all good qualities; and all created beings are endowed with but a small portion of his individuality. Assuming at will various forms, he bestows benefits on the whole world, which was his work. Glory, might, dominion, wisdom, energy, power, and other attributes, are collected in him. Supreme of the supreme, in whom no imperfections abide, lord over finite and infinite, god in individuals and universals, visible and invisible, omnipotent, omnipresent, omniscient, almighty. The wisdom, perfect, pure, supreme, undefiled, and one only, by which he is conceived, contemplated, and known, that is wisdom; all else is ignorance."

CHAPTER VI

He, Purushottama, is also known by holy study and devotion; and either, as the cause of attaining him, is entitled Brahma. From study let a man proceed to meditation, and from meditation to study; by perfection in both supreme spirit becomes manifest. Study is one eye wherewith to behold it, and meditation is the other: he who is one with Brahma sees not with the eye of flesh.

1 Both study of the Vedas (Svádhýáya) and abstraction (Yoga) are to be practised: when a man is weary of one, he may apply to the other. The Yoga, however, limits the practical part to silent prayer. अपाध्यायः पुनर्भवेद्ध्यानाश्रयि: पुनर्भवेद्ध्यायां अपाध्यायः अपाध्यायः. ‘Weared of meditation, let him pray inaudibly: weary of prayer, let him repeat meditation.’ अपाध्यायांश्चायि शरे पश्यात्मकान्ति:। ‘By the union of prayer and meditation let him behold soul in himself.’
Maitreya—Reverend teacher, I am desirous of being informed what is meant by the term meditation (Yoga), by understanding which I may behold the supreme being, the upholder of the universe.

Parásara—Tell me first, Brahman, who Khánḍikya was, and who was Keśidhwaja; and how it happened that a conversation relating to the practice of Yoga occurred between them.

Parásara.—There was Janaka, named Dharmadhwaja, who had two sons, Amitadhwaja and Kritadhwaja; and the latter was a king ever intent upon existent supreme spirit: his son was the celebrated Keśidhwaja. The son of Amitadhwaja was Janaka, called Khánḍikya.

Khánḍikya was diligent in the way of works, and was renowned on earth for religious rites. Keśidhwaja, on the other hand, was endowed with spiritual knowledge. These two were engaged in hostilities,

2. No such names occur amongst the Maithila kings of the Vishṇu Purāṇa (see Bk.IV. Ch. V.); but, as there noticed (note 6), the Bhágavata inserts them. Janaka is used as a title. Kritadhwaja, in some of the copies, is read Ritadhwaja.
and Khāndikyā was driven from his principality by Keśidhwaja. Expelled from his dominions, he wandered with a few followers, his priest and his counsellors, amidst woods and mountains, where, destitute of true wisdom, he performed many sacrifices, expecting thereby to obtain divine truth, and to escape from death by ignorance.

Once whilst the best of those who are skilled in devotion, Keśidhwaja, was engaged in devout exercises, a fierce tiger slew his milch cow in the lonely forest. When the Rājā heard that the cow had been killed, he asked the ministering priests what form of penance would expiate the crime. They replied that they did not know, and referred him to Kaśeru. Kaśeru, when the Rājā consulted him, told him that he knew not, but that Sunaka would be able to tell him. Accordingly the Rājā went to Sunaka, but he replied, "I am as unable, great king, to answer your question as Kaśeru has been; and there is

3 The performance of rites as a means of salvation is called ignorance in the Vedas (see Bk. VI. Ch. V. n. 7). Works are recommended as introductory to the acquirement of knowledge: it is ignorance to consider them as finite.

4 Tasya-dhenum (तस्याशेणूः). One copy has Homa-dhenu, 'cow of sacrifice'; another, Dharmo-dhenu, 'cow of righteousness.' The commentator explains the terms as importing the same thing, a cow yielding milk for holy purposes, or for the butter which is poured in oblations upon the sacrificial fire.
no one now upon earth who can give you the information except your enemy Khāndikya, whom you have conquered."

Upon receiving this answer, Keśidwaja said, "I will go, then, and pay a visit to my foes: if he kill me, no matter, for then I shall obtain the reward that attends being killed in a holy cause; if, on the contrary, he tell me what penance to perform, then my sacrifice will be unimpaired in efficacy." Accordingly he ascended his car, having clothed himself in the deer skin (of the religious student), and went to the forest where the wise Khāndikya resided. When Khāndikya beheld him approach, his eyes reddened with rage, and he took up his bow, and said to him, "You have armed yourself with the deer skin to accomplish my destruction, imagining that in such an attire you will be safe from me; but, fool, the deer, upon whose backs this skin is seen, are slain by you and me with sharp arrows: so will I slay you; you shall not go free whilst I am living. You are an unprincipled felon, who have robbed me of my kingdom, and are deserving of death." To this Keśidwaja answered, "I have come hither, Khāndikya, to ask you to solve my doubts, and not with any hostile intention: lay aside therefore both your arrow and your anger." Thus spoken to, Khāndikya retired a while with his counsellors and his
priest, and consulted with them what course to pursue. They strongly urged him to slay Kesidhwaja, who was now in his power, and by whose death he would again become the monarch of the whole earth. Khandikya replied to them, "It is no doubt true that by such an act I should become the monarch of the whole earth: he, however, would thereby conquer the world to come; whilst the earth would be mine. Now if I do not kill him, I shall subdue the next world, and leave him this earth. It seems to me that this world is not of more value than the next; for the subjugation of the next world endures for ever; the conquest over this is but for a brief season. I will therefore not kill him, but tell him what he wishes to know."

