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FIRST.—To form a nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste, or color.

SECOND.—To promote the study of Aryan and other Eastern literatures, religions, and sciences and demonstrate the importance of that study.

THIRD.—To investigate unexplained laws of nature and the psychical powers latent in man.

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WILLIAM Q. JUDGE,

General Secretary American Section,
144 Madison Avenue, New York.

PRONOUNCE Sanskrit Consonants as in English ; Sanskrit Vowels as in Italian or German.

THE NEW YEAR.

THE ORIENTAL DEPARTMENT gives New Year's greeting to all in the West who love the East ; to all in the New World whose hearts go out to the wisdom of the Old, garnered under deep blue Indian skies, in the Golden Age, the spring-time of the world.

In this new year we shall try to recall the Genius of that Golden Age with its pure living and high thinking, through the great UPANISHADS, the recorded wisdom of those old Indian days.

Long after the Golden Age of India had closed, two Great Men, by power of intellect and luminousness of soul, caught the light of that earlier, brighter time, and kindled it again in the hearts of men.

These two were GAUTAMA BUDDHA, greatest of warrior Kshatriyas ; and SHANKARACHARYA, greatest of priestly Brahmins. After the Upanishads, their teaching will chiefly occupy us.

THE GREAT UPANISHADS.

“From every page of the Upanishads, deep, original, lofty thoughts step forth to meet us; while a high and holy earnestness breathes over all. This is the richest and loftiest study possible in the world; it has been the comfort of my life, and will be the comfort of my death.”

—SCHOPENHAUER.

ALL that Narada and the Seven Sages knew is contained in the twelve Great Upanishads. They are the Vedanta—Veda-end—as being the crown and end of Vedic wisdom and as ending the Vedas in their collected form.

Indian tradition tells us that Vyasa, the Arranger, compiled the four Vedas—Rig Veda, Yajur Veda, Sama Veda, Atharva Veda—in the days of the Mahabharata War between the Pandu and Kuru princes, five thousand years ago.

Vyasa, or Indian tradition before him, linked the great Upanishads to one or other collection of Vedic hymns; thus the Aitareya Upanishad is joined to the Rig Veda; Katha Upanishad to the Yajur Veda; Kena Upanishad to the Sama Veda; Mundaka Upanishad to the Atharva Veda.

How much older than Vyasa's days, five milleniums back, is the wisdom of the Upanishads? “Thus have we heard from those of old who taught us”, the Upanishads tell us, and nothing more.

We can only say that the first Masters of this wisdom were not Brahmins but Kshattriyas; not priests but kings; royal sages of the mighty Râjanya race. But it would perhaps be truest to say that the wisdom of the Upanishads is as old as the divinity of man; as old as Brahmâ, ‘former of all, and guardian of the world’.

We shall translate these twelve great Upanishads one by one, in the spirit of Indian thought and Indian earnestness; adding such commentary as comparison may suggest, such light as study and thought can give.

In the words of Anquetil Duperron, the first European who read the Upanishads: Here, reader, is the key of India's sanctuary, somewhat rough with rust. Enter, if thou darest, if thou canst, with pure and clean heart, drawing near to the highest being, and merging in it. Let the outer senses rest; awaken the inner. Let thy body be as dead, and sunk in the ocean of wisdom and unwisdom. Know it—after Indian custom—as a divine law, that thou seest nothing but the Eternal; that nothing is, but the Eternal.

A VEDIC MASTER.

Translated from the "Upanishad of the Questions."

PRASHNA UPANISHAD.

THESE men, Sukesha Bharadvaja, Shaivya Satyakama, Saurya-yani Gargya, Kaushalya Ashvalayana, Bhargava Vaidharbhi, and Kabandhi Katyayana, bent on the Eternal, following the Eternal, were seeking the Supreme Eternal.

And they came to the Master Pippalada, with kindling-wood in their hands, saying 'He will declare it all to us'.

And the Sage said to them: 'Live together a year more, in fervor, faith, and service of the Eternal; then ask what questions you will. If we know them, we shall declare all to you.'

So Kabandhi Katyayana, approaching, asked: 'Master, whence are all these beings produced?'

