

some or all the frightful things foretold by the seers and seeresses of our time.\*

H. S. O.

# PREDESTINATION AND FREE-WILL.

No. V.

WHAT DO HINDU BOOKS SAY?

[Continued from page 281.]

THAT man's destiny lies in his own hands has been amply proved. But this involved the two postulates *Chit* and *Achit* only. That man has it in his power to become his own friend, or his own enemy according to his own choice, shows that there is a certain latitude in him of free-will to become what he may wish. The *Bhagavad Gîtâ* tells us :

"By the mind shall the soul be lifted. No distress shall be allowed to approach the soul. The mind indeed is the soul's friend, and the mind is its foe, according as one has control over self, or otherwise."

*Vishnu-purâna* tells us :—

"To man, mind alone is what causes bondage and what causes liberation."

The same principle is seen asserted in the famous *Sanatsujâtiya*† :—

"Him, knowest thou not, the destroyer in thy body?" Again, *Manu* inculcates the same lesson in VIII., 84. Not to multiply extracts, it is seen at once that man has the choice to work out his own salvation. In this work the struggle is between the two forces *predestination* and *free-will*. So far, self-effort; but here comes *Isvara*, the third postulate of existence. The question now is, is man, by himself, unaided, able to work out his salvation? And what does salvation mean? Is it simple *Âtmic*-realization, or *Isvaric*-realization? In other words, what is man's highest ideal; *Kaivalya* or *Brahmânubhava*? That is to say, does he seek his own soul (*Chit*) or does he seek God? Great controversies, diversities of opinion, and a plethora of dialecticism have arisen on this subject. But our present purpose is not pursuit of inquiry in this direction, though we have been tempted to state the matter as one full of interest. Going back then to the question of how far *Isvara* is concerned in man's salvation, we shall but inquire briefly how far man's own strength serves him in his struggle for *Moksha*, and whether he needs a greater strength to help him, be the *Moksha* either *Âtmic*-isolation, or *Isvaric*-attainment. A passage from the writings of Bâbu

\* [I can add to the editor's interesting compilation a fact that came within my own knowledge. The late Mrs. English was a natural clairvoyant and throughout her whole life had psychical experiences, often of a prophetic character. About a year before the outbreak of the American civil war she saw appear in the sky, one morning in broad day-light and distinctly outlined, a spectral troop of cavalry in rapid march moving in a southerly direction.]

W. A. E.

† *Mahâbhârata* Udyoga Parva—41st Adhyâya, verse 15. VI. 5.

Keshub Chunder Sen, the renowned *Brâhma* Reformer of this century is given here as a prelude to the question in point.

"The experience of all mankind ever since man was born, down to the present time, has testified that unaided human power is not enough to overcome evil, to guard the soul against sin. We feel this daily, yes hourly in our struggles with the temptations of the world. It is not a matter which can be argued out by any appeal to the authority of books or to the deductions of logic. No ; I would appeal to your experiences, and ask you whether you have spiritual nerve enough within you to guard yourself against every sin, not one sin or two sins, not five varieties of sin, but every manner and kind of sin. Your natural temperament and the peculiar advantages of your social position or education or age may put you beyond particular temptations : you may be above theft and murder and other similar crimes, but have you conquered all the passions and lusts of the flesh ; are you liable to no sin whatever ? I say there is not a man of flesh and blood on earth who can triumphantly say, ' Here am I ; come all manner of sin and temptation, my heart is proof against all attacks.' The fact is, God's aid is absolutely necessary—the eyes must be lifted up, and we must invoke the blessings of that Divine Father without whose aid man cannot advance one single step in the path of religious progress."\*

Says Archbishop Trench : " No thoughtful student of the past records of man can refuse to acknowledge that through all its history there has run the hope of a redemption from the evil which oppresses it ; and as little can deny that this hope has continually attached itself to some single man. The help that is coming to the world has been incorporated in a person. The generations of men, weak and helpless in themselves, have evermore been looking after ONE in whom they may find all they seek for, vainly, in themselves and in those around them."

