

Sankaracharya Philosopher and Mystic by: Kenneth Tryambak Telang

With a not by ANNIE BESANT President, The Theosophical Society. 1907-1933

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PREFACE

KASINATH TRYAMBAK TELANG, the late Judge of the Bombay High Court, a deep scholar, a true patriot, and a large-hearted philanthropist, was a sympathizer with the work of The Theosophical Society and a friend of the Founders, Madame H. P. Blavatsky and Colonel H. S. Olcott. He was born in 1850 into a high family of the Sarasvata Gauda Brāhmana caste and was educated in Bombay at the Elphinstone High School and the Elphinstone College. He was a keen student of English literature, philosophy and political economy and became an accomplished speaker and writer. He was a proficient Samskr̥t scholar and one volume in the *Sacred Books of the East* containing admirable translations of the *Bhagavad-gītā*, *Sanat-sujātiya* and *Anugita* - stands to his credit and will go down to posterity as a monument to his deep scholarship. His learned contributions to the *Indian Antiquary* and his *Gleanings from Mahratta Chronicles* are full of instructive hints and suggestions. He was at one time the President of the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society.

In 1871 he read before the Students' Literary and Scientific Society a very interesting paper on Samkaracharya; he had also other valuable notes and material on that obscure subject which, with the paper, were rescued from oblivion by Colonel Olcott and published in 1879 in *The Theosophist* (Vol. I, pp. 71, 89 and 203). The essay is admirable and contains valuable information and its publication in this permanent form will, it is hoped, be appreciated.

T. P. H.

NOTE

FROM the occult standpoint the first Sri Samkaracharya was a Being far above our race, one of the Three Kumaras immediately below the Great Initiator, spoken of in *The Secret Doctrine*, and in closest relation with Him. He belongs to the humanity of S'ukra, not to that of our earth. He became incarnate about eighty years after the passing away of Gautama, the Lord Buddha - a fact that is historically recorded only in the archives of the Dvaraka Math. Some hints about Him may be found in the *Third Volume of The Secret Doctrine*, but they are very confused and perhaps purposely made contradictory; they will be found in the Section on " *The Mystery of Buddha* ".

ANNIE BESANT

References will be found in:

The Age of Sri Sankaracharya- by Pandit N. Bhashyacharya
Sri Sankaracharya's Date and Doctrine in the Esoteric Writings of T.Subba Row- and
The Mystery of Buddha in the third volume of the Secret Doctrine by H.P.Blavatsky

I MIGHT well plead the multitudinous engagements of a busy professional and literary life as an excuse, for not complying with the request to briefly notice in *The Theosophist* the incidents of S'amkaracarya's illustrious career. But I am, first and last, a Hindu and my sympathies and humble co-operation are pledged in advance to every legitimate attempt to elucidate the history of India or better the intellectual condition of my countrymen. From the earliest time, the study of philosophy and metaphysics has been prized and encouraged in this country, and, high above all other names in its history, are written those of our people, who have aimed to help men to clearer thinking, upon the subjects embraced in those categories, whether by their writings, discourses or example. The life which forms my present theme, is the life of one of the greatest men who have appeared in India. Whether we consider his natural abilities, his unselfish devotion to the cause of religion, or the influence he has exerted upon his countrymen, this splendid ascetic stands *facile princeps*.

So enchanting, in fact, are all his surroundings, that it is no wonder that the admiration of an astonished people should have euhemerized him into an incarnation of the Deity. Our ignoble human nature seems ever so conscious of its own weakness and imperfection as to be prone to deify whosoever exemplifies its higher aspirations; as though the keeping of him on the human plane made other men seem meaner and more little by contrast.

S'amkaracarya's biographers apotheosized their hero, as Alexander's and Cicero's and those of Apollonius, Jesus and Muhammad did theirs. They made his advent presaged by a heavenly vision- of Maha-deva, to his father, S'iva-guru- and his career attended by miracles, which no theory of interior, or psychical, development can cover. A lenient posterity may well pass over these pious embellishments as the fruit of an exuberant partiality, for, after all these have been stripped away, the true grandeur of the pandit, philosopher and mystic, is only the more plainly revealed to us.