Returning then to Kesidhwaja, Khandikya desired him to propose his question, which he promised to answer; and Kesidhwaja related to him what had happened, the death of the cow, and demanded to know what penance he should perform. Khandikya, in reply, explained to him fully the expiation that was suited to the occasion; and Kesidhwaja then, with his permission, returned to the place of
sacrifice, and regularly fulfilled every necessary act. Having completed the ceremony, with its supplementary rites, Kesidhwaja accomplished all his objects: but he then reflected thus: The priests whom I invited to attend have all been duly honoured; all those who had any request to make have been gratified by compliance with their desires; all that is proper for this world has been effected by me: why then should my mind feel as if my duty had been unfulfilled?” So meditating, he remembered that he had not presented to Khândikya the gift that it is becoming to offer to a spiritual preceptor, and, mounting his chariot, he immediately set off to the thick forest where that sage abode. Khândikya, upon his reappearance, assumed his weapons to kill him; but Kesidhwaja exclaimed, “Forbear, venerable sage. I not here to injure you, Khândikya: dismiss your wrath, and know that I have come hither to offer you that remuneration which is due to you as my instructor. Through your lessons I have fully completed my sacrifice, and I am therefore desirous to give you a gift. Demand what it shall be.”
dom back again, as kingdoms are obtained by prudent men without conflicting hosts. The reflecting king Khándikya laughed, and replied to them, “Why should a person such as I be desirous of a temporary earthly kingdom? Of a truth you are able counsellors in the concerns of this life, but of those of the life to come you are assuredly ignorant.” So speaking, he went back to Keśidhwaja, and said to him, “Is it true that you wish to make me a gift, as to your preceptor?” “Indeed I do,” answered Keśidhwaja. “Then,” rejoined Khándikya, “as it is known that you are learned in the spiritual learning that teaches the doctrine of the soul, if you will communicate that knowledge to me, you will have discharged your debt to your instructor. Declare to me what acts are efficacious for the alleviation of human affliction.”

CHAPTER VII

न प्राधितं त्वया कस्मान्म राज्यमकर्ष्टकम् ।
राज्यलाभाद्विनात्यतृ धर्मवानकामतिप्रयम्॥८॥
केशिद्वज निबोध तत्र स्या न प्राधितं यतं ।
राज्यमेतदोषें ते यत् गृह्यन् भवन्दितः॥९॥

“But,” said Keśidhwaja, “why have you not asked of me my kingdom, now free from all annoyance? what else except dominion is acceptable to the warrior race?” “I will tell you,” replied Khándikya, “why I did not make such a demand, nor require that territory which
is an object of ignorant ambition. It is the duty of the warrior to protect his subjects in peace, and to kill in fight the enemies of his sway. It is no fault that you should have taken my kingdom from one who was unable to defend it, to whom it was a bondage, and who was thus freed from the encumbrance of ignorance. My desire of dominion originated in my being born to possess it: the ambition of others, which proceeds from human frailties, is not compatible with virtue. To solicit gifts is not the duty of a prince and warrior: and for these reasons I have not asked for your kingdom, nor made a demand which ignorance alone would have suggested. Those only who are destitute of knowledge, whose minds are engrossed by selfishness, who are intoxicated with the inebriating beverage of self-sufficiency, desire kingdoms; not such as I am.

When king Kesidhwaja heard these words, he was much pleased, and exclaimed, "It is well spoken!" Then addressing Khândikya affectionately, he said, "Listen to my words. Through desire of escaping death by the ignorance of work, I exercise the regal power, celebrate various sacrifices, and enjoy pleasures subversive of purity. Fortunate is it for you that your mind has attached itself to the dominion of discrimination. Pride of your race! now listen to the
real nature of ignorance. The (erroneous) notion that self consists in what is not self, and the opinion that property consists in what is not one’s own, constitute the double seed of the tree of ignorance. The ill-judging embodied being, bewildered by the darkness: of fascination, situated in a body composed of the five elements, loudly asserts, ‘This is I’: but who would ascribe spiritual individuality to a body in which soul is distinct from the ether, air, fire, water, and earth (of which that body is composed)? What man of understanding assigns to disembodied spirit corporeal fruition, or lands, houses, and the like, that it should say, ‘These are mine?’ What wise man entertains the idea of property in sons or grandsons begotten of the body after the spirit has abandoned it? Man performs all acts for purpose of bodily fruition, and the consequence of such acts is another body; so that their result is nothing but confinement to bodily existence. In the same manner as a mansion of clay is plastered with clay and water, so the body, which is of earth, is perpetuated by earth and water (or by eating and drinking). The body, consisting of the five elements, is nourished by substances equally composed of those elements: but

1 The text is somewhat obscure, but it is in some degree cleared up by the illustration. No one would think of applying the property of self—the idea of possession or personality—to soul, separated from body: but the objection is equally applicable to soul in the body; for whilst there it is as distinct in its nature from the materials of body as if it was disembodied, and quite as incapable of individual personal fruition.
since this is the case, what is there in this life that man should be proud of? Travelling the path of the world for many thousands of births, man attains only the weariness of bewilderment, and is smothered by the dust of imagination. When that dust is washed away by the bland water of real knowledge, then the weariness of bewilderment sustained by the wayfarer through repeated births is removed. When that weariness is relieved, the internal man is at peace, and he obtains that supreme felicity which is unequalled and undisturbed. This soul is (of its own nature) pure, and composed of happiness and wisdom. The properties of pain, ignorance, and impurity, are those of nature (Prakriti), not of soul. There is no affinity between fire and water, but when the latter is placed over the former in a caldron it bubbles and boils, and exhibits the properties of fire. In like manner, when soul is associated with Prakriti it is vitiated by egotism and the rest, and assumes the qualities of grosser nature, although essentially distinct from them, and incorruptible. Such is the seed of ignorance, as I have explained it to you. There is but one cure of worldly sorrows, the practice of devotion; no other is known.”

