digested) food to the tissues. It will hence correspond to the nervous energy of the sympathetic system connected with digestion and the supply of food and oxygen to the tissues. It is of the colour of cow's milk.

Udana presides over the head, neck, and temples, while a person is alive. At death, it leads the Prana, *via* the third ventricle, to the anterior fontanelle and out of the body. It is of a pale yellow colour, and presides over the organic life of the head.

Possibly the macrocosmic correspondences of these five Pranas will help us more easily to comprehend their functions. This Prana in the cosmos is the sun; Apana is the earth, the supporter of all; Vyana is all-pervading air; Samana the Akasha, and Udana light.

(3) The eleven Pranas. These are the nervous energies of psychical life, that of sensation, voluntary action and thought. The Pranas of the Jnanendriyas are those that flow in the olfactory, gustatory, optic, tactile and auditory nerves. At the sensorium, where these nerves take their rise, the substrata of these five sensations reside. Thus where the olfactory nerves take their rise, there is Gandha-tanmatra, lit. "smell pure and simple," an elementary substance which by various combinations called Panchikarana, or quintuplication, becomes earth; and so on for the other four sensations.

Thus when the Hindu speaks of Akasha being Shabdatanmatra, people mistranslate the statement into sound consisting of vibrations of Akasha, and ridicule the Hindu Naiayikas on that

account. It properly means that Shabdi-tanmatra, the pure sensation of sound, or rather the elementary matter where it inheres, viz., Akasha, resides in the sensorium, and the same Akasha, being mixed with air, etc., forms the compound Akasha all round us.

European physiology cannot explain how sound, which is a vibration of air, can become a sensation inside us. Indian Nyaya says that the sound we hear and the sound outside us are in the same elementary substance, called Akasha. Surely the Hindu explanation is sound as an explanation, only it cannot be proved by the canons by which physical facts are proved, because the elementary substance involved in the explanation is super-physical.

The five sensations, then, depending on five Tanmatras, super-physical elements, the Pranas corresponding to them are five-fold. The five Karmendriyas are the five sets of voluntary muscles, those concerned in speaking, grasping with the hands, walking, evacuation, and emission.

The eleventh Prana is that of Manas, the nervous energies concerned with thought. Manas is here used in a loose way to indicate what the subtle analysis of the Sankhyas discriminates as Buddhi, Ahamkara and Manas proper, which roughly correspond to will, self-consciousness and formative imagination or perceptive faculty (Adhyavasaya, Abhimana, Sankalpaka); and these mental functions are associated with the play of three modifications of a certain kind of Prana of the highest grade of matter.

In Indian philosophy the internal mental functions and objective play of Prana are inseparably associated with each other. One is not the cause of the other; there is no question of precedence between them.

This Prana plays in the cavities of the brain (the ventricles), and also in the Sushumna, the central canal of the spinal cord. As described in the *Taittiriya Up.*, (I, vi.): "Between the palates it (the uvula) hangs like a nipple—that is the birth place of Indra. Where the root of the hair divides, there he opens the two sides of the head (he enters Agni, Vayu, Aditya, and Brahman). . . . He there obtains lordship, he reaches the lord of the Manas. He becomes lord of speech, lord of sight, lord of hearing, lord of Vijnana (knowledge). Nay, more than this; there is the Brahman, whose body is Akasha, whose nature is Truth, who rejoices in the Pranas, is delighted in the mind, is perfect in peace, immortal. Worship thus."

A more detailed description of this supreme Prana cannot be attempted as it is the object of this article to give only a general view of the subject.

III. THE NADIS.

The Nadis are the tubes of nervous matter, in which the Pranas flow. They are of two classes, those connected with involuntary action, with man's physical life, which does not normally show itself in his consciousness, and those connected with voluntary action, with his psychical life, bound up with his consciousness. It has been already pointed out that psychical life (*i.e.* the Prana corresponding to Manas) resides in the cavities of the brain. Its centre is the third ventricle, whence it acts all through the brain, innervating the eyes, ears and the organ of smell, and down the front to the pharynx and tongue to cause voice and help to sense taste, and down the back, along the spinal tube, subserving the sense of touch, and the four Kārnendriyas except Vak (voice). These two tubes from the third ventricle are each called Sushumna.