The celebrated Reformer of the 11th century, *Srî Râmânûja*, affirmed with all force the insufficiency of man's unaided efforts, and said that but a little understanding is committed to man's care, and no more... From this understanding—which is given him—he is to help himself, and " God helps those who help themselves." There is thus work for man to do ; for him to exercise his free-will, as *Chit* ; and there is work for Him to whom he must look up as God (*Isvara*), who stands to man as the ocean of *Chit* does to a depending wave thereon ; the two *Chits* in the relation of indissoluble dependence. Now if God be taken away, religion finds itself driven to put in the place of the ostracised Universal Soul some man-god or man-gods. When we are told the futility of expecting any help from God, we are yet not left entirely to our own resources, but are asked to look up for help to some higher intelligences than ourselves, say a hierarchy of Illuminated men somewhere above the ordinary mortals, but who are equally as much removed

\*On prayer, pp. 236-237, Keshub Chunder Sen's lectures, by Miss S. D. Collett.

from our ordinary vision as is the single Lord. Such a body of men must either be monarchical, if there is one Lord under whose orders they work, or they are oligarchical, or democratic. Now if there is a series of consciousnesses, it is a scale which must necessarily terminate in one point or supreme spirit: there must be One Consciousness to whom all differentiated or limited consciousnesses must be subordinate. All metaphysical induction, and every ontological method always leads to the recognition of a Unity. And that Unity is the Ruling Spirit, God. Every religion which has attempted to demolish this metaphysically necessary postulate has been obliged to elevate some deified man or men; and—if the Universe is no chaos—the question is, whether such men rule that universe as a democratic body, or do they obey superior beings above them, these superior beings having others still more superior, above them, and thus logically leading one to a point of rest and supreme authority, *viz.*, the Ultimate One? If many Gods rule the universe, the question again arises, do they act independently of each other, and if so how do they do it, in concert or in disagreement? Independent action in either form must create confusion. The very fact of consultation, which is a necessary feature of action in concert, involves the conception of some relationship as superior and inferior, command and obedience. Says Patanjali in his Yoga Sûtra, I., 24, "God is a particular soul," &c.; and Bhoja in his commentary thereon writes thus:—"Nor is there a multiplicity of Gods, for if we admit their equality there must be diversity of object, and the object (of the inquiry into the cause of creation) is defeated; and if we admit relative greatness, he who is the greatest is God, because in Him almightiness attains its highest limit." Whichever way we turn we are confronted with the stubborn fact that no attempt to dethrone God can ever succeed. Buddhism took birth in India for example. It was an off-shoot of Hindnism, and its leading aim was to make that portion of man perfect which constitutes his moral character, so that it took up one important side of the soul's evolution, but beyond this, as regards a God and Lord above, at least exoterically, it took up an attitude which Hinduism proper considered as God-less, and that is why Buddhism could never maintain ground in India, but had to carry its purely ethical mission beyond India's limits.

In India itself, Advaitism teaches us that man is God. *Aham Brahmasmi*, is the great Upanishad Mahāvākya, which is too literally interpreted. The questions that rise here are whether man *has been* God, *is* God, or is going to *become* God; secondly, whether men are Gods, *distributively* considered, or all men one God *collectively* considered? and thirdly—if it is a question of *becoming* God,—whether there *was* a God before the God which a man (or men) is going to become? 'I am God,' says the Upanishad, "Thou art That," says it; and therefore what seems different and what seems many is a mere seeming, a dupery of the senses; and therefore all questions as to man's identity with God are stilled once for all. Mâyâ or illusion or

the unreality of events explains all. But Gauda-pûrnânanda, a great Advaita philosopher, says:—"Thou art verily rifled, O thou animal soul, of thy understanding, by this dark theory of *Mâyâ*, because, like a maniac thou constantly ravest, 'I am Brahma.' Where is thy divinity, thy sovereignty, thy omniscience? O thou animal soul! thou art as different from Brahma as is a mustard seed from Mount *Meru*. Thou art a finite soul, He is infinite. Thou canst occupy but one space at a time, He is always everywhere. Thou art momentarily happy or miserable, He is happy at all times. How canst thou say 'I am He?' Hast thou no shame?"

The Theosophical Society has sometimes been identified with Buddhism, sometimes with Advaitism and sometimes with other 'isms.' But not to go to great lengths to disprove this, two extracts from the utterances of ardent theosophists seem sufficient. One is from the Esoteric Buddhism itself, where Mr. A. P. Sinnett says about the Brothers thus:—"Those great beings, the perfected efflorescence of former humanity, who, though far from constituting a supreme God, reign nevertheless in a divine way over the destinies of our world, are not only *not* omnipotent, but, great as they are, are restricted as regards their action by comparatively narrow limits. It would seem as if, when the stage is, so to speak, prepared afresh for a new drama of life, they are able to introduce some improvements into the action,—derived from their own experience in the drama with which they were concerned, but are only capable as regards the main construction of the piece, of repeating that which has been represented before. They can do on a large scale what a gardener can do with dahlias on a small one; he can evolve considerable improvements in form and colour, but his flowers, however carefully tended, will be dahlias still."\* So then Theosophy (1) does not deny God, as atheism does, (2) it asserts the law of *Karma* as binding on the Great Brotherhood as on ourselves, poor mortals, and (3) it gives us the Brotherhood in addition to God-hood, to help humanity in its onward progress towards spiritual perfection. In giving us a Brotherhood, Theosophy has but re-asserted in a better form the great principle of mediation, which is a necessary link between God and man. It establishes the fact of God working through His agents. And it establishes the necessity of incarnation, in order that the Divine may reach the human. So far then the position of Theosophy is clear; and it can therefore never be identified with sectarian Buddhism which dethrones God to place a man thereon. The same author in his latest work, "*The Growth of the Soul*," writes as follows:—

