

The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda-  
Volume 4- Translation: Poems

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# Chapter 1

## To a Friend

### TO A FRIEND

*(Rendered from a Bengali poem composed by Swami Vivekananda)*

Where darkness is interpreted as light,  
Where misery passes for happiness,  
Where disease is pretended to be health,  
Where the new-born's cry but shows 'tis alive;  
Dost thou, O wise, expect happiness here ?  
Where war and competition ceaseless run,  
Even the father turns against the son,  
Where "self", "self"—this always the only note,  
Dost thou, O wise, seek for peace supreme here?  
A glaring mixture of heaven and hell,  
Who can fly from this Samsâr<sup>[1]</sup> of Mâyâ?  
Fastened in the neck with Karma's fetters,  
Say, where can the slave escape for safety?  
The paths of Yoga and of sense-enjoyment,  
The life of the householder and Sannyâs,  
Devotion, worship, and earning riches,  
Vows, Tyâga, and austerities severe,  
I have seen through them all. What have I known?  
—Have known there's not a jot of happiness,  
Life is only a cup of Tantalus;  
The nobler is your heart, know for certain,  
The more must be your share of misery.  
Thou large-hearted Lover unselfish, know,  
There's no room in this sordid world for thee;  
Can a marble figure e'er brook the blow  
That an iron mass can afford to bear?  
Couldst thou be as one inert and abject,  
Honey-mouthed, but with poison in thy heart,  
Destitute of truth and worshipping self,  
Then thou wouldst have a place in this Samsar.  
Pledging even life for gaining knowledge,  
I have devoted half my days on earth;  
For the sake of love, even as one insane,  
I have often clutched at shadows lifeless;  
For religion, many creeds have I sought,  
Lived in mountain-caves, on cremation-grounds,  
By the Ganga and other sacred streams,  
And how many days have I passed on alms!  
Friendless, clad in rags, with no possession,  
Feeding from door to door on what chance would bring.

The frame broken under Tapasyâ's<sup>[2]</sup> weight;  
What riches, ask thou, have I earned in life?  
Listen, friend, I will speak my heart to thee;  
I have found in my life this truth supreme—  
Buffeted by waves, in this whirl of life,  
There's one ferry that takes across the sea.<sup>[3]</sup>  
Formulas of worship, control of breath,  
Science, philosophy, systems varied,  
Relinquishment, possession, and the like,  
All these are but delusions of the mind—  
Love, Love—that's the one thing, the sole treasure.  
In Jiva and Brahman, in man and God,  
In ghosts, and wraiths, and spirits, and so forth,  
In Devas, beasts, birds, insects, and in worms,  
This Prema<sup>[4]</sup> dwells in the heart of them all.  
Say, who else is the highest God of gods?  
Say, who else moves all the universe?  
The mother dies for her young, robber robs—  
Both are but the impulse of the same Love!  
Beyond the ken of human speech and mind,  
It dwells in weal and woe; 'tis that which comes  
As the all-powerful, all-destroyer  
Kâli, and as the kindest mother.  
Disease, bereavement, pinch of poverty,  
Dharma,<sup>[5]</sup> and its opposite Adharma,<sup>[6]</sup>  
Are but ITS worship in manifold modes;  
Say, what does by himself a Jiva do?  
Deluded is he who happiness seeks,  
Lunatic he who misery wishes,  
Insane he too who fondly longs for death,  
Immortality—vain aspiration!  
For, far, however far you may travel,  
Mounted on the brilliant mental car,  
'Tis the same ocean of the Samsar,  
Happiness and misery whirling on.  
Listen O Vihangam,<sup>[7]</sup> bereft of wings,  
'Tis not the way to make good your escape;  
Time and again you get blows, and collapse,  
Why then attempt what is impossible?  
Let go your vain reliance on knowledge,  
Let go your prayers, offerings, and strength,  
For Love selfless is the only resource;—  
Lo, the insects teach, embracing the flame!  
The base insect's blind, by beauty charmed,  
Thy soul is drunken with the wine of Love;