On the sides of the Sushumna in the spinal tube are the Ida and the Pingala, through which currents of Vayu-tattva ("atomic air") and Agni-tattva ("atomic fire") flow. When the Ida is active the Pingala is passive and *vice versa*. According to Hindu ideas, when the Ida is active the breath flows through the left nostril; and when the Pingala is active the breath flows through the right nostril.

It is curious that this fact—that while both lungs act always, the breath plays normally only through one nostril at any given moment, and that there is a periodical alternation of the flow through the right and left nostrils—seems quite to have escaped the notice of European science.

Besides these two, ten other Nadis parallel to them are mentioned. These twelve extend from the Region of the lumbosacral enlargement of the spinal cord to the floor of the fourth ventricle—the Dyadashantara (the end of the twelve).

The Nadis conveying the Prana of organic life correspond to the sympathetic system. The peculiarity of this system is that the nerves at various places enter into ganglia, where they seem to be reinforced. Five of these ganglia are given great prominence in certain forms of Yoga that deal with the animal non-mental life of man. They are Muladhara (sacral), Svadhishthana (hypogastric), Manipuraka (solar), Anahata (stellate), and Vishuddhi (superior cervical).

Besides these, the six plexuses in the course of the spinal cord seem to be connected with the higher forms of Yoga, but that is a subject about which very little is taught in books.—*The Theosophical Review.*

The late Colonel H. S. Olcott.

It is with deep regret that we have to record the death of Colonel H. S. Olcott, which took place at Adyar, on Sunday morning (the 17th February 07). For a number of days past his condition had been critical, and latterly quite hopeless. To the educated man not only in India but throughout the civilised world the late Colonel Olcott was known as the founder, organiser and leader of a world-wide religious movement which has been instrumental in propagating and diffusing the neglected truths of the world's ancient religions. In the year 1875 the Theosophical Society was founded.

Colonel Olcott had before the starting of the Theosophical Society been known in the United States of America as a man of courage, energy and first rate practical capacity through his exposure of a series of extensive and systematic frauds perpetrated by men of wealth and position, by which the State Treasury was swindled of large sums of money. The power thus revealed to the world he brought to bear on the diffusion and organisation of a world-wide movement with the result, that the Theosophical Society has branch associations affiliated to it all over the world, and Theosophic thought has left its marks on the culture and even the vocabulary of the civilised world. The debt the Eastern nations owe to him is great. He has been largely instrumental in turning their thoughts to what is true, good and beautiful in their religions. The scientific world too is under no slight obligation to him, for he with others disturbed the dangerous slumber of dogmatism into which it had fallen. Whatever the ultimate verdict of science on the problems he helped to place before the public, not even his opponents can grudge him the need of praise that rightly belongs to him for stimulating and exhorting men of science to revise their Judgments. Till increasing years brought a natural decline in his vigour, he was a familiar figure on public platforms, where his gift of flowing and powerful eloquence readily moved his audiences. To the last he presided over the deliberations of the Theosophic Society and his Journeys all over the world in furtherance of its interests constitute a record which would be hard to beat. A remarkable man and a remarkable career have come to an end. May his Soul rest in peace !

Reviews.

Theosophical Review, London, December 1906: is a very interesting number. The 'Watch Tower' gives a very clear explanation of the Trikaya, or the Three Modes of Activity, generally called the Three Bodies of the Buddha, viz., the Dharmakaya, the Sambhogakaya and the Nirmanakaya. The root meaning that underlies the conception of Bodhi is evidently the consummation of highest Gnosis or self-realisation, or identification of the individual with the universe. Other articles of interest are one by Mr. Mead upon "Heresy" and one on "The Theosophic Movement" by Dr. Hubbe Schleiden. There is also an article by P. T. Srinivasa Aiyengar on 'The Physiology of the Nervous system according to the Hindus,' which we extract elsewhere in this issue.