And he answered him: 'The Lord of beings, desiring to produce, brooded with fervor. And brooding with fervor, he produced a Pair. They were Body and Life. These will make manifold beings for me, said he.

'The sun is life; the moon is body. All that is formed is body, and the formless [is life]. For form is body.

'The sun, rising, enters the eastern quarter, and thus guides the eastern lives among his rays. And as he enters the southern and western and northern quarters, above and below and the quarters between, he illuminates all and guides all lives among his rays.

'And this universal manifold life rises as fire. Hence it is said in the Vedic verse;

— The all-formed golden lord of fire, the great light,
giver of warmth;

— Thousand-rayed, turning a hundred ways, the life of
beings rises, — the sun.

'The circling year is a lord of beings; his paths are the south and the north. Therefore those who worship by purification and sacrifices win the lunar world. They verily return to the world again. Hence those sages who desire offspring turn to the south. For this is the body, and the path of the fathers.

'But by the northern path, by fervor, faith, and service of the Eternal, and by knowledge, seeking the Self, others win the sun. For it is the home of lives; the deathless, fearless, the higher way. From it they return not to the world. It is final rest.

‘And there is this Vedic verse :

—They call him in the sky, the father with five feet [seasons] and twelve faces [months], and in the one half [-year] he is giver of increase ;

—And in the other [sense] they say he is giver of wisdom, seated in the chariot with seven wheels of six spokes.

‘The month is a lord of beings. The black half is body, the white half is life. Hence these sages sacrifice in the white half ; but others in the other half. And day-and-night is a lord of beings. Day is life ; night is body.

‘Food also is a lord of beings ; whence seed comes ; whence these beings are produced. Hence those who perform the vow for offspring produce a pair.

‘Theirs, indeed, is that eternal world, who have fervor and service of the Eternal, and in whom truth is set firm.

‘Theirs, truly, is that passionless, eternal world ; but not theirs in whom are crookedness, untruth, illusion.’

And so Bhargava Vaidarbhi asked him ; ‘Master, how many bright ones support being ? Which of them illumine it ? And who is chief among them ?’

‘To him he answered : ‘There is the bright ether, and air, and fire, the waters, and earth, voice, thought, sight, hearing. They, illumining, declare—We support this life, establishing it.

‘Then Life, the chief of them, said : Cherish not this illusion ! I, dividing myself fivefold, support this life, establishing it !

‘But the others were incredulous. So Life made as if to go out above ; and as he went out, all the others went out ; and when he returned, all the others returned.

‘As the bees all follow the honey-makers’ king, departing, and return when he returns, so did voice, thought, sight and hearing ; joyful they sing the praise of Life :

—This, as fire, warms ; this as the sun, as the rain-god ; the thunderer ; wind, and the earth ; as body ; as the bright one ; and being, and non-being, and the immortal.

—Like the spokes in a nave, all this is fixed in Life. So are the Rig, and Yajur, and Sama hymns ; and sacrifice, and warrior, and priest.

—Thou art lord of beings in the germ : and thou it is that art born forth. To thee, Life, these beings bring oblations ; to thee, who art manifested by the lives.

—Thou art the fire of the gods; the first oblation of the fathers. Thou art the wisdom of the sages; the truth of sacrificial priests.

—Thou, Life, art Indra with his brightness. Thou art Rudra, the preserver. As the sun, thou movest in the sky; thou art the master of the stars.

—When thou rainest, Life, then these thy children rise up with gladness. There will be food, they say, according to our desire.

—Thou art the exile, Life; the lonely seer; the good master of all. We are givers of the first offering; thou art our father, the great breath.

—That form of thine that is manifest as voice, that form that is in hearing and in sight; that form of thine that spreads as thought; render that propitious! Go not out!

—All this is in the power of Life, all that is set firm in the triple heaven. Guard us as a mother her children; and as Fortune, give us wisdom!

And so Kaushalya Ashvalayana asked: 'Master, whence is this Life born? How does it enter this body? Or, dividing itself, how does become manifest? How does it go out? How does it enfold what is outside? And how as to the Self?

