

books of his own religion, that he knows all about his religion, and others do not, lives in a fool's paradise; because the true basis of every great religion is something quite different from what is commonly accepted by the masses. It is therefore necessary to study as many scriptures as we can, in order to gain as much knowledge of the Spirit as we possibly can in the present state of human evolution, always bearing in mind the wise words of the "Bhagavad Gîtâ":

"It is best to die in one's own *dharma*; the *dharma* of another is full of dangers."

NASARVANJI F. BILIMORIA.

(To be concluded.)

PREDESTINATION AND FREE-WILL.

No. IV.

WHAT DO HINDU BOOKS SAY ?

(Continued from page 203).

CONSCIOUSNESS is thus at the root of all manifestation. In its effects it is known as evolution: in its causes it may be known as involution. It descends, but it also ascends. Consciousness works in circles, and infinity conceived in circles solves many puzzles presented as psychological problems, which would never see solution if infinity were conceived as straight lines with no beginning and no end. The doctrine of original sin, and all the free-will controversies, become puzzles, because mankind either takes its views as confined to a link of an infinity of causes, or it infers unreason by forgetting the Rule of Cycles made up of evolution and involution; and each of these appearing to our limited view as effect and cause, *per se*, but really alternating, as the one or the other is viewed in succession. There are causes, primary and secondary. If a man attributes to his present single life all that has been, it is tantamount to his ignorance of primary causes in addition to those of the secondary causes which personate him as the being of the current life he is leading. Primary causes once admitted, in other words, antecedent and consequent incarnations of man beyond the present life once admitted, linking all by the Law of Continuity, the Christians would neither stick to their originality of sin nor that of the universe, nor impugn the Hindus as belonging to the Stoic brotherhood who posited Fatalism.

Consciousness is at the root, and has the double aspect of 'pre-ordination' and 'liberty.' Action is *Karma*, which is the manifestation of consciousness. Like the heat-energy of the sun stored in the wood, consciousness is, as it were, stored in action. An illustration of this is memory. Remembrance of past acts is itself an act of consciousness. An act, the result of consciousness, connotes a consciousness of liberty, but the consciousness of a remembered act is a pre-ordained consciousness. This is the double aspect of consciousness, and that is how a

man is moulded. He is a freeman as well as a bondman ; free, looking forward, and bound, looking back. And he moves in a circle of causes and effects alternating, just in the same manner as all stars, planets and systems move in orbits, just as nights and days alternate, just as our waking and sleeping states alternate, just as the tree comes out of the seed and seeds come out of the tree. *Karma* is thus a wheel, in a point of which man may be said to take his place. As an exception to this universal law, as an exception to the rule of Continuity, as a break of the principle of Antecedents and Sequences invariably connected, no religion can be acceptable which would assert that man all at once jumped into creation by the sudden act of a whimsical God. In so far then as man is a link somewhere in the circular chain of events, he is connected with all the past, and connected with all the future. *Ex nihilo nihil fit* is the Hindu rule ; so says their Scripture, the Bhagavad Gîtâ :—

नास्तोविद्यतेभावो नाभावोविद्यतेसतः ॥*

‘To the non-existing there cannot be existence ; to the existing no non-existence.’

“Predestination” and “free-will” are co-ordinate. In the one is involved the other. Any one with common sense can see that man to-day, is what he is, from what he was, and that he can make himself in the future from what he is. Like the one life are all the lives he has passed through and all the lives he may pass through, the several lives being so many individual items in the list of his destiny, or as Bhagavad Gîtâ says :—†

सूत्रेमाणिगणाइव ।

i.e., ‘like so many beads strung on a thread.’

Man’s life is an *Âdi* (beginning), and is yet the *Sêsha* (the remainder). The meaning of this may be pondered over. Ever a beginning and yet ever a remainder constitutes the symbol *Âdi-Sêsha*, which is represented in a circle. The remainder is always in the beginning. This is represented by the tail of *Âdi-Sêsha*, the serpent, grasped in its mouth (the serpent being the symbol of eternity), and shows that Continuity is the law, which expresses itself in circles.