O thou Lover true, cast into the fire  
 All thy dross of self, thy mean selfishness.  
 Say—comes happiness e'er to a beggar?  
 What good being object of charity?  
 Give away, ne'er turn to ask in return,  
 Should there be the wealth treasured in thy heart.  
 Ay, born heir to the Infinite thou art,  
 Within the heart is the ocean of Love,  
 "Give", "Give away"—whoever asks return,  
 His ocean dwindles down to a mere drop.  
 From highest Brahman to the yonder worm,  
 And to the very minutest atom,  
 Everywhere is the same God, the All-Love;  
 Friend, offer mind, soul, body, at their feet.  
 These are His manifold forms before thee,  
 Rejecting them, where seekest thou for God?  
 Who loves all beings without distinction,  
 He indeed is worshipping best his God.

1. ↑ Samsâra, the world.
2. ↑ Of austerities.
3. ↑ The sea of Samsara.
4. ↑ Love.
5. ↑ Virtue.
6. ↑ Vice.
7. ↑ Bird, here addressed to the bound soul.

#### Notes

## Chapter 2

# The Hymn of Creation

### THE HYMN OF CREATION

*(Rendered from Bengali)*

One Mass, devoid of form, name, and colour,  
Timeless, devoid of time past and future,  
Spaceless, voiceless, boundless, devoid of all—  
Where rests hushed even speech of negation.<sup>[1]</sup>  
From thence, down floweth the river causal,  
Wearing the form of desire radiant,  
Its heaving waters angrily roaring  
The constant roar, “I am”, “I am”.  
In that ocean of desire limitless,  
Appear shining waves, countless, infinite,  
Oh, of what power manifold they are,  
Of what forms myriad, of what repose,  
Of what movements varied, who can reckon?  
Millions of moons, millions of suns,  
Taking their birth in that very ocean,  
Rushing headlong with din tumultuous,  
Overspread the whole firmament, drowning  
The points of heaven in light effulgent.  
In it arise and reside what beings,  
Quick with life, dull, and lifeless—unnumbered,  
And pleasure and pain, disease, birth, and death!  
Verily, the Sun is He, His the ray,  
Nay, the Sun is He, and He is the ray.

1. ↑ “Neti, Neti”, “Not this, not this.” Brahman cannot be described in any positive way.

### Notes

## Chapter 3

# The Hymn of Samadhi

### THE HYMN OF SAMADHI

*(Rendered from Bengali)*

Lo! The sun is not, nor the comely moon,  
All light extinct; in the great void of space  
Floats shadow-like the image-universe.  
In the void of mind involute, there floats  
The fleeting universe, rises and floats,  
Sinks again, ceaseless, in the current "I".  
Slowly, slowly, the shadow-multitude  
Entered the primal womb, and flowed ceaseless,  
The only current, the "I am", "I am".  
Lo! 'Tis stopped, ev'n that current flows no more,  
Void merged into void — beyond speech and mind!  
Whose heart understands, he verily does.