तत्त्वं श्री हि महाभाग ! योगं योगविद्यतम !
विवाहत्योगशास्त्रायश्चस्तम्या निमित्तन्तरी॥ २५॥

“Then,” said Khândikya, “do you, who are the chief of those versed in contemplative devotion, explain to me what that is; for in
the race of the descendants of Nimi\textsuperscript{a} you are best acquainted with
the sacred writings in which it is taught." "Hear," replied Kesidhwaja, "the account of the nature of contemplative devotion,\textsuperscript{b} which I impart to you, and by perfection in which the sage attains resolution into Brahma, and never suffers birth again. The mind of man is the cause both of his bondage and his liberation: its addiction to the objects of sense is the means of his bondage; its separation from objects of sense is the means of his freedom. The sage who is capable of discriminative knowledge must therefore restrain his mind from all the objects of sense, and therewith meditate upon the supreme being, who is one with spirit, in order to attain liberation; for that supreme spirit attracts to itself him who meditates upon it, and who is of the same nature, as the loadstone attracts the iron by the virtue

2. That is, in the race of princes of Mithilā.

3 The term Yoga (\textit{yog}: ), which is that used in the text, in its literal acceptance signifies 'union,' 'junction,' from \textit{kuj} ‘to join:’ in a spiritual sense it denotes 'union of separated with universal soul;' and with some latitude of expression it comes to signify the means by which such union is effected. In the Bhagavad Gitā it is variously applied, but ordinarily denotes the performance of religious ceremonies as a duty, and not for interested purposes. Thus Kṛṣṇa says to Arjuna, \textit{yogasthā:} \textit{kuj} \textit{kamāṇi sām} \textit{lakṣaṇa} \textit{puruṣayāh} \textit{sāmāyāh} \textit{yogas} \textit{udāyate}. ‘Engaging in Yoga, perform rites, Dhananjaya, being indifferent to success or failure: such indifference is called Yoga.” II. v. 48. It is elsewhere defined, ‘exemption from the contact of pain:’ \textit{ũśakṣamāna} \textit{yogasthān} \textit{yogas} \textit{śriyam}. VI. v. 23.

The word has been accordingly rendered ‘devotion’ by Wilkins, and ‘devotio’ by Schlegel, in their translations of the Gitā. In this place, however, it is used in a less general sense, and signifies, as is subsequently explained, reunion with spirit through the ‘exercises necessary to perfect abstraction as they are taught and practised by the followers of Patanjali.
which is common to itself and to its products. Contemplative devotion is the union with Brahma, effected by that condition of mind which has attained perfection through those exercises which complete the control of self; and he whose contemplative devotion is characterized by the property of such absolute perfection, is in truth a sage, expectant of final liberation from the world.

Yogasukh pratham yogi yogana hamsihiyate. 
Bhinvanassamabhistu par Brahmaprabhiman. 1133.

"The sage, or Yogi, when first applying himself to contemplative devotion is called the novice or practitioner (Yoga yuj); when he has attained spiritual union he is termed the adept, or he whose meditations

4 This illustration is however only to a limited extent, explanatory of the nature of Yoga; for though the loadstone and iron unite, by virtue of a community of kind, yet the union that takes place is only that of contiguity, Samyoga (समयोग), not that of identification or unity. Tadaikyum (तद्विषयम्). Some further explanation therefore is required.

5 The first stage is the Atma prayatna, the practice of moral and religious restraint, Yama, Niyama, &c. When the novice is perfect in these, then he is fit to attain the perfectibility of an adept, through the especial practices which treatises on the Yoga prescribe. When the mind has attained the state which can alone be attained through them, then the union with Brahma, which is the consequence, is called Yoga: आत्मप्रयत्नसाक्षरविषयाद निषेधायमस्ता मनोगति. तथा ज्ञानं संबोधनो योग इत्यभिधीयते. The Atma prayatna is defined to be that which has Yama, &c. for its objects, ज्ञानिनवादविशिष्टम्, The next phrase, तस्प्रियविशिष्टम्, is explained तद्विषयम् (लेक्यक्षम्). Some further explanation therefore is required.

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A text of Yajnavalkya is quoted to this effect: ज्ञाने देवमात्र सिद्धि रूपमेवास्थिति संबोधिता योग इत्यक्षे ज्ञानिनवादविशिष्टम्. ‘Know holy wisdom to be the same with Yoga’ (the practice of) which has eight divisions. That which is termed Yoga is union of the living with the supreme soul.'
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are accomplished. Should the thoughts of the former be unvitiated by any obstructing imperfection, he will obtain freedom, after practising devotion through several lives. The latter speedily obtains liberation in that existence (in which he reaches perfection), all his acts being consumed by the fire of contemplative devotion. The sage who would bring his mind into a fit state for the performance of devout contemplation must be devoid of desire, and observe invariably continence, compassion, truth, honesty, and disinterestedness: he must fix his mind intently on the supreme Brahma, practising holy study, purification, contentment, penance, and self-control. These virtues, respectively termed the five acts of restraint (Yama), and five of obligation (Niyama), bestow excellent rewards when practised for the sake of reward, and eternal liberation when they are not prompted by desire (of transient benefits). Endowed with these merits, the sage self-restrained should sit in one of the modes termed Bhadrāsana, &c., and engage in contemplation. Bringing his vital airs, called

6 Vishishpannasamādhī is the expression of the text, which can scarcely be regarded an appellative. The commentator terms the adept Brahmajñāni, 'He who knows Brahma.'