We are, unfortunately, without the necessary data to enable us to precisely fix the epoch in which this great teacher flourished. Some ascribe it to the second century before, others would bring him down to the tenth after Christ. Most modern scholars agree in locating him in the eighth century of the Christian era: and, since we have for this opinion the concurrent authority of Wilson, Colebrooke, Ram Mohan Roy, Yajnesvara Sastri, and Prof. Jayanarayana Tarkapancanana, the Bengali editor of Ananda-giri's *S'amkara-vijaya*, and as it is less important, after all, to know when he taught, than what he taught and did, we may as well accept that decision without debate. No more certainly can his birth-place be determined. As seven cities competed for the honour of having produced a Homer, so five biographers ascribe his nativity to as many different localities. S'ringeri is commonly believed to have been the favoured town; [See Pandit K. V. Rama-svami's sketches, page 4, and themap at the end of the book.],but a passage from the S'iva-rahasya, quoted in the Kavi-caritra, would indicate a town in the Kerala District, named Sasala- grama; [Kavi-caritra, page 3, line 17] Ananda-giri's life of S'amkara names Cidambara-pura; [Pages 9 and 19. It may be added here that I have grave doubts as to the Samkara-vijaya, published at Calcutta. being really a work of Ananda-giri, the pupil of S'amkara.] Madhava puts

forward Kalati; [Madhavacarya. II, 3.] and lastly, Yajvnesvara S'astri, in his *Arya-vidya-sudhakara*, tells us that S'amkara first saw the light at Kalpi.[Page 226]

Even if we do not believe the stories of the portents and wonders said to have occurred in the animal and vegetable kingdoms at his birth -such as the fraternizing together of beasts ordinarily hostile to each other, the uncommon pellucidity of the streams, the preternatural shedding of fragrance by trees and plants, nor of the joy of the Upanishads, nor the glad paeans of the whole celestial host; we yet know for certain that our hero, at an early age, displayed a most wonderful precocity. In his first year he acquired the Samskrt alphabet and his own language; at two, learned to read; at three, studied the Kavyas and Puranas-and understood many portions of them by intuition.[Madhava. IV.1-3] Ananda-giri, less circumstantial, merely states that S'amkara became conversant with Prakrta, Magadhi and Samskrt languages even in his Saisava, infancy.

Having studied the Itihasa, the Puranas, the Maha-bharata, the Smrtis and the Sastras, Samkara, in his seventh year, returned from his preceptor to his own home. Madhava narrates that the mother of his hero, being, one day, overpowered by the debility resulting from the austerities she had practised before his birth, to propitiate the gods and make them grant her prayer for a son, as well as by the torrid heat of the sun, fainted: whereupon S'amkara, finding her in a swoon, not only brought her back to consciousness but also caused the river to rise, thereby cooling the air for her, a circumstance which of course spread his fame as a thaumaturgist far and wide! The King of Kerala, vainly offering him presents of gold and elephants through his own minister, came himself to pay reverence and disclosing his longing for a son like himself, was made happy by the sage, who taught the king privately the rites to be performed in such cases. I must not lose the opportunity to point out, in passing, the two things implied in this biographical scrap, viz., that it was believed that the birth of progeny might be brought about by the recitation of mantras [Madhava. V, I. compare Ananda-giri, page 11] and the performance of ceremonial rites, and that the secret is never publicly taught, but privately conveyed from adept to disciple. [Madhava, V, 59.] I shall not dwell upon these facts but leave them to be disposed off as they will be by our new friends, the Theosophists, to whom the mystical side of nature, offers most enticements.

About the same time, the great sage Agastya. visiting Samkara with other sages. prophesied to his mother, that he would die at the age of 32. Feeling that this world is all a passing show, this boy of eight years determined to embrace the life of a holy Samnyasin, but his mother objected, her motherly pride doubtless craving that her son should in his turn, beget a son to inherit his own greatness of soul and mind. The lad's determination was not to be shaken, however, and the maternal consent was obtained, as the biographers tell us, by the working of a miracle.[*Madhava*, V. 87 None of Madhava's details are to be found in Ananda-giri, where we have but two lines on this subject altogether. Page 17.] Bathing in the river one day, his foot was caught by an alligator. He wailed so loud that his mother ran to the spot and being told, that the alligator would not leave go his hold until she had agreed to her son's becoming an ascetic, felt coerced into giving her consent. S'amkaracarya thereupon came out of the river and confiding her to the care of relatives and friends and telling her he would come back to her whenever she should need his presence, he went a way and took up the career for which he had so strong a natural bent.