## Chapter 4

# A Hymn to the Divine Mother

### A HYMN TO THE DIVINE MOTHER

#### अम्बास्तोत्रम् ।

का त्वं शुभे शविकरे सुखदुःखहस्ते  
आधूर्णति भवजलं प्रबलोरमभिङ्गैः ।  
शान्तिं विधातुमहि किं बहुधा वभिग्नाम्  
मातः प्रयत्नपरमासि सदैव वशि्वे ॥  
O Thou most beautiful! Whose holy hands  
Hold pleasure and hold pain! Doer of good!  
Who art Thou? The water of existence  
By Thee is whirled and tossed in mighty waves.  
Is it, O Mother, to restore again  
This universe's broken harmony  
That Thou, without cessation, art at work?  
संपादयत्यवरितं त्ववरिमवृत्ता  
या वै स्थिति कृतफलं त्वकृतस्य नेत्री ।  
सा मे भवत्वनुदनिं वरदा भवानी  
जानाम्यहं ध्रुवमदिं धृतकर्मपाशा ॥  
Oh! May the Mother of the universe—  
In whose activity no respite rests,  
Incessantly distributing the fruits  
Of action done, guiding unceasingly  
All action yet to come—bestow Her boon  
Of blessing on me, Her child, for evermore.  
I realise, I know, that it is Thou  
Who holdest in Thy hands dread Karma's rope.  
को वा धर्मः कमिकृतं कः कपाललेखः  
कविदृष्टं फलमहासति हि यां वनिा भोः  
इच्छापाशैर्नयिमति नयिमाः स्वतन्त्रैः  
यस्या नेत्री भवतु सा शरणं ममाद्या ॥  
Is it inherent nature? Something uncreate?  
Or Destiny? Some unforeseen result?—  
Who lacking nothing, is accountable,  
Whose chain of will, untrammelled, grasps the laws,  
May She, the Primal Guide, my shelter be!  
सन्तानयन्तजिलधिजिनमृत्युजालं  
सम्भावयन्त्यवकितं वकितं वभिग्नाम् ।  
यस्या वभितय इहामतिशक्तपिलाः  
नाश्रुतिय तां वद कुतः शरणं व्रजामः ॥  
Manifestations of Her glory show  
In power of immeasurable might,  
Throughout the universe, powers that swell  
The sea of birth and death, forces that change  
And break up the Unchanged and changed again.

Lo! Where shall we seek refuge, save in Her?  
मतिरे शत्रौ त्ववषिमं तव पद्मनेत्रम्  
स्वस्थे दुःस्थे त्ववतिथं तव हस्तपातः ।  
मृत्युच्छाया तव दया त्वमृतञ्च मातः  
मा मां मुञ्चन्तु परमे शुभदृष्टयस्ते ॥  
To friend and foe Thy lotus-eyes are even;  
Ever Thine animating touch brings fruit  
To fortunate and unfortunate alike;  
The shade of death and immortality—  
Both these, O mother, are Thy grace Supreme!  
Mother Supreme! Oh, may Thy gracious face  
Never be turned away from me, Thy child!  
क्वाम्बा सर्वा क्वा गृणनं मम हीनबुधेः  
धर्तुं दोर्भ्यामवि मतरिजगदेकधात्रीम् ॥  
श्रीसञ्चिन्त्यं सुचरणं अभयप्रतष्ठं  
सेवासारैरभिनितं शरणं प्रपद्ये ॥  
What Thou art, the Mother! the All. How praise?  
My understanding is so little worth.  
'Twere like desire to seize with hands of mine  
The sole Supporter of the universe!  
So, at Thy blessed feet—contemplated  
By the Goddess of Fortune Herself—the abode  
Of fearlessness, worshipped by service true—  
There, at those blessed feet, I take refuge!  
या मामाज्जन्म वनियत्यतद्दिःखमार्गैः  
आसंसधिदेः स्वकलतिललतिर्वलिसैः ।  
या मे बुध्दिसुवदिधे सततं धरण्यांम्  
साम्बा सर्वा मम गतिः सफलेऽफले वा ॥  
She who, since birth, has ever led me on  
Through paths of trouble to perfection's goal,  
Mother-wise, in Her own sweet playful ways,  
She, who has always through my life inspired  
My understanding, She, my Mother, She,  
The All, is my resort, whether my work  
O'erflow with full fruition or with none.