7 After three lives, according to the Vāyu Sanhitā, as quoted in the comment.

8 There are various postures in which the Yogi is directed to sit when he engages in meditation. In the Bhadrāsana he is directed to cross his legs underneath him, and to lay hold of his feet on each side with his hands.
Prána, under subjection, by frequent repetition, is thence called Pránapáyáma, which is as it were a seed with a seed. In this the breath of expiration and that of inspiration are alternately obstructed, constituting the act twofold; and the suppression of both modes of breathing produces a third. The exercise of the Yogi, whilst endeavouring to bring before his thoughts the gross form of the eternal, is denominated Alambana. He is then to perform the Pratyáhára, which consists in restraining his organs of sense from susceptibility to outward impressions, and directing them entirely to mental perceptions. By these means the entire subjugation of the unsteady senses is effected; and if they are not controlled, the sage will not accomplish his devotions. When by the Pránapáyáma the vital airs are restrained, and the senses are subjugated by the Pratyáhára, then the sage will be able to keep his mind steady in its perfect asylum.

Khándikya then said to Keśidhvaja. "Illustrious sage, inform me

9 सबोज़ बीज एवं | It is itself figuratively the seeds of the fruit, which is meditation; but it is to be accompanied with what is also technically called Bija, or seed, inaudible repetition of certain prayers, and meditation on the visible form of the deity, termed likewise Alambana, and presently mentioned.

10 Pránapáyáma is performed by three modifications of breathing: the first act is expiration, which is performed through the right nostril, whilst the left is closed with the fingers of the right hand; this is called Rechaka: the thumb is then placed upon the right nostril, and the fingers raised from the left, through which breath is inhaled; this is called Púraka: in the third act both nostrils are closed, and breathing suspended; this is Kumbhaka: and a succession of these operations is the practice of Pránapáyáma.

11 Alambana is the silent repetition of prayer.
what is that perfect asylum of the mind, resting on which it destroys all the products of (human) infirmity.” To this, Kesidhwaja replied: “The asylum of mind is spirit (Brahma), which of its own nature is twofold, as being with or without form; and each of these is supreme and secondary.\textsuperscript{12} Apprehension of spirit,\textsuperscript{12} again, is threefold. I will explain the differencel kinds to you: they are, that which is called Brahma, that which is named from works, and that which comprehends both. That mental apprehension which consists of Brahma is one; that which is formed of works is another; and that which comprehends both is the third: so that mental apprehension (of the object or asylum of the thoughts) is threefold. Sanandana and other (perfect sages) were endowed with apprehension of the nature of Brahma. The gods and others, whether animate or inanimate, are possessed of that which regards acts. The apprehension that comprehends both works and spirit exists in Hiranyagarbha and others,

\textsuperscript{12} The Brahma that is without form (Amūrta) may be Para or Apara. Supreme formless spirit is without attributes of any kind. Secondary formless spirit is invested with the attributes of power, glory, truth, perfection. Spirit embodied, or with form in his highest state, is, according to our text, Vishnu and his manifestations. Spirit in an inferior or secondary series of bodily forms is Brahmá and all other living beings.

The term is Bhāvāna, defined to be, ‘function to be engendered by knowledge;’ साजिध्य: संस्कार: \textsuperscript{1} the mental impression of apprehension following upon knowledge. Here it implies in particular the formation of a fixed idea by the Yogi of the object of his contemplations. It is also termed Bhāva-bhāvana, ‘apprehension of the being, the existence, or substantiality, of the objects; the thing contemplated;’ भावो वस्तु त्वरिष्या भावना भावाभावना।
who are possessed of contemplative knowledge of their own nature, and who also exercise certain active functions, as creation and the rest. Until all acts, which are the causes of notions of individuality, are discontinued, spirit is one thing, and the universe is another, to those who contemplate objects as distinct and various; but that is called true knowledge, or knowledge of Brahma, which recognises no distinctions, which contemplates only simple existence, which is indefinable by words, and is to be discovered solely in one's own spirit. That is the supreme, imperishable form of Vishnu, who is without (sensible) form, and is characterised as a condition of the supreme soul, which is variously modified from the condition of universal form. But this condition cannot be contemplated by sages in their (early) devotions, and they must therefore direct their minds to the gross form of Hari, which is of universal perceptibility. They must meditate upon him as Hiranyagarbha, as the glorious Vāsava, as Prajāpati, as the winds, the Vāsus, the Rudras, the suns, stars, planets, Gandharbas, Yakshas, Daityas, all the gods and their progenitors, men, animals, mountains, oceans, rivets, trees, all beings, and all sources of beings, all modifications whatever of nature and its products, whether sentient or unconscious, one-footed, two-footed, or many-footed; all these are the sensible form of Hari, to be apprehended by the three kinds of apprehension. All this universal world, this world of moving and
stationary beings, is pervaded by the energy of Vishnu, who is of the nature of the supreme Brahma. This energy is either supreme, or, when it is that of conscious embodied spirit, it is secondary. Ignorance, or that which is denominated from works, is a third energy; by which the omnipresent energy of embodied spirit is ever excited, and whence it suffers all the pains of repeated worldly existence. Obscured by that energy (of ignorance or illusion), the energy that is denominated from embodied spirit is characterised by different degrees of perfection in all created beings. In things without life it exists in a very small degree: it is more in things that have life, but are (without motion): in insects it is still more abundant, and still more in birds; it is more in wild animals, and in domestic animals the faculty is still greater: men have more of this (spiritual) faculty than animals, and thence arises their authority over them: the faculty exists in an ascending degree in Nágas, Gandharbas, Yakshas, gods, Sakra, Prajápati, and Hiranyakarbhá: and is above all