As if drawn by some irresistible magnetic attraction towards a certain spot, S'amkara travelled for several days, through forests, over hills, by towns and across rivers, yet, all the while unconscious of all and oblivious to the men and beasts that went by him on his way, and arrived at the cave in a hill on the

banks of the Narmada, where Govinda Yati had fixed his hermitage. After the usual preliminaries, the sage accepted the lad as a pupil and taught him the Brahman out of the four great sentences-Knowledge is Brahman; This soul is Brahman; Thou art That; and I am Brahman. It is related by Madhava, that immediately after he had entered upon this discipleship, one day when his guru was immersed in contemplation, or, as we should say, Dharana, by pronouncing certain mystic verses, S'amkara performed the miracle of quelling a furious tempest of rain accompanied by awful thunder and lightning. Upon returning to consciousness of external things, hearing, what his illustrious pupil had done, Govinda Natha was overjoyed, as this very event had been foretold to him by Vyasa at a sacrifice celebrated long before, by the sage Atri. Bestowing his benediction upon S'amkara, he bade him go to Holy Benares and receive there the blessing of the Deity.

On thy glorious work
Then enter, and begin to save mankind.

Thus admonished, S'amkara proceeded to Benares, where, after a residence of some months, he is said to have received his first pupil Sanandana - the same who afterwards became celebrated as his greatest favourite, under the title of Padma-pada. I confess to a doubt of the accuracy of this date, though I quote the circumstance from Madhava 's book, [Madhava. V. 53-61.] for it does seem impossible that S'amkara should have begun to get pupils at such a very tender age as, upon Madhava 's own showing, he must have reached at the time. However, be this as it may, Padma-pada was duly enrolled as a disciple at Benares and there most of the others also joined him.

In his twelfth year S'amkara removed to Badari, on the banks of the Ganges, where he composed his masterpiece, the commentary on the *Brahma-sutras*. Here also, he wrote the commentary on the *Upanisads*, on the *Bhagavad-gita*, on the *Nrsirmha-tapani* (so called by Madhava), and on the *Sanat-sujatiya*, besides other works. He then taught his great commentary to his numerous pupils, but always reserving his marvellous powers of exposition for Padma-pada. This excited envy in the breasts of the other pupils, to dispel which, S'amkara, once standing on the bank of the river which flowed by his residence, called to Padma-pada to come over to him directly from the opposite bank. The latter obeyed and dauntlessly walked over the surface of the waters, which sent up a lotus at each step he took. It was on this occasion that the name Padma-pada was given him by S'amkara, as he warmly embraced him in recognition of his enthusiastic devotion.

While teaching his pupils, the youthful teacher did not fail to make adversaries among the learned men, who held tenets different to his own, but he always came off victor. He drew, says Madhava, from the arsenal of a vast Vedic learning, the weapons with which to combat his powerful assailants. We are treated to a description of an eight-days' debate- between himself and Vyasa, who appeared under the guise of an aged Brahmana, but whose identity was intuitively recognized, at least by Padma-pada. The biographer tells us that the spirit of Vyasa in his assumed guise of the Brahmana, propounded a thousand objections to S'amkara's great Bhasya on the *Brahma-sutras*, which were all triumphantly answered, and in the end gave the latter an extension of sixteen years of life over and above the set term of sixteen that he was to have lived, and after bidding him undertake a refutation of all the other philosophic systems in vogue, blessed him and then disappeared.

After this, S'amkara set out for Prayaga in search of Bhatta Kumarila, with a view to ask him to write

varttikas on his Bhasya, but found that he was upon the point of self-cremation, in disgust with the world. Vainly entreating him to reconsider his determination, S'amkara nevertheless was permitted to explain his commentaries, which Kumarila praised unstintingly; and after the latter had accomplished his act of self-immolation, S'amkara proceeded on to Mahismati, the city where as Kumarila had informed him, he would find Mandana Mis'ra, who would undertake the work S'amkara had requested him to perform. Arrived at the place, he was directed to the sage's house by parrots, miraculously endowed with human speech, and able to discuss most recondite questions of philosophy. He found the house, but found it closed, so that to obtain entrance he had to raise himself up into the air and alight, a *deus ex machina*, in Mandana's Hall. An animated and, at first, even acrimonious, discussion ensued between the host and his unexpected and unwelcome guest, the two finally deciding to make the wife of Mandana Mis'ra umpire between them. But she, having other matters to attend to, gave each a garland, stipulating that he should be deemed vanquished whose garland withered. I will not attempt, in such time and space as I now command, to even epitomize this wonderful debate, but refer the reader to Madhava (VIII, 58-130) for particulars, adding that they will richly repay study. S'amkara won, and in winning, under the terms of the debate, claimed his antagonist as a disciple and required him to abandon the domestic life and become an ascetic. He consented, and the wife-who was an incarnation of Sarasvatī, as we are told, started for the other world. But before she had quite departed she was prevailed upon by S'amkara to tarry, while he should hold a debate with her also. Then commenced the second discussion, but the ready answers of the former to all questions put to him foiled Sarasvatī, as she may now be called, until she struck into a path to which S'amkara was a total stranger, She asked him a question on the Science of Love. He was of course, unable to answer it at once, being a Samnyasin and a celibate all his life; so he craved a respite of one month, which being granted, he left Mahismati.