And he answered him: 'Thou askest many questions! But thou art bent on the Eternal, and therefore I tell thee.

'This Life is born from the Self; and, like this shadow beside a man, it extends beside the Self. By the force of thought it enters this body.

'Verily, as a sovereign commands his deputies: "Rule over those villages, and these villages!" So also this life guides the lesser lives, disposing them. In the lower organs the downward-life; in sight, hearing, mouth and nose, the forward-life; in the center, the binding-life. This binds the food that is offered, and from it issue seven rays.

'In the heart is the Self; from thence go a hundred and one channels; from each of these a hundred; from these seventy-two thousand branch channels. In these, the distributing-life moves.

'By one channel the upward-life rises; by pure deeds it leads to the pure world; by sin to the sinful world; by both to the human world.

'As the sun, the outer life rises, linked with the life of the eye, and the potency in the earth enters into and establishes the

downward life of man. And the ether is linked with the binding-life; and the air with the distributing-life; and fire with the upward life.

'Hence one whose fire has burned out is reborn through the tendencies retained in mind; and according to his thoughts he enters life. But linked by the fire with the Self, this life leads to a world of recompense.

'Whoever, thus knowing, knows life, his offspring does not fail, he becomes immortal. So there is this verse:

—Knowing the beginning, the range, the place, the five-fold lordship of Life, and its union with the Self, one gains immortality,—one gains immortality.'

THE SYMBOLS USED.

THE use of symbols is to picture the invisible by the visible. In the Upanishads, one is struck first, perhaps, by the quaintness and old-world flavor of the symbols; and then by their simplicity and natural fitness.

For instance, the pupils, seeking the Eternal, approach the Master; who is here as elsewhere the symbol of the Higher Self.

They bring fuel, or kindling-wood in their hands, as saying 'we bring the readiness to be illuminated: do thou give us light!'

The ripening of the mind has been compared to the burning of wood; first a painful struggle and emission of moisture; then blackness and, at last, readiness to burst out into a clear flame. It is this readiness and ripeness that is typified here by the fuel in the hand.

The first answer outlines a scheme of cosmic evolution. From the unknowable Eternal arises first the Evolver or Lord of beings; who then becomes two-fold, or produces a "pair"—a duality. This pair is variously named in Sanskrit books. Sometimes it is the masculine and feminine Logos, or the positive and negative Word; here the pair is called Life and Body, or Substance. And from this duality all other dualities proceed; as spirit and matter, the perciever and the thing perceived, the knower and the known. More than one of these dualities are suggested in the Upanishad; as day and night, summer and winter, sun and moon.

This brings us to another symbol, as simple and natural as the kindling-wood, though not without the quaintness which gives such a charm to these old books.

The sun, we are told in the Vedic verse, is first the father in the sky, the outer light ; and then the giver of wisdom, the inner light. This 'inner light' is seated in 'a chariot with seven wheels' ; and this simile at once recalls the verse spoken by Death to Nachiketas : 'the Self is the lord of the chariot ; the body is the chariot ; the soul is the charioteer, and mind the reins

The sun is therefore the symbol of the Spirit or Higher Self in that seven-fold, perfect man spoken of very clearly in more than one passage of the Upanishads.

Opposite the Higher Self is the lower self, as the moon is opposite the sun. This makes clear the symbol of the two paths, the path of the sun and the path of the moon. The path of the sun is the religion of the Higher Self which leads to final liberation ; to perfect life in the eternal world. The path of the moon is the religion of the lower self ; the religion of ritual and observance, which leads to a temporary paradise after death, and then to rebirth in the world, and the opposition between these two is found again and again in the Upanishads.

The second answer leads us to a further step in the cosmic evolution. The Evolver, becoming the masculine Life, and the feminine Word, the three together make up the formative trinity or Triad.

The Life of the Evolver, expanding through the Word, produces the manifested universe. This expansion forms a series of descending planes, from the more spiritual to the more material. It is as though a rainbow-colored curtain were let down across the empty stage of space.