14 The term used throughout is Sakti (शक्ति), 'power,' 'ability,' 'energy.' By the first kind, or Pará, is understood knowledge able to appreciate abstract truth, or the nature of universal soul; by the second, ability to understand the nature of embodied soul; and by the third, inability to discern one's own nature, and reliance on moral or ceremonial merit. These different kinds are called energies, because they are the energies or faculties of the supreme spirit, or, according to the Vaishnava, of Vishnu, accompanying soul in all its various conditions of existence.
predominant in that male (Vishnu) of whom all these various creatures are but the diversified forms, penetrated universally by his energy, as all-pervading as the ether.

"The second\textsuperscript{15} state of him who is called Vishnu, and which is to be meditated upon by the (advanced) sage, is that imperceptible, shapeless form of Brahma, which is called by the wise, 'That which is,'\textsuperscript{16} and in which all the before described energies reside. Thence proceeds the form of the universal form, the other great form of Hari, which is the origin of those manifested forms (or incarnations) that are endowed with every kind of energy, and which, whether the forms of gods, animals, or men, are assumed by him (Hari) in his sport. This active interposition of the indefinable god, all-comprehending and irresistible, is for the purpose of benefiting the world, and is not the necessary consequence of works. This form of the universal form is to be meditated upon by the sage for the object of purification, as it destroys all sin. In the same manner as fire, blazing in the wind, burns dry grass, so Vishnu, seated in the heart, consumes the sins of the sage; and therefore let him resolutely effect the fixation of his

\textsuperscript{15} The first, which has been intended to be described in the foregoing passages, was the universal, visible form of Vishnu; the second is his formless or imperceptible condition.

\textsuperscript{16} Sat (सत्), 'what is being'
mind upon that receptacle of all the three energies (Vishṇu), for that is the operation of the mind which is called perfect Dhāranā: and thus the perfect asylum of individual as well as universal spirit, that which is beyond the three modes of apprehension, is attained, for the eternal emancipation of the sage. The minds of other beings, which are not fixed upon that asylum, are altogether impure, and are all the gods and the rest, who spring from acts. The retention or apprehension by the mind of that visible form of Vishṇu, without regard to subsidiary forms, is thence called Dhāranā; and I will describe to you the perceptible form of Hari, which no mental retention will manifest, except in a mind that is fit to become the receptacle of the idea. The meditating sage must think (he beholds internally the figure) of Vishnu as having a pleased and lovely countenance, with eyes like the leaf of the lotus, smooth cheeks, and a broad and brilliant forehead; ears of equal size, the lobes of which are decorated with splendid pendants; a painted neck, and a broad breast, on which shines the Śrīvatsa mark;

17 Retention, or holding of the image or idea formed in the mind by contemplation: from Dhri (ध्री), ‘to hold,’ literally or figuratively.

18 The explanation of Dhāranā given in the text is rendered unnecessarily perplexed by the double doctrine here taught, and the attempt to combine the abstractions of Yoga theism with the sectarian worship of Vishnu.
a belly falling in graceful folds, with a deep-seated navel; eight long arms, or else four; and firm and well-knit thighs and legs, with well-formed feet and toes. Let him, with well-governed thoughts, contemplate, as long as he can persevere in unremitting attention, Hari as clad in a yellow robe, wearing a rich diadem on his head, and brilliant armlets and bracelets on his arms, and bearing in his hands the bow, the shell, the mace, the sword, the discus, the rosary, the lotus, and the arrow. When this image never departs from his mind, whether he be going or standing, or be engaged in any other voluntary act, then he may believe his retention to be perfect. The sage may then meditate upon the form of Vishnu without his arms, as the shell, mace, discus, and bow; and as placid, and bearing only his rosary. When the idea of this image is firmly retained, then he may meditate on Vishnu without his diadem, bracelets, or other ornaments. He may next contemplate him as having but one single limb, and may then fix his whole thoughts upon the body to which the limbs belong.

This process of forming a lively image in the mind, exclusive of all other objects, constitutes Dhyāna, or meditation, which is perfected

19 The two last implements are from the comment; the text specifies only six.
by six stages: and when an accurate knowledge of self, free from all distinction, is attained by this mental meditation, that is termed Samádhi.

"(When the Yogi has accomplished this stage, he acquires) discriminative knowledge, which is the means of enabling living soul, when all the three kinds of apprehension are destroyed, to attain the attainable supreme Brahma. Embodied spirit is the user of the instrument, which instrument is true knowledge; and by it that (identification) of the former (with Brahma) is attained. Liberation, which is the 

20 They are, 1. Yama & c., acts of restraint and obligation; 2. Āsana, sitting in particular postures; 3. Pranáyáma, modes of breathing; 4. Pratyáhára, exclusion of all external ideas; 5. Bhávaná, apprehension of internal ideas; 6. Dháraná, fixation or retention of those ideas.