The question of Sarasvatī as to the true nature of Love required to be answered, though he were ten times a Yogin or Samnyasin, So S'amkara journeyed on to find the means of learning the truth. As he was going out with his pupils, they met the corpse of a certain king named Amaruka (of Amrta-pura), to the west of Mandan Misra 's city, according to Ananda-giri [Ananda-giri. 244.], lying at the foot of a tree in the forest surrounded by men and women mourning his death, Taking advantage of the opportunity, S'amkara entrusted his own body to the charge of his pupils and caused his soul to enter the corpse of the king. The supposed resuscitation which followed delighted the people, and King S'amkara was taken in triumph from the forest of death to the throne of royalty.[This incident is too important to pass by without editorial comments. The power of the Yogin to quit his own body and enter and animate that of another person, though affirmed by Patanjali and included among the Siddhis of Krsna. is discredited by Europeanized young Indians. Naturally enough since, as western biologists deny a soul to man, it is an unthinkable proposition to them that the yogin's soul should be able to enter another's body. That such an unreasoning infidelity should prevail among the pupils of European Schools is quite reason enough why an effort should be made to revive in India those schools of Psychology in which the Aryan youth were theoretically and practically taught the occult laws of man and nature. We, who have at least some trifling acquaintance with modern science, do not hesitate to affirm our belief that this temporary transmigration of souls is possible. We may even go so far as to say that the phenomenon has been experimentally proved to us in New York, among other places. And, since we would be among the last to require so marvellous a statement to be accepted upon anyone's unsupported testimony, we urge our readers to first study Aryan Literature, and then get from personal experience the corroborative evidence. The result must inevitably be to satisfy every honest enquirer that Patanjali and S'amkaracarya did, and Tyndall, Carpenter and Huxley do not, know the secrets of our being.- EDITOR, The Theosophist. (H. P. B.)]

There, King S'amkara, standing as it were in the shoes of Amaruka and indeed Amaruka himself so far as

the eye could discern, and passing as such; learned practically all that pertained to the science and art of Love, and fitted himself to answer the query of the cunning wife of Mandana. He also studied the theory of the subject in Vatsyayana, and made progress enough to write an original treatise upon it himself. [Madhava. X. 18.] Meanwhile, however, the ministers of the state finding their resuscitated Raja a far wiser and better man than ever before, suspected that there had been some transmigration of souls, and so, *to prevent the return of this intruder to his own body, secretly issued an order that all corpses in the city should be burnt*; but they took good care that the order should not come to the knowledge of the king." [Pandit Rama-svami says that the order was issued by the queen herself. and in this the pandit is at one with Ananda-giri who also makes the Queen suspect the fact (p. 245). and makes no allusion to the ministers.]

In the meantime the pupils of S'amkara who had charge of his body, finding that the limit of time fixed by him for his return had already been exceeded, grew very uneasy. While the others were given up to their grief, Padma-pada suggested a plan which was unanimously adopted, and they started out to discover the whereabouts of their preceptor. The stories of Madhava and Ananda-giri do not agree as to this quest of the pupils after their master, the former making them wander from province to province, while the latter tells us that S'amkara's body was deposited in the outskirts of the King's own city. In fact, Madhava himself elsewhere describes the circumstances of S'amkara's soul not finding the body in the appointed place, then animating it on the funeral pyre, and his returning with his pupils to Mandana as a work of but short duration; but we are interrupting the sequence of our narrative. Padma-pada's plan was for them to first discover the whereabouts of their master, and then, gaining access to his presence under the disguise of singers, express to him their sorrow at his absence and recall him to his own body and to the prosecution of his labours. Arrived at King Amaruka 's city, they heard the story of the preternatural resuscitation, and satisfied that they were on the right track, carried out their affectionate plot. Their music not only held the audience spell-bound, but reached the inner consciousness of S'amkara in his borrowed body. He dismissed the singers, left the Raja 's coil empty once more, this time effectually, retransferred himself to his own body which he found already amid the flames and which was uninjured, it having been rendered fire-proof by his occult powers and rejoined his devoted pupils singing the praises of Nrsimha. Reaching the residence of Mandana he answers Sarasvati's question and eventually converts Mandana Mis'ra to Vedantism.