These planes are symbolized here as the planes of ether, of air, of fire, of water, of earth. And these five, together with the dual form of the Evolver, make up the sevenfold cosmos, corresponding to the sevenfold man ; the macrocosm corresponding to the microcosm.

Then comes the teaching that this sevenfold life is still a unity, the manifold form of the One Life. 'I, said Life, dividing myself fivefold, support this life establishing it.'

Then follow the fable of the bees, and the magnificent hymn to Life, which can hardly be equalled for majesty and beauty. Its expression is so universal that it hardly needs a commentary ; but one thought may be noted. The Vedic gods, Agni, Indra, and Vayu, or Fire, the Thunderer, and Air, are spoken of as forms or facets of the One Life ; as representatives or regents of the great cosmic planes and fields of life. They are no personal

gods, but personified aspects of the indivisible One. This suggests a clue to much that is enigmatic in the Vedic hymns to one or other of these deities.

The whole spirit of the old Indian wisdom is summed up in the burden of this hymn : that all is Life ; that nothing is, but infinite, unbounded Life.

It is a fact which is brought home by constant study of the Upanishads, that their teachings are in reality much clearer, more definite, and more precise than at first sight appears. One part exactly fills up and completes the other ; and a well-defined unity of thought pervades the whole.

In the third answer in this Upanishad, the teacher turns from the macrocosm to the microcosm ; from the universe to man.

Let us once more touch on the outline of universal evolution. From the eternal springs the Evolver, who expanding through the Word, produces the fivefold outer universe. Exactly in the same way the microcosm, man, is formed. From the Self (Atma) springs the Life, which expanding through the Soul (Buddhi), produces the five inferior lives, or lower principles in man.

These three powers, the Self, the Life, and the Soul, make up the divine, eternal nature of man, which necessarily and perpetually stands within the threshold of the eternal world ; and is by its very nature immortal.

This divinity and immortality of the Higher Self, as a fact already existing from the beginning, is one of the most characteristic doctrines of the Upanishads.

The whole aim of their teachings is this : to point the path by which the personal self may win immortality and divinity, by becoming united with the Higher Self, which always possessed immortality and divinity.

We stand in the middle, a god above us ; a beast below us. We can consciously choose to be united and identified with either the one or the other. The steady upward advance that leads to the god, the Higher Self, is spoken of in the Upanishads as the upward-life (ud-ana). It is the personal self aspiring to the Higher Self. Its duality is clearly pointed out, in the words : by pure deeds it leads to a pure world ; by sinful deeds to a sinful world ; by both, to a human world.

We have, therefore, the Self (Atma), its Life, and the Soul (Buddhi) making the divine nature of man ; the Higher Self. The 'upward-life', or advancing personal self is the link between the higher and lower nature. And the lower nature is then de-

scribed, as linked with the different planes or fields of the outer material world ; the lowest being the 'downward-life' or animal passions, which is spoken of as of the earth earthy.

By the gradual turning of the personal life from the animal to the god, he gains immortality,—he gains immortality. C. J.

THE HERITAGE OF THE BRAHMANS.

IT is said that long ago, in the childhood of the world, the senses were so fine that we could hear the growing of the grass, the rustling of the opening buds of spring. By a memory of these early senses, by the faint remnant of them that the long ages in their passage have left us, we can hear now the faint stirring of the opening buds of a new spring of intellectual life, a new period in the spiritual thought of the world ; and the key-note of this new period is the East, the wisdom of the East, the thought and ideals of the East.

Not merely or necessarily the East in latitude, but rather the Eastern side of man—that East in the soul of every man where the sun rises, where the light of intuition opens its first dawning rays, and, "rising, guides the lesser lives among its rays". And yet the East in latitude gives the key-note to the new dawn of thought in a special sense too. For it was in the East, and, more than all, in India, "mother of nations", that the eastern part of man where the sun rises found its best development ; that the interior light of the soul found its fullest recognition.

And it is only natural that the minds of men, feeling the first gleam of dawning day, should turn towards the East ; that they should grow enthusiastic for the Lands of the East, and, more than all, for India : that India should occupy an ever-widening space on the horizon of their thoughts ; that their hearts should more and more turn towards India.