21 The result of the Dhyána or Samádhi is the absence of all idea of individuality, when the meditator, the meditation, and the thing or object meditated upon, are all considered to be but one. According to the text of Patanjali: ‘Restraint of the body, retention of the mind, and meditation, which thence is exclusively confined to one object, is Dhyána: the idea of identification with the object of such meditation, so as if devoid of individual nature, is Samádhi.' देवन्यथितं भारस्य तत्त्वस्य कल्पतु नतत्त्वान्तः तद्कार्यार्थाभिनिर्घं सामाधिः।

22 The expressions of the text are somewhat obscure, nor does the commentator make them much more intelligible, until he cuts the matter short by stating the meaning to be, that 'discriminative knowledge enables the living spirit to attain Brahma': देवन्यथितं भारस्य तत्त्वस्य कल्पतु नतत्त्वान्तः तद्कार्यार्थाभिनिर्घं सामाधिः।

23 The text is very elliptical and obscure. Having stated that embodied spirit (Kshestrajna) is the Karanin, the possessor or user of the Karané, which is knowledge, it adds. तेनत्त्वं तत्तः literally, 'by that, of that, that'; i.e. Tat, 'that which is'; and Brahma, or supreme spirit, is the attainment of that spirit which abides in body by that instrument, or discriminative knowledge, of which it has become possessed through perfect meditation: देवन्यथितं भारस्य तत्त्वस्य कल्पतु नतत्त्वान्तः तद्कार्यार्थाभिनिर्घं सामाधिः। देवन्यथितं भारस्य तत्त्वस्य कल्पतु नतत्त्वान्तः तद्कार्यार्थाभिनिर्घं सामाधिः।
object to be effected, being accomplished, discriminative knowledge ceases. When endowed with the apprehension of the nature of the object of inquiry, then, there is no difference between it (individual and) supreme spirit: difference is the consequence of the absence of (true) knowledge. When that ignorance which is the cause of the difference between individual and universal spirit is destroyed finally and for ever, who shall ever make that distinction between them which does not exist? Thus have I, Khândikya, in reply to your question, explained to you what is meant by contemplative devotion, both fully and summarily. What else do you wish to hear?"

Kāṅkṣitā yogyāvāne svabhāva kṛtta mām.
Tatopadeśānādeke nityāntamalo yata: 1196
Māmāti gataḥ prāktmasadante bhāya.
Narēna! gṛhaṁ śrāvamāṇī viśeṣyatevidāś: 1197
Aṁ māmāti visheṣo vaharasthānāyoh.
Parāṁśfurakṣaṇāyāno gochito vachsan na sa: 1198
Tad gṛha śreyaṁ svabhāvānta kṛtta.

Yahāṁ kṣudrīrko yagna: prakṛta: keshāvajāya: 1199

Khândikya replied to Kesiṣdhvaja, and said, "The explanation which you have given me of the real nature of contemplative devotion has fulfilled all my wishes, and removed all impurity from my mind. The expression 'mine,' which I have been accustomed to use, is untruth, and cannot be otherwise declared by those who know what is to be known. The words 'I' and 'mine' constitute ignorance; but practice is influenced by ignorance. Supreme truth cannot be defined, for it is not to be explained by words. Depart therefore, Kesiṣdhvaja; you have done all that is necessary for my real happiness, in teaching me contemplative devotion, the inexhaustible bestower of liberation from existence."

Yathā̃hānyo yena śaṅkṣeyen sa punāt:
Ajaṇgama purāṇaśrāvaṁ kēśiṣṭhavoh nīpa: 1200

Accordingly king Kesiṣdhvaja, after receiving suitable homage from Khándikya, returned to his city. Khándikya, having nominated
his son Rájá,24 retired to the woods to accomplish his devotions, his whole mind being intent upon Govinda: there his entire thoughts being engrossed upon one only object, and being purified by practices of restraint, self-control, and the rest, he obtained absorption into the pure and perfect spirit which is termed Vishnu. Keśidhvaja also, in order to attain liberation, became averse from his own perishable works, and lived amidst objects of sense (without regarding them,) and instituted religious rites without expecting therefrom any advantages to himself. Thus by pure and auspicious fruition, being cleansed from all sin, he also obtained that perfection which assuages all affliction for ever.

CHAPTER VIII

I have now explained to you, Maitreya, the third kind of worldly dissolution, or that which is absolute and final, which is, liberation and resolution into eternal spirit¹. I have related to you primary and secondary creation, the families of the patriarchs, the periods of the Manvantaras, and the genealogical histories (of the kings). I have

24 The commentator, in order to explain how Khándikya should have given what he did not possess, states that it is to be understood that Keśidhvaja relinquished to him the kingdom; or the term Rájá may denote merely, master of, or acquainted with, mystic prayers, or Mantras: यद्द राजा मन्त्रवाचिनेन कुत्ता।

1 The term is Brahmi laya (ब्रह्मि लयः), which means, ‘a melting away,’ ‘a dissolution’ or ‘fusion,’ from the root Li (ल), ‘to liquefy,’ ‘to melt,’ ‘to dissolve.’
repeated to you, in short, who were desirous of hearing it, the imperishable Vaishnava Purana, which is destructive of all sins, the most excellent of all holy writings, and the means of attaining the great end of man. If there is any thing else you wish to hear, propose your question, and I will answer it.