Theosophy in India, Benares, December 1906: In it is commenced an important paper on the 'Significance of Psychic Experiments.' Miss Edger's 'Studies in the Pedigree of Man' are continued. There are other articles on the 'Vital airs' by P. T. S., and the Construction of the Tesseract. 'The necessity of the Guru for the spiritual life', commenced in the October issue by 'Seeker' is concluded herein.

Central Hindu College Magazine, Benares, December 1906; gives an interesting account of Mrs. Besants' tour through the Bombay District. Miss Wilson's "Science Jottings" are always interesting and contain some useful hints on the physical training of women; also it contains several legends and stories of Indian heroes, and an article on Some Natural Wonders' with illustrations.

Virjanand Magazine, Partabgarh (Oudh), December 1906: The first three leading articles are 'the Marriage of the Tank,' 'Why I became a Teetotaler', 'Swami Dayanand Saraswati's Beliefs.' In the first is mentioned the value which the Indians put on tank and tree, how a tank is dug and married after its completion, and how the marriage of the tank was accompanied a century ago by a sacrifice in which, instead of a kid as at present, the victim used to be a young and beautiful maiden. The writer further narrates the story of a ruined temple and tank in the South Behar, the popular belief for their ruin being that it was visited by the wrath of God on account of the misdeeds of the *punjari* of the temple, who being disappointed of his amorous overtures to a fair Bania Maiden, caused her to be sacrificed on the occasion of the marriage of a tank. The concluding portion of the article brings out well the present status of our priests and heads of Mutts. "These are the pathetic instances of noble

maidens who prefer to sacrifice themselves rather than sacrifice their chastity. The so-called *maitees* and *dasees* who sell flowers, beads sandal and rosaries at Ajodhya, Benares and other places of Hindu Pilgrimage are in the private keeping of the well-fed, fat, ignorant, crafty and impious *pujarees* and *mahants*. Any one of the readers who has had the opportunity to see the inner life of the *pujarees*, will readily admit that most heinous crimes are being committed almost every moment by one of these *pujaries*, under the patronage of the unsuspecting idol worshippers. The best way to reform is to use the money that is being squandered on temples and thus affording these impious *pujaries* means for purposes nefarious; in opening orphanages, schools for girls, homes for widows and other religious institutions."

The Hindu Spiritual Magazine, Calcutta, January 1907, opens with "the Aim and Scope of Hindu Spiritualism, in which is described Heaven, Hades, and Hell as seen by a lady in the Mirror of Wisdom. The writer concludes with an exhortation to cultivate spiritualism if anybody wish to benefit himself everlasting. This is followed by other articles of interest, viz, Hypnotism, Spirit initiated by a Saint, Dr. Peebles in India &c. The Magazine deals solely with subjects of the spiritual world or bearing on Mesmerism &c.

Indian Magazine and Review, London, January 1907. Opens with its new Year Greetings to its readers and sets forth in detail the objects of the National Indian Association, the work it has done in England and India, and the scope of the Magazine and the Association. An interesting and important lecture 'The Effects of Western Education on Hindu Domestic Life' by Mr. Har Dayal, M.A., appears in this issue.

The Almanack for 1907 by B. Suryanarain Row Esq, B.A., M.R.A.S, Editor of the Astrological Magazine, Madras, Price Annas 8 per Copy. This is the first of its kind in English, containing movements of all important planets and hints for doing and avoiding good and bad work &c. Great credit is due to the author for the preparation of such an almanack in English. We welcome its publication and thank the author for having sent a copy to us.

We beg to acknowledge with thanks the receipt of the following exchanges:

The Grail, December 06; The Mazdozan, August and December 06; The Worlds Advance Thought (October and November 06); The Maha Bodhi (December 06); Abkari (January 07); The Industrial India, (December 06; The Brahavadin, (December 06); The Arya, (October 06); The Indian Nation; The Weekly Chronicle; Prabuddha Bharata (January 07); The Vegetarian Magazine, (December 06) Vivasaya Deepika, (Nos. 3 to 8); Tamil Zenana Magazine; Viveka Chintamani; The Crescent; The Astrological Magazine (February 07); The Aryan (Tamil); Jananukulan, Tamil; The Hindu Organ (Jaffna).

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