"Occultism would be ridiculously misunderstood if it were supposed to ignore the existence of Divine Will operating through nature to determine just results in connection with the progress of humanity—(p. 184)."

\* *Esoteric Buddhism*, pp. 139-40 (Edn. of 1893).

The attitude of Theosophy towards Advaitism will now be explained in the words of another theosophist, viz., Mr. W. B. Old. He says : "The 'Secret Doctrine' is more allied to the teachings of the Purānas than to the Advaita system of Sankarāchārya, and an eternal dualism pervades even the highest conceptions of the universe, Parabrahman being only a screen against which the endless panorama of successive *Manvantaras* and *Pralayas* is displayed. The re-appearance of the monads after a *Mahāpralaya*, with their Karmic tendencies, certainly gives a strong aspect of Dvaitism to the teachings of the 'Secret Doctrine.' On the other hand, the underlying unity of all things is frequently proclaimed, though not in the sense of Śrī Sankarāchārya's Advaitism, since the 'Secret Doctrine' regards the universe as real, whereas Sankarāchārya regards the whole of the phenomenal world only as a modification of the cognizing principle and not separable therefrom."\*

Next we shall consider the significance of a passage written by H. P. B., and examine its bearings in relation to Upanishads and other Aryan Scriptures. The passage in question is that which occurs on p. 43 of "Key to Theosophy." To the question, "Then are you atheists?" the reply is :—

"\* \* \*. We believe in a Universal Divine Principle, the root of all, from which all proceeds, and within which all shall be absorbed at the end of the great cycle of Being."

Strikingly is this an echo of the very first verse of the first *Anuśā* of *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*, viz. :—

यस्मादिदं जगदजायत यत्र तिष्ठत्यंते समस्तमिदमस्तमुपैतियत्र।  
तस्मै नमस्सद सदा दिविक्ष्वग्न्य चैतन्यमात्रवपुषे पुरोत्तमाय ॥

Strikingly is the passage a re-formulation in the English language of the fundamental *Brahma Sūtra* :—

जन्माद्यस्यतः†

And strikingly is the passage, again, a re-assertion of the doctrine contained in the first verse of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavata* :—

"Let us meditate upon Him, from whom are the creations, &c., of this (Universe), by reason of his being present in all that is, and absent from all that is not; who is Omniscient; who shineth by Himself; who revealed by his heart unto the primeval poet, the Vedas in which even the learned men become puzzled; Him in whom threefold creation is real, like the exchange (apparent transformation, in mirage) of Light, Water and Earth; by whose power delusion is restrained; who is existent and pre-eminent."

\* October *Pranavāna* (1894).

† *Brahma Sūtra*, I, i, 2.

Thus, the "One Principle" from which all proceeds, and into which all is absorbed eventually, is the primary evolvent. Thus evolution,\* or descending into series, being dependent on the One Principle, and involution or curving back into the same principle being dependent on That again, That principle is the Primary Dependence on which all is dependent, the dependence of all material, moral, as well as spiritual laws. With the dependence of all laws on That, follows the dependence of all responsibility on That, a primary responsibility, which is dependently and correlatively shared by all the individual links in the involutionary and evolutionary chain springing from the centre, viz., the One Principle. While the responsibility resting on *That* is "primary," and inclusive, the divided responsibilities on the differential terms of the manifested series in an Universe, become "secondary." It will now be clear that as far as Nos. I. to IV. of this article went, the question of *Predestination* and *Free-will* was confined to the "Secondaries," viz., *Chit* and *Achit*, and in this paper the "Primary" or the Principle of *Ishvara* is considered as bearing on this great question. Remembering this, the following Upanishad texts will be found to throw much light.

*Taittiriya-Upanishad* says:—

"From *That*, *Atma* became *Akāśa* (ether); from *Akāśa*, *Vāyu* (air); from air, *Agni* (fire); from fire, *Apas* (water); from water, *Prithivi* (earth); from earth, *O'shadhi* (plants); from plants, *Anna* (food); from food, *Purusha* (*Chit* or sentient being)."