Maitreya.——Holy teacher, you have indeed related to me all that I wished to know, and I have listened to it with pious attention. I have nothing further to inquire. The doubts inseparable from the mind of man have all been resolved by you, and through your instructions I am acquainted with the origin, duration, and end of all things; with Vishnu in his collective fourfold form; his three energies; and with the three modes of apprehending the object of contemplation. Of all this have I acquired a knowledge through your favour, and nothing else is worthy to be known, when it is once understood that Vishnu and this world are not mutually distinct. Great Muni, I have obtained through your kindness all I desired, the dissipation of my doubts, since you have instructed me in the duties of the several tribes, and in

2 Or with Vishnu in the four modifications described in the first section, spirit, matter, form, and time: see Bk. I. Ch. II.
3 Or Sakti, noticed in the last chapter, Ch. VII.
4 Or Bhava-pas, also described in the preceding section, Ch. VII.
other obligations; the nature of active life, and discontinuance of action; and the derivation of all that exists from works. There is nothing else, venerable Brahman, that I have to inquire of you; and forgive me if your answers to my questions have imposed upon you any fatigue. Pardon me the trouble that I have given you, through that amiable quality of the virtuous which makes no distinction between a disciple and a child.

Parāśara ubeça

Añita yamayāśatam pūraṇāṃ vedasmīttam 1

śatishāsaṃ ṣanvāvedūhyatpaapāraś: pṛṣṭāmyatī 12

sargasa pratiṣargas saṃgho mānaktarāṇī ś 1

ambahručarita hručas māyātṛa ṭavā koṭiṣṭita ś 13 1

anta deśavahya dētya gacchāvṛtāraṣṭraṃ 1

yakṣa viyādharaś: siddhaś: kṛṣṇateṣu ṭasaṣṭraś: 14 1

mūsya bhāvitaśāraś: kṛṣṇate tapasānītaś: 1 15

chāntuvarṇaḥ yaka puṣtāṃ viyādψarita naraṃ 16 1

pūraṇaḥ pandavāḥ médinyāḥ: puṣṭaḥ nābhaṣya sāgarāḥ 1

puruśaśaḥ mahāpuṣṭyāḥ pirāṇi ś śīmaṃtaś: 16 1

vṛttaḥśravāḥṣvamāṇaḥ savaḥ: śravāṇaḥ: pramahety: 17 1

uktātāni-sīrītā-nā ṣatāḥ susurya jyotāṣṭvya ś 1

ś śravāṇaḥ: śravāṇaḥ kṛṇate mahāvān hṛīrāḥ 18 1

Parāśara.—I have related to you this Purāṇa, which is equal to the Vedas in sanctity, and by hearing which all faults and sins whatever are expiated. In this have been described to you the primary and secondary creation, the families of the patriarchs, the Manvantaras, the regal dynasties; the gods, Daityas, Gandharbas serpents, Rākshasas, Yakshas, Vidyādharas, Siddhas, and heavenly nymphs; Munis endowed with spiritual wisdom, and practitioners of devotion; the distinction of the four castes, and the actions of the most eminent amongst men; holy places on the earth, holy rivers and oceans, sacred mountains, and legends of the truly wise; the duties of the different tribes, and the observances enjoined by the Vedas. By hearing this, all sins are at once obliterated. In this also the glorious Hari has been revealed, the cause of the creation, preservation, and destruction of the world; the soul of all things, and himself all things: by the repetition
of whose name man is undoubtedly liberated from all sins, which fly like wolves that are frightened by a lion. The repetition of his name with devout faith is the best remover of all sins, destroying them as fire purifies the metal from the dross. The stain of the Kali age, which ensures to men sharp punishments in hell, is at once effaced by a single invocation of Hari. He who is all that is, the whole egg of Brahmā, with Hiranyagarbha, Indra, Rudra, the Ādityas, the Asvins, the winds, the Kinrars, the Vasus, the Sādhyas, Visvadevas, the celestial gods, the Yakshas, serpents, Rākshasas, the Siddhas, Daityas, Gandharbas, Dānavas, nymphs, the stars, asterisms, planets, the seven Rṣis, the regents and superintendents of the quarters, men, Brahmans and the rest, animals tame and wild, insects, birds, ghosts and goblins, trees, mountains, woods, rivers, oceans, the subterranean legions, the divisions of the earth, and all perceptible objects—he who is all things, who knoweth all things, who is the form of all things, being without form himself, and of whom whatever is, from mount Meru to an atom, all consists—he, the glorious Vishnu, the destroyer of all sin—is described in this Purāṇa. By hearing this Purāṇa an
VISHNU PURĀNA

equal recompense is obtained to that which is derived from the performance of an Āsvamedha sacrifice, or from fasting at the holy places Prayāga, Pushkara Kurukshetra, or Arbuda. Hearing this Purāṇa but once is as efficacious as the offering of oblations in a perpetual fire for a year. The man who with well-governed passions bathes at Mathurā on the twelfth day of the month Jyesthā, and beholds (the image of) Hari, obtains a great recompense; so does he who with mind fixed upon Keśava attentively recites this Purāṇa. The man who bathes in the waters of the Yamunā on the twelfth lunation of the light fortnight of the month in which the moon is in the mansion Jyesthā, and who fasts and worships Achyuta in the city of Mathurā, receives the reward of an uninterrupted Āsvamedha. Beholding the degree of prosperity enjoyed by others of eminence, through the merits of their descendants, a man’s paternal ancestors, his parents and their parents, exclaim, “Whosoever of our descendants, having bathed

5 This month is also called Jyeshṭhamūla, which the commentator explains to mean, the month, of which the root or cause (Mūla) of being so called is the moon’s being full in the constellation Jyesthā: but it may be so termed, perhaps, from the lunar asterism Mūlā, which is next to Jyeshṭhā, falling also within the moon’s passage through the same month.
in the Yamuna and fasted, will worship Govinda in Mathurā, in the light fortnight of Jyestha, will secure for us eminent exaltation; for we shall be elevated by the merits of our posterity!” A man of good extraction will present obsequial cakes to his fortunate ancestors in the Yamunā, having worshipped Janārdana in the light fortnight of Jyestha. But the same degree of merit that a man reaps from adoring Janārdana at that season with a devoted heart, and from bathing in the Yamunā, and effecting the liberation of his progenitors by offering to them on such an occasion obsequial cakes, he derives also from hearing with equal devotion a section of this Purāṇa. This Purāṇa is the best of all preservatives for those who are afraid of worldly existence, a certain alleviation of the sufferings of men, and remover of all imperfections.