This growing interest and enthusiasm for India—an enthusiasm at first almost instinctive, but gradually quickened by advancing knowledge—is especially felt to-day in the two most idealistic nations in the West, the Americans and the Germans. For with all their sense of practical life and practical development, the Americans and Germans are at heart idealists ; ready to sacrifice all their practical aims and practical accomplishment to a vision ; ready, as Emerson said, to leave Cleopatra and the army, to seek the sources of the Nile.

The deepest curiosity of the Americans and Germans, turning

towards India, unquestionably centers on the Brahmans; one hears again and again the words—the wisdom of the Brahmans, the ideal of the Brahmans, the life of the Brahmans; and the first question one is always asked refers to the Brahman order. To answer this question, it would be necessary to write many volumes; to trace the rise of the Brahman order in the dim twilight of Vedic days; to show the growth and consolidation of their power in the days of Rama, and through the struggles of the great war of the PANDU and KURU princes; to point to certain dark sides of their development that had become visible in Buddha's days; and at last to fill in the splendid picture of Brahmanic advance and Brahmanic development in Shankaracharya's days.

When the records of the monasteries of Southern India are more fully known and understood, when the Smarta Brahmans who have preserved most clearly the splendid tradition of Shankara relax a little their reserve, we shall—it can hardly be doubted—have a picture of that great man and his times as perfect and full of color as the picture we have of Plato's times, and the thought of Plato who, more than any other philosopher, resembles Shankara.

What we know of Shankara already, though only a tithe of what we may know when old records are opened, is enough to give him a place amongst the choicest spiritual aristocracy of the world, as a seer and thinker who towered above his race as Plato towered above the Greeks; as a Great Man, an elder brother of the race, whose thought and insight mark a high tide of human life.

There is a dim tradition, in the oldest Indian books, in the great Upanishads, and the earlier Vedic hymns, that the Brahmans were not in the beginning the spiritual teachers of India; that they received their earliest wisdom from the Royal Sages of the Râjanya or Kshatriya race. But the Brahmans have so long held these treasures of wisdom as their own—guarding them as a mother her child, as a man his first-born—that they have come to consider them as their very own; their heritage rather by birth than by adoption. The fact that, in spite of this jealous love of their darling treasures, they have preserved the tradition of their earliest Royal Teachers, points to the most valued feature in the Brahmans' character;—the unflinching, unalterable fidelity with which they have preserved, unaltered and inviolate, the spiritual treasures committed to their care; and the safeguarding of which through the ages forms their truest and greatest title to fame; the best justification for that instinctive

turning towards the Brahmins as the center and representative of Indian genius, which we have noted as so marked a feature of the Indian Renaissance to-day.

But once the Brahmins had received the wisdom-doctrines from their Royal Teachers, their distinctive genius, their most valued quality, began to assert itself. With their unparalleled genius for order, their instinctive feeling for preservation, they recorded, classified and developed the intuitive wisdom of the Royal Sages—Buddha, a Royal Sage of far later days, has put on record this unparalleled fidelity: “those ancient Rishis of the Brahmins, versed in the Three Wisdoms, the authors of the verses, the utterers of the verses, whose ancient form of words so chanted, uttered, or composed, the Brahmins of to-day chant over again and repeat; intoning or reciting, exactly as has been intoned or recited”.—(*Tevigga Sutta*).

That Krishna, the spiritual hero of the Mahabharata war, whose mission it was to usher in the Iron Age of Kali Yuga, was no Brahmin but a Kshatriya, who traced his doctrines from Manu the Kshatriya through the Royal Sages, is enough to show that in the days of the great war, the Brahmins had not yet claimed as quite their own the teachings of wisdom which it was their mission to hand down through the ages. (*Bhagavad-Gita*, iv).

The great war, according to Indian tradition, was fought out five thousand years ago. And, after the great war, in which so many Kshatriya princes fell, the keeping of the Sacred records began to pass completely into the hands of the Brahmins. The Brahmins, sensible of their great mission, prepared themselves to carry it out by forming a high ideal of life; by strict rules of conduct and discipline which only the highest characters could support; and the very strictness of which seems to have produced a reaction which we see traces of in Buddha's days.