If this passage be pondered over, it will be found that *Atma* stands for the "One Principle" from which proceed all. The series comprising the terms *Akāśa* to *Anna* is a dual manifestation of spirit and matter, until we come to the term *Purusha*, which is so called, because while yet a dual manifestation, viz., a compound of "body plus mind," the mind which was developing in each of the previous terms from *Akāśa* to *Anna*, is now become a "manifest" instead of the hitherto "latent" factor.

When the first term evolves from the "Integral *That*," the "One Principle," *That*, enters into that term as the very "core" or "heart" of it; and this process is repeated along the whole series, so that in the term "*Purusha*," It is again the central germ or *Ishvara* to whom is bound *Chit* and *Achit*. Such is the import of such passages for example, as:—

अन्तः प्रविष्टः शास्ताजनानाम् ।†

"The All-self interpenetrating all beings and holding them to Law."

\* The term *involution* should be applied to the descent of spirit into matter, its enfoldment in material forms; while *evolution* is the unfoldment which results from the development and gradual refining of these forms until the ego is freed from their limitations: thus, *involution* would mean entanglement, and *evolution* disentanglement, when used in contrast. E.

† *Taittiriya Aranyaka*, III, ii—2.

There is thus 'Law,' the 'Law-giver,' and those amenable to 'Law,' terms which show the complex constitution of the Universe as comprising the three fundamental postulates of *Chit*, *Achit* and *Isvara*, and that responsibility primarily rests on the Giver of the Law, *Isvara*, and secondarily on those who are beholden to that Law, and on the Universe illustrating the administration of Laws, which is "order" as distinguished from "chaos," and which is "design" as distinguished from "purposelessness."

"HE WHO takes his seat in *Ātma*, WHO is inside *Ātma*, but WHOM *Ātma* knoweth not, of WHOM *Ātma* forms the body, WHO is the interior of *Ātma* rules."\* "*Ātma*" here refers to *Chit*, and "HE" and "WHO" and "WHOM," refer to *Isvara*. The "primary" responsibility rests on HIM as the framer and administrator of laws, and the "secondary," responsibility rests on *Ātma* (*Jīvātma* or *Chit*) in abiding under those laws. This law-abiding is that in which is involved all the question of "predestination and free-will."

Says Sri Bhagavad-Gītā:—

"Fully resting all acts in Me, with a mind absorbed in *Ātma*, and resigning all fruit and all selfishness (act, &c.)."

This means that one acts, his acts constituting 'predestination and free-will,' but if he is wise he will feel his dependence on God, without WHOM he cannot "live, move and have his being," and trace through such dependence the ultimate source from which all responsibility must flow, and therefore his individual responsibility ceases as soon as it is resolved in (or dedicated to) the source of all-responsibility.

The fact that from It, all departs, and that to It all returns, and that in the free-will of That, is primarily involved the appearance and the disappearance of every cosmic series, makes it necessary to invest the Great Free-willing Agent with the Universal symbol of the sum of all free-wills and necessities, manifesting as individualized free-wills and necessities in the several particular terms constituting the Universal WHOLE.

It will now be clear how the law of Karma affects *Chit* (or *Chit* plus *Achit*) on the one hand and *Isvara* on the other. In bringing forth an Universe, it is *Isvara's* free-will that operates. It is this that *Brahma-Sūtra* undertakes to prove. And that it is *Isvara* who brings forth on conditions given, or results existing, in a previous universe,—which is the law of Karma for *Isvara* under the aspect of a pre-ordination—is proven by such texts as "धातायथापूर्वमकल्पयत्," i.e., the Prop; (of the Cosmos) made (things) as heretofore."

So that when man is made to work under law, God rules under laws also, and never allows Himself lawlessness!

We have thus *Chit* and *Achit* and *Isvara*, (as hinted in the last paragraph of No. IV. of this article).† all co-ordinating in the mighty

\* Brih. Upanishad.

† P 281. *Theosophist* for February 1887.

scheme of the Universe; and all errors rise in regarding any one of them as the CAUSE to the exclusion of the others. He who would take *Achit* as constituting all, is a materialist. He who would take *Chit* alone, or *Achit* and *Chit* together is either a spiritualist or materio-spiritualist. And He who would take *Isvara* alone, or *Achit*, and *Chit* and *Isvara*, together for the all, is a theist. Briefly, the attitude assumed by each of these is attended by consequences beautifully summed up by Sri Yâmunâchârya in his memorable work, called *Âgama-prâmânya*, to which the world at large is still a stranger. The translation runs thus: \*—

(Short translations.) “Would you state that mountains, earth &c., are no effects? We reply to you that they are wonderful works of art (or design) as for example the structure, *viz.*, the palace of a king and that in the manner in which they aggregated into wholes, they are subject to disintegration into parts. But how come about these transfigurations save that they are brought about by an intelligent artist who knows how to do it?”