Travelling southwards, S'amkara published his works in Maha-rastra, and took up his residence at S'ri-S'aila, where a strange proposal was made to him. A Kapalika called on him and besought him to give him his head, which he said he wanted to offer up as a sacrifice, as he had been promised by Maha-deva a residence in Kailasa in his human body, if he offered up the head of either a king or an omniscient person. S'amkara agreed on condition that the Kapalika should come for it without the knowledge of his pupils, who might interfere. This was done, but before the decapitation could be effected, Padma-pada learnt the things through his inner consciousness, and assuming the form of a man-lion fell upon the Kapalika, and rent him joint by joint. He had then to be appeased and brought back to himself.

The next miracle attributed to S'amkara was the bringing back to life at Gokarana of a child greatly beloved by its parents, (Madhava, XII, 24). To Srivali, where he got a new pupil in the person of Hastamalaka, a lad supposed to be an idiot, but in fact something very different-and Srnga-giri, he then went. At the latter place Mandana Mis'ra, who had taken the name of Suresvara (see page 251 of Ananda-giri, whose account leaves it a matter of doubt as to the identity of Madana with Sures'vara) wrote at S'amkara's command an independent treatise on the Brahman, which surprised the other pupils

and equally pleased the master .

At this time S'amkara, learning in some supernatural way [We must take issue with our distinguished contributor upon this point. We do not believe in supernatural ways," ,and we do believe and know that it was not at all difficult for an Initiate like S'amkara to learn by his interior faculties of his mother's state.- (H.P.Bavatsky, Editor of *The Theosophist*.] of his mother's being at the point of death, hastened to her side, and at her request for spiritual confort instructed her or rather attempted to instruct her in the formless Brahman. She could not comprehend his teaching, but he tranquillized her mind until the moment of her dissolution. His relatives refused to aid him in performing the usual funeral ceremonies on the ground that he, being an ascetic, was not competent to perform the offices in question. Thereupon he produced a fire from his right hand, wherewith he burned the corpse. (Madhava, 29-56.)

At this time, Padma-pada, who had been absent on a pilgrimage, returned and told S'amkara how a commentary on the Bhasya, which he had composed and deposited with his uncle when he went on his pilgrimage, was destroyed by that person, as it contained a refutation of the doctrines he held. To the great joy of Padma-pada, S'amkara dictated the whole from memory, as he had once read it himself, and from his dictation Padma-pada rewrote it. Raja-s'ekhara, also, who had lost his dramas, had them dictated to him in the same- manner

And now, accompanied by his pupils and by King Sudhanvan, S'amkara started on his. tour of intellectual conquest. The *redargutio philosophiarum*, which Vyasa had suggested to him, and for which his original lease of life had been extended, now commenced. He first directed his steps towards the Setu - the Bridge - then passing through the countries of the Pandyas, the Colas, and the Dravidas, he went to Kanci where he erected a temple and established the system of the adoration of the Devi. Having then favoured with a visit the people called Andhras, and having looked in at the seat of Venkatacalesa, he proceeded to the country of the Vidarbhas. On hearing that S'amkara wished to go into the Karnataka country, the king of the Vidarbhas warned him of the mischievous character of the people generally, and of their envy and hatred of S'amkara particularly. S'amkara went into that country nevertheless, and the first person of note he came across was a Kapalika named Krakaca, whose exposition of his own doctrines so disgusted all who heard it that Sudhanvan caused him with all his followers to be ignominiously driven away. They went breathing vengeance and returned armed in hundreds. They were however destroyed by king Sudhanvan- all but the first Kapalika, Krakaca, who came up to S'amkara and addressed him saying : " Now taste the fruit of thy deeds ". He then prayed to Bhairava and, as soon as he appeared, asked him to destroy the destroyers of his followers. But Bhairava killed Krakaca himself, exclaiming " Dost thou offend even me ? "

Onward went S'amkara to the western ocean, and to Go-karla, where he vanquished Nilakantha, a philosopher who thought himself perfectly invincible. S'amkara thence went into the Saurastra country and published his Bhasya there. Then he went to Dvara-vata or Dvaraka and thence to Ujjayini where he challenged and conquered Bhatta Bhaskara. Thence he went " conquering and to conquer," into the countries of the Bahlikas, Bharatas, Sura-senas, Kurus, Daradas, Pancalas, and so forth. In the country of the Kama-rupas, S'amkara encountered and defeated Abhinava-gupta, a doctor of the S'akta school. Having, however, more wordly wisdom than philosophy or love of truth, and finding that he could not compete with S'amkara, that personage got his pupils to hide his works for a period, and passed himself off as belonging to S'amkara's school, all the while maturing a plot of which the sequel will be presently narrated.