The life of the Brahmin was conceived and moulded in accordance with his high ideal; in accordance with his high destiny as transmitter of the wisdom of the Golden Age across the centuries to our dark iron days. Purity, unworldliness, and discipline were the key-notes of his life; and the Brahmin's unparalleled genius for order gradually moulded this ideal into a set of definite rules, a series of religious ceremonies, which laid hold on his life before he saw the light of day, and did not lose that hold when his body vanished among the red embers of the funeral pyre—but rather kept in touch with him, through the Shraddha offering to the shades for nine generations after his death.

This life of ceremonies and rites, the key-note of which was

the acquiring and transmission of the Three Wisdoms spoken of by Buddha, gradually made of the Brahma order a treasure-box or casket for the safer keeping of the holy records handed down. Whether the Brahmans were originally of the fair, almost white race which forms their nucleus to-day, and whose distinctive physical character and color make a Brahman of pure type at once recognizable in an assemblage of Hindus, is a question difficult to solve. We find in the oldest Indian books that : "The color of the Brahman is white", and this, in later days became a sentence symbolical of their ideal of purity ; but in the beginning it may have been a description of their color, an index of their race.

It is very probable that this fair, almost white race, which now forms the nucleus of the Brahman order, gradually became, through selective genius, through their unequalled instinct of order, the recognized repository and transmitter of the sacred records of the past. But the ideal life of the Brahman was, perhaps, too arduous for the common lot of man ; at any rate we see a gradually increasing tendency to degeneration in one side of the Brahman's life ; for in India as in other lands, even silver clouds have their dark linings.

Their instinct for order, among the Brahmans of lesser moral structure than the high ideal of their race, became an instinct for ceremonial ; their ideal of purity became a habit of outward purification ; and they tended to harden into an exclusive priestly caste, withdrawn from, and above the common life of man. The priestcraft, by a second step, began to weave ambitions, to seek a share of political power, and, at last, a practical predominance in the state, which threatened to become a spiritual tyranny.

But these developments, inseparable from the weakness of human life, were but the rusting of the outer layer of the casket in which the wisdom of the Golden Age was handed down. There were also within the Brahman order—as there are to-day—men who held to the high ideal of their past ; who were fitting repositories of the high tradition they were destined to carry down. The casket in which were held the records of the past had always its lining of precious metal, though the outside might rust and tarnish with the passing ages.

The greatest of these followers of that high idea, in later days, within the Brahman caste, was Shankaracharya, the Brahman Sage of Southern India. It is hard to say, with certainty, when Shankara lived ; but the records of Shringiri, where his successors have held rule over the nucleus of the Brahman order, point to a

period about two milleniums ago ; a period, that is, just outside the threshold of our era.

Shankaracharya began the work of reforming the Brahman caste from within. A few centuries before him, Buddha had scattered broadcast through India, and Buddha's followers had scattered broadcast through the world, the teachings of India's Golden Days, in a form readily intelligible for all, and to be assimilated by the simplest mind of man.

It remained to do for India, what, perhaps, others were doing, across the Himalayas, for the whole world ; to preserve inviolate, and transmit in its purity that other side of wisdom which the simplest heart of man can intuitively feel ; but which only the most perfectly developed powers, the most fully expanded intellect and spiritual insight can fully and consciously grasp ; it remained to secure the preservation of those profounder truths and that deeper knowledge which only the finest powers of the soul can adequately comprehend.

To secure their preservation in India was the duty and mission of Shankaracharya. Believing that this preservation should be helped and seconded by whatever aids selective race genius and hereditary capacity could give, he confined the transmission of this wisdom, and of the records which contained it, entirely within the Brahman order, as far as our knowledge goes. There is evidence that, among the Brahmans of Southern India in early days, were a certain number of families not belonging to that white race which forms the nucleus of the Brahman caste ; but belonging to the dark, almost black Dravidian peoples of Southern India, who are the survivors, perhaps, of a land that once lay to the south of India, but has now vanished beneath the waves. This dark Dravidian race has produced many men of remarkable genius and power, whose insight and force quite fitted them for inclusion in the Brahman order.