“But if you would retort by saying that you do not see any such agent residing in a tree when it falls and decomposes, we say that your mere not seeing does not disprove the existence of an intelligent spirit presiding over the tree to watch over its destinies. Our argument is thus not rendered invalid.”

“Ergo, in our affirming of a Bhagavân or All-Sufficient Intelligence—who as watcher of all moral principles (good or otherwise) which underlie all effects, and which He uses as His working tools (for moulding all things), brings about all such effects as the formation of worlds, &c.,—as the Artificer (or cause of such effects), is no irrelevance.”

“It cannot be contended (by you) that *Karma*, *per se*, is efficient to accomplish for man (say) who produces that *Karma*, all that the man desires to have, such as body, estate, &c.”

“For, no *Karma* can independently produce effects without intelligent power directing it, for *Karma* is in itself non-intelligent, as for instance an axe. No axe, unless guided by an intelligent carpenter can carve a pillar...out of a log of wood. But to close the argument, can it be said that *Chit*, or we intelligent creatures, generate *Karmas* such that they possess a power in them (*apûrva*) to produce fruit for us? In that case we should be masters enough to be such *Karmas*’ witnesses (or knowers) before they were generated, and thus we should take care like wise men to generate no bad *Karma* which would bind us and force us to participate in its unhappy harvest. Who but a fool would surround himself with misery? Hence we are conditioned and blind. And therefore ONE WHO can be an impartial witness to all, and WHO can deal without fear or favour, according to the merits or demerits which lie to men’s accounts in an orderly universe, becomes a necessary axiom of every religion, and of such, must be necessarily predicated:—“He

\* Pp. 10, 11 and 12, “Telugu Edition, by Yogi Parthasarathy Iyengar.”

Who could be the Lord of the Universe must possess the four necessary attributes, *viz.*, (1) unlimited knowledge (or wisdom), (2) absence of desire, (3) sovereign affluence, and (4) righteousness (justice and love).” The division of responsibility as between man and God, or the law of necessity and freedom jointly as in relation to man and God is dwelt on thus by two modern European thinkers of note. One of them is a Scientist, Dr. Carpenter, and the other a mystic philosopher, Emanuel Swedenborg. Their views on such a high topic cannot but be full of interest :—

*Swedenborg* :—“ Man, inasmuch as he is the epitome of creation, and the image and likeness of the creator, receives and entertains life with a fulness and perfection unknown to lower creatures. To him is given self-consciousness, the sense of independent existence, and the God-like confidence that he lives of himself.”

“ It is right that man should feel so ; the feeling is indestructible and constitutes his manhood, but the illusion must be corrected, or he would be destroyed by pride.”

“ This correction is effectual by Revelation—by religions which teach that he is not independent, but has a superior in God, who regards him as one of His many Children whom he must treat with justice, or suffer his vengeance here or hereafter.”\*

*Carpenter*. “ \* \* \* The power of self-control, thus usually acquired in the first instance in regard to those impulses which directly determine the conduct, gradually extends itself to the habitual succession of the thoughts ; and in proportion as this is brought under the direction of the will, does the individual become capable of forming his own character and is therefore truly responsible for his actions. \* \* \* It is by the assimilation, rather than by the subjugation, of the human will to the Divine, that man is really lifted towards God ; and in proportion as this assimilation has been effected, does it manifest itself in the life and conduct ; so that even the lowliest actions become holy ministrations in a temple consecrated by the felt presence of the Divinity.”† (Notice is invited to the parallelism of sentiment existing in the closing lines of this quotation, with the Bhagavad Gîtâ (verse 30, Adh. III).

Theosophical notions in regard to *Chit*, *Achit* and *Isvara* will thus be found to be in agreement with all main tracts of thought travelled by all philosophers in all ages in such departments of inquiry. Fixing our thoughts then on the salient features of all inquiry into the questions of predestination and free-will, *viz.*, the necessity of the existence of, and the interrelations between the three eternal verities, God, souls and matter, we are now prepared to advance a step further.

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(To be concluded next month).

\* Emanuel Swedenborg's Life and Writings, by William White, pp. 735—36.

† *Vide* English Cyclopædia Britannica, Vol. IX. Nervous System, Carpenter's Human Physiology, p. 848.