The North thus disposed of, and accepting the respect and veneration of the Videhas, the Kosalas, the Angas and the Vangas, S'amkara went into the country of the Gandas. It was then that the nefarious designs of the discomfited doctor of the S'akta school culminated. S'amkara suddenly caught the disease called Bhagam-dara, [A terrible form of ulcerated sore or fistula. Editor- The Theosophist.] which had been sent upon him by the necromantic spells of Abhinava-gupta, who had performed a special sacrifice to accomplish his malicious plot. The greatest physicians attended on S'amkara, but in vain. Meanwhile the patient himself behaved stoically, or rather vedantically. But at last when the disease could not be cured, he prayed to Maha-deva to send down the As'vini-kumaras, who were accordingly sent down disguised as Brahmanas. But they pronounced the disease to be beyond their powers of cure as it was caused by the act of another. On this communication the anger of Padma-pada once more came to the relief of the Vedantism of S'amkara. For, though dissuaded by S'amkara himself, he muttered some mystic incantations which transferred the disease to Abhinava-gupta himself, who died of it. [Madhava, xvi, 22-23. An important point for the student of occult science is here made and should not be overlooked. The law of physics, that action and reaction tend to equilibrate each other, holds in the realm of the occult. This had been fully explained in *Isis Unveiled* and other works of the kind. A current of Akasa, directed by a sorcerer at a given object with an evil intent, must either be propelled by such intensity of will as to break through every obstacle and overpower the resistant will of the selected victim, or it will rebound against the sender, and afflict him or her in the same way that it was intended the other should be hurt. So well is this law understood that it has been preserved to us in many popular proverbs, such as the English ones, 'curses come home to roost,' , the biter bit " etc. The Italian one 'La bestemia gira, e gira, e gira, e torna adosso a che la tira,' etc. This reversal of a maleficent current upon the sender may be greatly facilitated by the friendly interference of another person who knows the secret of controlling the Akas'ic currents-if it is permissible for us to coin a new word that will soon be wanted in the western parlance.-H. P. Blavatsky, editor of *The Theosophist*.]

About this time S'amkara heard of a temple in Kashmir, which none but an all-knowing person could open, which had been opened on its northern, eastern and western side, but which had continued closed till then on its southern side. S'amkara accordingly went up to the temple, but the controversialists there would not allow him to enter before they examined him. He was examined accordingly, and was found, as one may say, not wanting. He then entered, but as he was going to take his seat on the stool within, the Goddess of the temple--Sarasvati said : " Your omniscience has been already more than sufficiently proved ; but omniscience is not enough to entitle you to take your seat on this stool. Continence is also necessary. Bethink yourself of your acts, and say whether you can claim it under these circumstances." S'amkara replied: "This body is perfectly pure. It cannot be tarnished by the sins of another body ." This was of course, a clincher, and S'amkara took his seat on the coveted stool! [Madhava., xvi. 86.]

He thence went to the hermitage of Rsyasrnga, and, after staying there for some time, to Badari. There he taught his Bhasya to some persons who were studying in the Patanjala School of Philosophy. Thence he proceeded to Kedara- where he prayed to Maha-deva to send down warm water for his benumbed pupils. That was, of course, done; and Madhava says the river still flows with hot water in that part of the country .[Madhava.. xvi.101. According to Ananda-giri the prayer for hot water was made to Narayana. page 235.]

He now arrived at the close of his thirty-second year, and his term of life being over, all the Gods and all the Siddhas and all the Sages came down in divine vehicles to escort him up to heaven. As soon as S'amkara made up his mind, his vehicle appeared for him, and then " with his praises sung by the

principal deities headed by Indra and Upendra, and worshipped with heavenly flowers, supported by the arm of the Lotus-born God, he mounted his excellent Bull, and exhibiting his knots of hair with their ornament, the moon, he started for his own residence, hearing the word 'victory' uttered by the sages." [Madhava. xvi. 107.]