It is the ‘habit’ of the seed to grow its tree, and it becomes the ‘habit’ of the tree in its turn to produce the seed. So runs man’s destiny. He is a product of himself and his environment.

We may be charged with pleonasm, but the subject is so vast and complicated that its treatment in several ways justifies it. Nor need confusion be made when such treatment is found to be a compound of consciousness, free-will and predestination. The treatment may not appear consistent, nor like logical analysis. In its not being so, there is a purpose, viz., to present it to the reader popularly, but at the same time philosophically. To the charge of repetition, the reply is that re-

* Bhagavad Gîtâ, II, 16. † Book VII, 7. (Bhâg. Gîtâ.)

petition is a necessary method of education. With these remarks, let us pursue the subject whithersoever it may lead us.

Predestination is the product of free-willed habit, expressed in Sanskrit as *Karma-vāsanā*. Habit is at first a conscious effort. By repetition, the effort becomes gradually eliminated, and habit is automatic. It is automatic, yet is never independent of the self-creative original, on which it ever reposes, and without which it cannot, *per se*, exist or work.

Now, consider man as a spirit, cooped in the body's cage. Man is neither his eye, nor his ear, nor his brain, nor his heart; but yet they all contribute towards his personality. And apart from them all, he exists as "I," as the 'self-conscious' entity: a self-consciousness which may be said to be a compound consciousness in his embodied state. The embodied state is a composition of myriad little consciousnesses, of each of which he was at one time or another the author, but is now their slave. By yogic processes, the lost authorship can be recovered, Patanjali tells us. That is the yogic way of studying man. Till this education or re-assertion is completed, man is a prisoner. The self-consciousness preserves only an indirect supervision, and this must change to direct intervention. Then is he master. The law of necessary existence is a law made out of our own previous free-choice, and that law so far pre-ordains, but the spirit within, frets and chafes and struggles to free itself from self-created bonds. And all this inward struggle is the index of our pristine freedom which has never completely succumbed, nor will so long as the struggle is maintained. We are the children of our past but are the fathers of our future. In the womb of yesterday we have lain, but to-morrow lies in ourselves. The former is necessity, the latter is liberty.

The great difference between Christianity and Hinduism is that the former views but one life, the latter many lives, which is the law of *Karma* or continuity of existence. The question often asked is, why we have no memory of such births? The reply is: Have you memory of all the events of the present life? Could you minutely describe all that you did yesterday—nay, all that you did an hour ago? No. And who remembers his own birth from his mother? And yet nobody can deny that he *must* have been so born. Thus, want of memory cannot constitute an argument for denying the continuity of life, prospective and retrospective. Śrī Krishna speaks to Arjuna thus:—

बहूनिमेव्यतीतानि जन्मानितवचार्जुन ।

तान्यहं वेदस्वर्गाणि न त्वेवत्यपरंतप ॥

i.e., 'Arjuna! thou hast had many lives in the past, I have had many also. I remember them all, but not thou thine.'*

Thus memory is lost, but facts are there, and lost memory is no disproof of the existence of facts. Those who wish to recover memory can do so if the path laid down by Patanjali be pursued.†

* Bhagavad Gītā, Bk. IV, 5.

† Vide *Yōga Sūtra*, III, 18. "Samskāra-sākshāt-karanāt pūrvajāti-jñānam" et seq.

Predestination and Free-will are thus explicable on no other doctrine than that of *Karma*. In the treatment of this question, consciousness enters as a very necessary factor. For consciousness is in both. It enters into *predestination* as unconscious consciousness, and enters into *free-will* as conscious consciousness. We have thus two equations which may be written down as follows:—

(1) Predestination = the (present) 'I'—free-will potency.

(2) Free-will = the (present) 'I'—predestination.