But as the centuries moved on, such admission became more difficult ; till, in the days of Shankara, it is probable that the door was completely closed. What changes Shankara made in the Brahman order which followed him, in the division of the Brahmans which recognized his transcendent force, can only be known with surety to the Brahmans of that order themselves. But this much we know, that Shankara did all his overpowering genius could accomplish to turn the Brahmans from too exclusive following after ceremonial ; to lead them back to the spiritual wisdom, the recognition of the inner light of the soul, which was India's greatest heritage ; and that, taking India's most precious

records, the Great Upanishads, he rendered them into the thought and language of his own day, and did all that a marvelous insight and a literary style of wonderful lucidity could do to make the spirit and the genius of the Upanishads live once more in the hearts of the Brahmans of his time.

He set himself, above all, to cleanse the inner lining of the casket where India's treasures lay concealed; to remove every speck from the precious metal whose perfect purity alone could guarantee the costly contents against rust and moth. The reforms inaugurated by Shankaracharya continue to bear fruit to-day; the new light he shed on the old records, the new insight he gave to the old symbols, are the treasured inheritance of the Smarta Brahmans, whose spiritual heads, in unbroken succession, have ruled at Shringiri Math, in the mountains of Northern India.

Centuries passed, and the sunlit plains of India were filled with Moslem invaders, falling like swarms of locusts on the rich gardens of that distant wonderland; full of the fierce hostility of fanaticism against the symbols of a religion they did not understand; and against the Brahmans, as ministers of this religion. It would not be wonderful, it would rather be perfectly natural, if this hostility and predominance of a foreign fanatical power had sealed the lips of the Brahmans once for all as to the mysteries of their religion; had locked and double-locked the casket in which the heritage of India lay concealed.

But in spite of tyranny and fanatism that would have justified the most perfect reticence, the most absolute silence, the Brahmans retained an ideal of their universal mission, above and beyond their mission to their own land and their own religion. No sooner did brighter days dawn for them under the Emperor Akbar, the great Indian monarch of the sixteenth century who conceived and framed a high ideal of religious tolerance and mutual understanding which was the nearest approach to State Theosophy; no sooner did the brighter day dawn than the Brahmans were ready to forget old griefs and to teach their Moslem rulers the broad principles of their religion.

Two generations after Akbar, Akbar's noblest and most ill-fated descendant, Prince Dara Shukoh, received from the Brahmans the permission to translate into Persian a series of the Upanishads, including the Great Upanishads of which something has been already said. This Persian translation, besides following the words of the old records, put into visible form much that had been hidden between the lines, and followed, in some degree, the new light that had been shed on the Upanishads by the genius of Shankaracharya.

This Persian translation of the Upanishads, which embodies a very valuable tradition of their hidden meaning, made about the year 1640, was found by Anquetil Duperron in 1775, and by him translated into Latin. From Anquetil Duperron this "Key to the Indian Sanctuary" passed to Schopenhauer, and becoming "the comfort of his life, the comfort of his death" lead him to prophesy that Indian Renaissance which is glowing with the fair colors of dawn to-day.

But under Dara Shukoh's brother, the fanatical Aurungzeb, darker days fell upon the Brahmans; and they suffered much from European nations more presumptuous and not less fanatical than Aurungzeb; of these the darkest record clings to the Portuguese, who tried to wring from the Brahmans the heart of their mystery by Inquisition and *auto-da-fé*.

Yet, once more, just a hundred years ago when a group of Europeans full of love for the East, sought from the Brahmans some knowledge of their learning, the Brahmans, with singular generosity, made these Europeans in some degree sharers in their heritage. From the knowledge thus freely given to these Europeans, whose chiefs were William Jones and Thomas Colebrooke, the first foundations of Orientalism were laid; and a field of matchless fertility was opened to a growing band of workers who enrolled themselves under the banner of the East.

But the last and finest insight, the master-key to the records was still treasured in the East itself; somewhat of that insight has since been freely offered to us; on our ability to use it most probably depends the further insight that the future holds in promise.

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