## Chapter 5

# A Hymn to Shiva

### A HYMN TO SHIVA

शविस्तोत्रम् ।  
ॐ नमः शवाय ।

नखिलिभुवनजन्मस्थेमभङ्गप्ररोहाः  
अकलतिमहमिानः कल्पति यत्र तस्मिन् ।  
सुवमिलगगनाभे ईशसंस्थेऽप्यनीशे  
मम भवतु भवेऽस्मिन् भासुरो भावबन्धः ॥  
Salutation to Shiva! whose glory  
Is immeasurable, who resembles sky  
In clearness, to whom are attributed  
The phenomena of all creation,  
The preservation and dissolution  
Of the universe! May the devotion,  
The burning devotion of this my life  
Attach itself to Him, to Shiva, who,  
While being Lord of all, transcends Himself.  
नहितनखिलिमोहेऽधीशता यत्र रूढा  
प्रकटतिपरप्रेम्णा यो महादेवसंज्ञः ।  
अशथिलिपररिभः प्रेमरूपस्य यस्य  
प्रणयति हृद्विशिवं व्याजमात्रं वभित्त्वम् ॥  
In whom Lordship is ever established,  
Who causes annihilation of delusion,  
Whose most surpassing love, made manifest,  
Has crowned Him with a name above all names,  
The name of “Mahādeva”, the Great God!  
Whose warm embrace, of Love personified,  
Displays, within man’s heart, that all power  
Is but a semblance and a passing show,  
वहति विपुलवातः पूर्वसंस्काररूपः  
प्रमथति बलवृन्दं धूर्णतिवोरममिला ।  
प्रचलति खलु युग्मं युष्मदस्मत्प्रतीतं  
अतविकलतिरूपं नौर्मा चित्तं शविस्थम् ॥  
In which the tempest of the whole past blows,  
Past Samskāras,<sup>[1]</sup> stirring the energies  
With violence, like water lashed to waves;  
In which the dual consciousness of “I” and “Thou”  
Plays on: I salute that mind unstable,  
Centred in Shiva, the abode of calm!  
जनकजननिभावो वृत्तयः संस्कृताश्च  
अगणनबहुरूपो यत्र एको यथार्थः ।  
शामतिविकृतिवाते यत्र नान्तरवहश्चि  
तमहह हरमीडे चेतवृत्तेर्नरिधम् ॥  
Where the ideas of parent and produced,

Purified thoughts and endless varied forms,  
Merge in the Real one; where the existence ends  
Of such conceptions as “within”, “without”—  
The wind of modification being stilled—  
That Hara I worship, the suppression  
Of movements of the mind. Shiva I hail!  
गलितमिरिमालः शुभ्रतेजःप्रकाशः  
धवलकमलशोभः ज्ञानपुञ्जाट्टहासः ।  
यमजिनहृदगिम्यः नषिकलं ध्यायमानः  
प्रणतमवतु मां स मानसो राजहंसः ॥  
From whom all gloom and darkness have dispersed;  
That radiant Light, white, beautiful  
As bloom of lotus white is beautiful;  
Whose laughter loud sheds knowledge luminous;  
Who, by undivided meditation,  
Is realised in the self-controlled heart:  
May that Lordly Swan of the limpid lake  
Of my mind, guard me, prostrate before Him!  
दुरतिदलनदक्षं दक्षजादत्तदोषं  
कलतिकलकिलङ्कं कमरकहलारकान्तं ।  
परहतिकरणाय प्राणवच्छेदसूक्तं  
नतनयननयुक्तं नीलकण्ठं नमामः ॥  
Him, the Master-remover of evil,  
Who wipes the dark stain of this Iron Age;  
Whom Daksha’s Daughter gave Her coveted hand;  
Who, like the charming water-lily white,  
Is beautiful; who is ready ever  
To part with life for others’ good, whose gaze  
Is on the humble fixed; whose neck is blue<sup>[2]</sup>  
With the poison<sup>[3]</sup> swallowed:  
Him, we salute!

1. ↑ The accumulated effects of past desires and action.
2. ↑ Nilkantha, a name of Shiva.
3. ↑ The all-destructive evil.