This does seem too materialistic and non-vedantic. Ananda-giri has the following account: " Once in the city of Kanci, the place of absolution, as he was seated, he absorbed his gross body into the subtle one and became 'existence' ; then, absorbing the subtle one into the body which is the cause (of the world) became 'pure intelligence ' ; and then (assuming the) size of a thumb and attaining in the world of Isvara full happiness, (unbroken) like a perfect circle, he became the intelligence which pervades the whole universe. And he still exists in the form of the all-pervading intelligence. The Brahmanas of the place and his pupils, and their pupils reciting the *Upanishads*, the *Gita*, and the *Brahma-sutras*, then excavated a ditch in a very clean spot and offering to his body pigment, rice, etc., raised a tomb over it there." [Ananda-giri. p. 280.]

And here ends the story of the life of S'amkaracarya. As I look back over the narrative thus given by me after Madhava, methinks I hear the genius of the nineteenth century scepticism whisper' in my ears: " All this is an absurd fable from first to last; it is the ' tinsel clink of compliment' to one whom a halo of glory surrounds. At the age of two it is impossible to have learnt what S'amkara is said to have learnt; those miracles, which he is reported to have performed, are 'mere and sheer' impossibilities - in a word, all Madhava's narrative is fitter for the pages of a romance than of a work professing to be historical ". Now though I confess that I do believe there is some force in this argument, I must also affirm that I am not prepared to give it as much weight as those who propound it seem to claim for it. I am perfectly willing to grant that there is a considerable menstruum of poetry in this narrative : but I am not prepared to say that it is as much as may at first sight appear. Even in the sceptical nineteenth century, we have had accounts of historical personages, given as history, which bear in some points a very striking resemblance to Madhava 's account of S'amkaracarya. I shall put forward two very good instances in point which occur to me at this moment.

Dr. Thomas Brown, a man who flourished in this nineteenth century, a man whose life has been written by a prosaic westerner not guilty of Oriental hyperboles, is said to have been engaged in the fourth year of his age in comparing the narratives of the evangelists in order to find out any discrepancies that there might be between them. To appreciate the full force of this example, it must be remembered that this critical spirit was brought to bear upon a work, on which an opinion out of the common rut would be downright heresy. This circumstance, I may mention, is recorded in the memoir of Dr. Brown, prefixed to his eloquent lectures on the Philosophy of Mind'. [See also *The Contemporary Review*. June. 1872. Robert Leslie Ellis, Professor Grote.]

Mr. Morley, the present Editor of *The Fortnightly Review*, had contributed to the pages of that publication a valuable life of Turgot. Here is his deliverance on the precocity of the subject of his memoir. " It has been justly said of him that he passed at once from infancy to manhood, and was in the rank of sages before he had shaken off the dust of the playground." [The Fortnightly Review. August, 1869]

If more authority is necessary for refusing to subscribe to the theory that every statement which appears wonderful is, at once, and by reason of its being wonderful, to be put down as totally false, we have the

authority of that prince of philosophic historians, Mr. George Grote. "In separating," says that great authority upon all matters of historic criticism, "between the marvellous and the ordinary, there is no security that we are dividing the fictitious from the real". [See, too, the Duke of Somerset's recent book on *Christianity and Scepticism*, p. 46, and the Duke of Argyll's *Reign of Law*, passim.] And not to depend on the *ipse dixit* even of a Grote, I would refer the sceptic to the wonders of science, which are "truths stranger than fiction", which yet we see performed before our eyes. Before the fact, what would one have thought of the electric telegraph? Before the fact, what was thought of the Railway? I would ask the sceptic to pause here, to consider these matters fully from this point of view, before at once arguing: "these circumstances are wonderful; *ergo*, they are impossible." They are not of a piece with the common run of occurrences; I am willing to concede also that they may be much exaggerated. But when I am told that no reasonable man can believe them, then I demur. I rather choose to hold myself in suspense.

I had intended in this paper to say something about the works of S'amkaracarya, and about some other matters connected with him. But want of time and the length to which this paper has already extended, have prevented me from incorporating those necessary portions of a biography into the present paper. I hope, however in another paper to treat of those matters, as leisure and the materials accessible to me will permit.