Consciousness transferred from its original manufactory to the automatic centres never loses in efficiency. On the other hand its action is more orderly and regular. This is the difference between the sympathetic and the voluntary nervous systems. This question has a bearing on the efficacy of 'Mantras.' Leaving for the present those which are merely muttered and used as a vehicle for the passage of will-force, we will take the famous *Gâyatri*, which forms an integral part of the *Sandhya* of every *Dvija* of India. The day it was first taught, it was learnt with great care, accuracy, and much intelligent attention. But gradually, it became in our mouths like the prayer wheel of the Tibetan Buddhists. The mind gets entirely disengaged from the *Gâyatri*, either as regards its import or even the rhythmic pronunciation of the several terms composing it. And yet the mouth performs the function, though the mind may be engaged on other matters. The efficacy of the habitual repetition of that which was once set in motion by a voluntary act of consciousness, may thus be believed in, though it is beyond question that if will-force did infuse into it a re-inforcing power daily, the automatic efficiency would be greatly increased.

It has now been demonstrated that Hindus are not fatalists nor indifferentists. But they believe in *Karma* as a given condition or conditions which mankind is forced to accept; and which mankind has yet latitude to manipulate; and new conditions are thus given birth to. That such is the doctrine of the Hindus was shown by reference to their sacred books.

It has been shown that the Triune Principle of the Universe, God, Soul and Matter, is the fundamental basis on which rests the question of *predestination* and *free-will*; and it was, *en passant*, hinted what sort of relation subsisted between the three postulates of existence, *viz.*, God, Soul and Matter.

Then it was shown that the conditions of the visible or the manifested Universe, in which the Atmic Monad appears as the embodied creature, man, involved the recognition on the moral plane, of the two sets of working forces, '*pápa*' and '*puñya*,' corresponding to the forces of attraction and repulsion on the physical plane.

This led to an inquiry as to what is sin, and what was the origin of it, and it was shown that there was no origin, an origin being a philosophical impossibility. This position was shown as receiving support from such thinkers as Herbert Spencer and Max Müller.

It was next shown that conditioned existence was due to the union of the two verities known as *Chit* and *Achit*, or in other words *purusha* and *prakriti*. That *Samsāra* was this conditioned existence. That these two principles eternally co-existed was pointed out by a reference to Bhagavad Gītā, XIII., 19.*

It was then proved by reference to the Upanishadic passages and the Vedānta Sūtras that *Chit* was the 'knower' as well as the 'actor,' and *Achit* was its instrument; and that in the capacities of 'knowing and acting,' lay the free-agency of *Chit* or the Soul, but it was a conditioned free-agency. That *Chit* is inherently ever-creative, though under given conditions, was further corroborated by such passages as Gītā, III, 5.†

That free-agency connoted free-willing, and free-willing was consciousness, was shown by a discussion of what consciousness was, how it was divisible into primary and secondary aspects, or involuntary and voluntary, or automatic and original (or creative), the pairs of terms corresponding with *predestination* and *free-will* respectively. This naturally led to a notice of reflex actions and sympathetic nervous action according to human physiology.

This turned on the statement of the doctrine of *Karma* and re-incarnation, and it was shown that it worked in cycles; and that the hope of the fallen man lay in circles, for only in circles one can ascend and descend and regain the points of departure. For if the descent of spirit into matter were in an infinite straight line, it must infinitely descend and infinitely deteriorate into grossness, and there would thus be a single force of predestination ever gravitating downwards, and no opportunity left for free-will to check the descent somewhere, and turn the course upwards.

How free-will was in shackles was further explained by a reference to such popular expressions as "ill-luck," "bad stars," "a creature of circumstances," &c.

That it is not entirely "kismet" that works, was shown by the otherwise non-utility of all moral laws and regulations, known as *Sāstras*, which, by laying down the conduct for man impliedly appealed to his inherent free nature. The aphorism "*Karthā sāstrārthavatvāt*,"‡ it may be remembered, was cited in this connexion.

So far then it has been shown how the question of *predestination* and *free-will* is a question dependent on the interaction of two only out of the three fundamental postulates of existence, viz., *Chit* and *Achit*. What the province of *Ivara*, or God is, in this question, we propose to discuss in the next paper, should space be kindly accorded.

A. GOVINDA CHARLU.

(To be concluded.)

* '*Prakritim purushanchaiva viddhy-anādinibhāvapi*,' &c.

† "*Nahi kaschit kshanamapi*," &c.

‡ *Brahma Sūtra*, II, iii, 33.