### Notes

## Chapter 6

# A Hymn to the Divinity of Shri Ramakrishna

### A HYMN TO THE DIVINITY OF SHRI RAMAKRISHNA

The main poem/song was written in Bengali (which is given in the right column below). The English lyric is rendered from the Bengali lyrics. More information available at [Wikipedia](#)

#### Notes

## Chapter 7

# “And let Shyama Dance there”

### “AND LET SHYAMA DANCE THERE”

*(Rendered from Bengali)*

Beaut'ous blossoms ravishing with perfume,  
Swarms of maddened bees buzzing all around ;  
The silver moon—a shower of sweet smile,  
Which all the dwellers of heaven above  
Shed lavishly upon the homes of earth ;  
The soft Malaya<sup>[1]</sup> breeze, whose magic touch  
Opens to view distant memory's folds ;  
Murmuring rivers and brooks, rippling lakes  
With restless Bhramaras<sup>[2]</sup> wheeling over  
Gently waving lotuses unnumbered ;  
Foaming flow cascades—a streaming music—  
To which echo mountain caves in return ;  
Warblers, full of sweet-flowing melody,  
Hidden in leaves, pour hearts out—love discourse ;  
The rising orb of day, the painter divine,  
With his golden brush but lightly touches  
The canvas earth and a wealth of colours  
Floods at once o'er the bosom of nature,  
—Truly a museum of lovely hues—  
Waking up a whole sea of sentiments.  
The roll of thunder, the crashing of clouds,  
War of elements spreading earth and sky;  
Darkness vomiting forth blinding darkness,  
The Pralaya<sup>[3]</sup> wind angrily roaring;  
In quick bursts of dazzling splendour flashes  
Blood-red terrific lightning, dealing death;  
Monster waves roaring like thunder, foaming,  
Rush impetuous to leap mountain peaks;  
The earth booms furious, reels and totters,  
Sinks down to its ruin, hurled from its place;  
Piercing the ground, stream forth tremendous flames.  
Mighty ranges blow up into atoms.  
A lovely villa, on a lake of blue—  
Festooned with dusters of water-lilies;  
The heart-blood of ripe grapes capped with white foam  
Whispering softly tells tale of passion;  
The melody of the harp floods the ears,  
And by its air, time, and harmony rich,  
Enhances desire in the breast of man ;  
What stirring of emotions! How many  
Hot sighs of Love! And warm tears coursing down!

The Bimba<sup>[4]</sup>-red lips of the youthful fair,  
The two blue eyes—two oceans of feelings;  
The two hands eager to advance—love's cage—  
In which the heart, like a bird, lies captive.  
The martial music bursts, the trumpets blow,  
The ground shakes under the warriors' tread;  
The roar of cannon, the rattle of guns,  
Volumes of smoke, the gruesome battlefield,  
The thundering artillery vomits fire  
In thousand directions; shells burst and strike  
Vital parts of the body; elephants  
And horses mounted are blown up in space;  
The earth trembles under this infernal dance;  
A million heroes mounted on steeds  
Charge and capture the enemy's ordnance,  
Piercing through the smoke and shower of shells  
And rain of bullets; forward goes the flag,  
The emblem of victory, of heroism  
With the blood, yet hot, streaming down the staff,  
Followed by the rifles, drunk with war-spirit;  
Lo! the ensign falls, but the flag proceeds  
Onwards on the shoulder of another;  
Under his feet swell heaps of warriors  
Perished in battle; but he falters not.  
The flesh hankers for contacts of pleasure,  
The senses for enchanting strains of song,  
The mind hungers for peals of laughter sweet,  
The heart pants to reach realms beyond sorrow;  
Say, who cares exchange the soothing moonlight  
For the burning rays of the noontide sun?  
The wretch whose heart is like the scorching sun,  
—Even he fondly loves the balmy moon;  
Indeed, all thirst for joy. Breathes there the wretch  
Who hugs pain and sorrow to his bosom?  
Misery in his cup of happiness,  
Deadly venom in his drink of nectar,  
Poison in his throat—yet he clings to hope!  
Lo! how all are scared by the Terrific,  
None seek Elokeshi <sup>[5]</sup> whose form is Death.  
The deadly frightful sword, reeking with blood,  
They take from Her hand, and put a lute instead!  
Thou dreaded Kâli, the All-destroyer,  
Thou alone art true; Thy shadow's shadow  
Is indeed the pleasant Vanamâli. <sup>[6]</sup>  
O Terrible Mother, cut quick the core,