NOTE A

According to Ananda-giri, S'amkara does not seem to have left his birth-place before taking the Samnyasa, and when he left the place, he had already got numbers of pupils. He first went from Cidambara-pura southward to Madhyarjuna (p. 19), where he converted the people to advaitism by a miracle (p. 20). Thence he proceeded to Ramesvara near the Setu, where he stayed for two months, defeating the representatives of various sects who entered into controversies with him (p. 21). Then he went to Ananta-Sayana where he remained for one month (p. 51). Travelling westwards, he reached the town of Subrahmanya in fifteen days (p.81). Proceeding thence in a north-westerly direction, he went to the town of Ganavara and sojourned there for a month (p. 102), thence to Bhavani-nagara (p. 122), where he stayed for a month, and held discussions with the sectaries of the neighbouring towns of Kunalaya-pura and others (p. 127). From that town he went northward to Ujjayini, where he remained for two months (p. 138), thence in a north-westerly direction to the city of Anumalla (p. 160) where he spent twenty-one days. Going westward next to the town of Arundh (p. 164), and northward from that to Magadha-pura (p.170), he went on first to Indra-prastha (p. 174), and then to Yama-prastha, whence, after staying there for a month (p. 178), he proceeded to Prayaga at "the confluence of the Ganges, the Jumna and the SarasvatI" (p. 184). Going eastward thence, in "half a fortnight", he reached Kasi (p.205) and after "staying there for some time, he went northward to Badari by the route of Kuru.ksetra (p. 235). Having next seen Dvaraka and other heaven-like places, he went to Ayodhya, thence to Gaya, and thence to Parvata by the route of Jagan-nath (p. 235). After a month he proceeded to Ruddha-pura, where he saw Kumarila (p. 236) and northward thence to a very famous seat of learning- Vijaya-bindu-situated towards the south-east of Hastina-pura (p. 238). Having there vanquished Mandana Mis'ra, and established a college near Srnga-pura on the banks of the Tunga-bhadra he stayed there for twelve months (p. 251), after which he proceeded to Ahobala, thence to Venkata-giri, and thence to the town of Kanci, where, within a month of his arrival, he founded Siva-kanci and Vishnu-kanci (p. 251). Here his soul left off this mortal coil. But before this end, he is said to have authorized five of his principal pupils to found the Saiva, Vaisnava, Sakta, Saura and Gana-patya systems of worship. (264 et seq).

NOTE B

I must confess that even after a great deal of time and labour spent upon the work, I am as far as ever from being able to comprehend the geography of the tour of Samkaracarya as related by Ananda-giri and abstracted in the last note. Many of the names cannot be found noted in our modern maps. The only point worth noting is perhaps this, that Cid-ambara, which is mentioned by Ananda-giri as S'amkara's birthplace, may be Chillumbrum (so-called in the map), a place to the south of Porto Novo. The account of Madhava is somewhat better, but there are difficulties. Thus, though his progress through the countries of the Pandyas, the Colas, and the Dravidas, to Kanci, and thence to the country of the Andhras, may be understood, why should he go up as far as the country of the Vidarbhas-identified with Berar and then return to the Karnatic districts ? What follows, however, is not very hard to understand. It may, perhaps, be worth while to mention some of the names which have been identified. The knowledge may not be new to those who have studied the subject but it may be new to those who have not looked into it as it was to myself. Mahismati is mentioned in Raghu-vamsa (VI, 43) as situated on the Narmada. It is also mentioned in Magha (II, 64) as the city of Sisu-pala, and it is identified in Mr. Garret's recent dictionary with Chuli Maheshwar. The Pandrya country embraces the Tinnevely and Madura districts; the Cola country is the Coromandel Coast, southward from Godavari and eastward from the hills at Nandidurg (Elphinstone's *India*, fifth edition, p. 239) ; the Dravida country about Madras up to Bangalore on the west (Elphinstone, p. 231). The Andhra country is about Warangal and forms part of Telingana. The country of the Vidarbhas is Berar; that of the S'ura-senas is Mathura ; that of the Kama-rupas is the east of Hindustan; that of the Videhas, Mithila ; Kosalas, Oudh ; Angas, north-west of Bengal Proper. Indra-prastha is near Delhi. The probable situation of Cid-ambara has been already stated, and that of Sringeri is well known. Sasala-grama, mentioned above, I cannot find. May it not be the " Salla-grama " in the Mysore province; or, perhaps, what is called " Sosilly ", in Cassel's Atlas, also situated in the same province? As to Kalati mentioned by Madhava, I can say nothing at all. I may add here that it appears to me to be very probable that Madhava did not regard Shrngeri as Samkara's birthplace, for in XIV, 29, he makes S'amkara leave Shrngeri in order to see his mother in her last moments, and is then described as flying through space, while she herself, for aught that appears to the contrary, continued to remain at the town of his birth, where he had left her in charge of relatives.