This Purāṇa, originally composed by the Rśi (Nārāyaṇa), was communicated by Brahmā to Ribhu; he related it to Priyavrata, by whom it was imparted to Bhāguri. Bhāguri recited it to Tamasitra, and he to Dadhīcha, who gave it to Sārasvata. From the last Bṛgu

6 This name is also read Tambamitrita. One copy has Tava-mitrāya, ‘to thy friend,’ as if it was an epithet of Dadhīcha; but the construction of the verse requires a proper name. ‘Bhāguri gave it to Tambamittra, and he to Dadhīcha:’ भागुरिं भमित्रायं दधीचाय स चोऽवान्.
received it, who imparted it to Dhritarāṣṭra, the Nāga king, and to Puraṇa of the same race, by whom it was repeated to their monarch Vāsuki. Vāsuki communicated it to Vatsa, and he to Aśvatara, from whom it successively proceeded to Kambala and Elapatra. When the Muni Vedaśīras descended to Pātāla, he there received the whole Purāṇa from these Nāgas, and communicated it to Pramati. Pramati consigned it to the wise Jātukarna, and he taught it to many other holy persons. Through the blessing of Vāśishtha it came to my knowledge, and I have now, Maitreya, faithfully imparted it to you. You will teach it, at the end of the Kali age, to Śamīka. Whoever hears this great mystery, which removes the contamination of the Kali, shall be freed from all his sins. He who hears this every day acquires himself of his daily obligations to ancestors, gods and men. The great and rarely attainable merit that a man acquires by the gift of a brown cow, he derives from hearing ten chapters of this Purāṇa. He

7 A different series of narrators has been specified in the first book.
Bk. I. Ch. I.

8 This seems to be an injudicious interpolation; it is not in all the copies.
who hears the entire Purāṇa, contemplating in his mind Achyuta, who is all things, and of whom all things are made; who is the stay of the whole world, the receptacle of spirit; who is knowledge, and that which is to be known; who is without beginning or end, and the benefactor of the gods—obtains assuredly the reward that attends the uninterrupted celebration of the Āsvamedha rite. He who reads and retains with faith this Purāṇa, in the beginning, middle, and end of which is described the glorious Achyuta, the lord of the universe in every stage, the master of all that is stationary or moveable, composed of spiritual knowledge, acquires such purity as exists not in any world, the eternal state of perfection, which is Hari. The man who fixes his mind on Vishnu goes not to hell: he who meditates upon him regards heavenly enjoyment only as an impediment: and he whose mind and soul are penetrated by him thinks little of the world of Brahmā; for when present in the minds of those whose intellects are free from soil, he confers upon them eternal freedom. What marvel therefore is it that the sins of one who repeats the name of Achyuta should be wiped away? Should not that Hari be heard of, whom those devoted to acts worship with sacrifices continually as the god of sacrifice; whom those devoted to meditation contemplate as primary and secondary, composed of spirit; by obtaining whom man is not born, nor nourished, nor subjected to death; who is all that
is, and that is not (or both cause and effect); who, as the progenitors, receives the libations made to them; who, as the gods, accepts the offerings addressed to them; the glorious being who is without beginning or end; whose name is both Svāhā and Svadhā; who is the abode of all spiritual power; in whom the limits of finite things cannot be measured; and who, when he enters the ear, destroys all sin?

I adore him, that first of gods, Purushottama, who is without end and without beginning, without growth, without decay, without death; who is substance that knows not change. I adore that ever inexhaustible spirit, who assumed sensible qualities; who, though one, became many; who, though pure, became as if impure, by appearing in many and various shapes; who is endowed with divine wisdom, and is the author of the preservation of all creatures. I adore him, who is the one conjoined essence and object of both meditative wisdom and active virtue; who is watchful in providing for human enjoyments:

9 The words or prayers employed in presenting oblations with fire.
10 The text has, वसिन्न समानि नौ मानिनिम निषाये प्रभृवति। माना commonly means 'pride,' but here it seems most appropriately rendered by its radical import 'measure;' the measures which are for the determination of measurable things are not applicable to Vishnu.
who is one with the three qualities; who, without undergoing change, is the cause of the evolution of the world; who exists of his own essence, ever exempt from decay. I constantly adore him, who is entitled heaven, air, fire, water, earth, and ether; who is the bestower of all the objects which give gratification to the senses; who benefits mankind with the instruments of fruition; who is perceptible, who is subtle, who is imperceptible. May that unborn, eternal Hari, whose form is manifold, and whose essence is composed of both nature and spirit, bestow upon all mankind that blessed state which knows neither birth nor decay!

END OF VISHNU PURANA

समाप्तिः श्रीविन्दुपुराणाम्
THE

VĪṢṆU PURĀṆA

A SYSTEM

OF

HINDU MYTHOLOGY AND TRADITION

TEXT IN DEVANAGARI
ENGLISH TRANSLATION NOTES AND
APPENDICES, ETC.
TRANSLATED
FROM THE ORIGINAL SANSKRIT
AND
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