Illusion dispel—the dream of happiness,  
 Rend asunder the fondness for the flesh.  
 True, they garland Thee with skulls, but shrink back  
 In fright and call Thee, “O All-merciful!”  
 At Thy thunder peal of awful laughter,  
 At Thy nudeness—for space is thy garment—  
 Their hearts sink down with terror, but they say,  
 “It is the demons that the Mother kills!”  
 They only pretend they wish to see Thee,  
 But when the time comes, at Thy sight they flee.  
 Thou art Death! To each and all in the world  
 Thou distributest the plague and disease  
 —Vessels of venom filled by Thine own hands.  
 O thou insane! Thou but cheatest thyself,  
 Thou cost not turn thy head lest thou behold.  
 Ay, the form terrible of the Mother.  
 Thou courtest hardship hoping happiness,  
 Thou wearest cloak of Bhakti and worship,  
 With mind full of achieving selfish ends.  
 The blood from the severed head of a kid  
 Fills thee with fear—thy heart throbs at the sight—  
 Verily a coward! Compassionate? <sup>[7]</sup>  
 Bless my soul! A strange state of things indeed!  
 To whom shall I tell the truth?—Who will see?  
 Free thyself from the mighty attraction—  
 The maddening wine of love, the charm of sex.  
 Break the harp! Forward, with the ocean’s cry!  
 Drink tears, pledge even life—let the body fall.  
 Awake, O hero! Shake off thy vain dreams,  
 Death stands at thy head—does fear become thee?  
 A load of misery, true though it is—  
 This Becoming<sup>[8]</sup>—know this to be thy God!  
 His temple—the Shmashân<sup>[9]</sup> among corpses  
 And funeral pyres; unending battle —  
 That verily is His sacred worship;  
 Constant defeat — let that not unnerve thee;  
 Shattered be little self, hope, name, and fame;  
 Set up a pyre of them and make thy heart  
 A burning-ground.  
 And let Shyâmâ<sup>[10]</sup> dance there.

7. ↑ The idea is that the brave alone can be compassionate, and not the coward.
8. ↑ The wheel of constant birth and death, hence the world.
9. ↑ The cremation-ground.
10. ↑ The Dark One, Kali.

### Notes

1. ↑ A fabulous Sandal-wood mountain in the South. Hence, Malaya breeze means a fragrant breeze from the South.
2. ↑ A beetle somewhat like a humble-bee, which lives solely on honey.
3. ↑ The time of cosmic destruction.
4. ↑ A kind of fruit of a rich red colour.
5. ↑ She with untied hair, a name of Kâli, the Divine Mother of the Universe.
6. ↑ Literally, he who is garlanded with wild flowers. The Shepherd Krishna in His aspect of youthful sport.

## Chapter 8

# A Song I Sing to Thee

### A SONG I SING TO THEE

*(Rendered from Bengali)*

A song I sing. A song I sing to Thee!  
Nor care I for men's comments, good or bad.  
Censure or praise I hold of no account.  
Servant am I, true servant of Thee Both,<sup>[1]</sup>  
Low at Thy feet, with Shakti, I salute!  
Thou standest steadfast, ever at my back,  
Hence when I turn me round, I see Thy face,  
Thy smiling face. Therefore I sing again  
And yet again. Therefore I fear no fear;  
For birth and death lie prostrate at my feet.  
Thy servant am I through birth after birth,  
Sea of mercy, inscrutable Thy ways;  
So is my destiny inscrutable;  
It is unknown; nor would I wish to know.  
Bhakti, Mukti, Japa, Tapas, all these,  
Enjoyment, worship, and devotion too—  
These things and all things similar to these,  
I have expelled at Thy supreme command.  
But only one desire is left in me—  
An intimacy with Thee, mutual!  
Take me, O Lord across to Thee;  
Let no desire's dividing line prevent.  
The eye looks out upon the universe,  
Nor does it seek to look upon itself;  
Why should it? It sees itself in others.  
Thou art my eyes! Thou and Thou alone ;  
For every living temple shrines Thy face.  
Like to the playing of a little child  
Is every attitude of mine toward Thee.  
Even, at times, I dare be angered with Thee;  
Even, at times, I'd wander far away:—  
Yet there, in greyest gloom of darkest night,  
Yet there, with speechless mouth and tearful eyes,  
Thou standest fronting me, and Thy sweet Face  
Stoops down with loving look on face of mine.  
Then, instantly, I turn me back to Thee,  
And at Thy feet I fall on bended knees.  
I crave no pardon at Thy gentle hands,  
For Thou art never angry with Thy son.  
Who else with all my foolish freaks would bear?  
Thou art my Master! Thou my soul's real mate.

Many a time I see Thee—I am Thee!  
Ay, I am Thee, and Thou, my Lord, art me!  
Thou art within my speech. Within my throat  
Art Thou, as Vinâpâni,<sup>[2]</sup> learned, wise.  
On the flow of Thy current and its force  
Humanity is carried as Thou wilt.  
The thunder of Thy Voice is borne upon the boom  
Of crashing waves, of over-leaping seas;  
The sun and moon give utterance to Thy Voice;  
Thy conversation, in the gentle breeze  
Makes itself heard in truth, in very truth,  
True! True! And yet, the while, these gross precepts  
Give not the message of the Higher Truth  
Known to the knower!  
Lo! The sun, the moon,  
The moving planets and the shining stars,  
Spheres of abode by myriads in the skies,  
The comet swift, the glimmering lightning-flash,  
The firmament, expanded, infinite—  
These all, observant watchful eyes behold,  
Anger, desire, greed, Moha,<sup>[3]</sup> and the rest<sup>[4]</sup>  
Whence issues forth the waving of the play  
Of this existence; the home wherein dwells  
Knowledge, and non-knowledge—whose centre is  
The feeling of small self, the "Ahm!" "Ahm!"  
Full of the dual sense of pleasure and of pain,  
Teeming with birth and life, decay and death,  
Whose arms are "The External" and "The Internal",  
All things that are, down to the ocean's depths,  
Up to sun, moon, and stars in spanless space—  
The Mind, the Buddhi, Chitta, Ahamkâr,  
The Deva, Yaksha, man and demon, all,  
The quadruped, the bird, the worm, all insect life,  
The atom and its compound, all that is,  
Animate and inanimate, all, all—  
The Internal and the External—dwell  
In that one common plane of existence!  
This outward presentation is of order gross,  
As hair on human brow, Ay! very gross.  
On the spurs of the massive Mount Meru<sup>[5]</sup>  
The everlasting snowy ranges lie,  
Extending miles and miles beyond more miles.  
Piercing through clouds into the sky above  
Its peaks thrust up in hundreds, glorious,  
Brilliantly glistening, countless, snowy-white:

Flash upon flash of vivid lightning fleet,  
 The sun, high in his northern solstice hung,  
 With force of thousand rays concentrating,  
 Pours down upon the mountain floods of heat,  
 Furious as a billion thunderbolts,  
 From peak to peak.  
 Behold! The radiant sun  
 Swoons, as it were, in each. Then melts  
 The massive mountain with its crested peaks!  
 Down, down, it falls, with a horrific crash!  
 Water with water lies commingled now,  
 And all has passed like to a passing dream.  
 When all the many movements of the mind  
 Are, by Thy grace, made one, and unified,  
 The light of that unfoldment is so great  
 That, in its splendour, it surpasses far  
 The brilliance of ten thousand rising suns.  
 Then, sooth, the sun of Chit<sup>[6]</sup> reveals itself.  
 And melt away the sun and moon and stars,  
 High heaven above, the nether worlds, and all!  
 This universe seems but a tiny pool  
 Held in a hollow caused by some cow's hoof.  
 This is the reaching of the region which  
 Beyond the plane of the External lies.  
 Calmed are the clamours of the urgent flesh,  
 The tumult of the boastful mind is hushed,  
 Cords of the heart are loosened and set free,  
 Unfastened are the bandages that bind,  
 Attachment and delusion are no more!  
 Ay! There sounds sonorous the Sound  
 Void of vibration. Verily! Thy Voice!  
 Hearing that Voice, Thy servant, reverently,  
 Stands ever ready to fulfil Thy work.  
 "I exist. When, at Pralaya time  
 This wondrous universe is swallowed up;  
 Knowledge, the knower and the known, dissolved;  
 The world no more distinguishable, now,  
 No more conceivable; when sun and moon  
 And all the outspent stars, remain no more—  
 Then is the state of Mahâ-Nirvâna,  
 When action, act, and actor, are no more,  
 When instrumentality is no more;  
 Great darkness veils the bosom of the dark —  
 There I am present.  
 "I am present! At Pralaya time,  
 When this vast universe is swallowed up,  
 Knowledge, and knower, and the known  
 Merged into one.  
 The universe no more  
 Can be distinguished or can be conceived  
 By intellect. The sun and moon and stars are not.  
 Over the bosom of the darkness, darkness moves  
 Intense Devoid of all the threefold bonds,  
 Remains the universe. Gunas are calmed  
 Of all distinctions. Everything deluged  
 In one homogeneous mass, subtle,  
 Pure, of atom-form, indivisible—  
 There I am present.

"Once again, I unfold Myself—that 'I';  
 Of My 'Shakti' the first great change is Om;  
 The Primal Voice rings through the void;  
 Infinite Space hears that great vibrant sound.  
 The group of Primal Causes shakes off sleep,  
 New life revives atoms interminable;  
 Cosmic existence heaves and whirls and sways,  
 Dances and gyrates, moves towards the core,  
 From distances immeasurably far.  
 The animate Wind arouses rings of Waves  
 Over the Ocean of great Elements;  
 Stirring, falling, surging, that vast range of Waves  
 Rushes with lightning fury. Fragments thrown  
 By force of royal resistance through the path  
 Of space, rush, endless, in the form of spheres  
 Celestial, numberless. Planets and stars  
 Speed swift; and man's abode, the earth revolves.  
 "At the Beginning, I the Omniscient One,  
 I am! The moving and the un-moving,  
 All this Creation comes into being  
 By the unfoldment of My power supreme.  
 I play with My own Maya, My Power Divine.  
 The One, I become the many, to behold  
 My own Form.  
 "At the Beginning, I, the Omniscient One,  
 I am! The moving and the un-moving,  
 All this Creation comes into being  
 By the unfoldment of My power supreme.  
 Perforce of My command, the wild storm blows  
 On the face of the earth; clouds clash and roar;  
 The flash of lightning startles and rebounds;  
 Softly and gently the Malaya breeze  
 Flows in and out like calm, unruffled breath;  
 The moon's rays pour their cooling current forth;  
 The earth's bare body in fair garb is clothed,  
 Of trees and creepers multitudinous;  
 And the flower abloom lifts her happy face,  
 Washed with drops of dew, towards the sun."

1. ↑ Purusha and Prakriti together.
2. ↑ Goddess of learning.
3. ↑ Delusion.
4. ↑ Such as pride and malice, the sixfold evil.
5. ↑ The name of a fabulous mountain round which the planets are said to revolve.
6. ↑ Knowledge.

## Notes

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