

ISHWARA, THE CHRISTOS.

23. The state of abstract meditation may be attained by profound devotedness toward the Supreme Spirit, considered in its comprehensible manifestation as Ishwara.

24. Ishwara is a spirit, untouched by troubles, works, fruits of works, or desires.

25. In Ishwara becomes infinite that omniscience which in man exists but as a germ.

26. Ishwara is the preceptor of all, even of the earliest of created beings, for He is not limited by time.

27. His name is OM.

28. The repetition of this name should be made with reflection upon its significance.

Om is the first letter of the Sanscrit alphabet. Its utterance involves three sounds, those of long au, short u, and the "stoppage" or labial consonant m. To this tripartiteness is attached deep mystical symbolic meaning. It denotes, as distinct, yet in union, Brahma, Vishnu, and Siva, or Creation, Preservation, and Destruction (Regeneration). As a whole it implies "the Universe." In its application to man; au refers to the spark of Divine Spirit that is in humanity; u to the body through which the Spirit manifests itself; and m to the death of the body, or its resolute to its material elements. With regard to the cycles affecting any planetary system, it implies the Spirit, represented by au as the basis of the manifested worlds; the body or manifested matter, represented by u, through which the Spirit works; and, represented by m, "the stoppage or return of sound to its source," the Pralaya or Dissolution of the worlds. In practical occultism, through this word reference is made to Sound or Vibration in all its properties and effects, this being one of the greatest powers of nature. In the use of this word as a practice, by means of the lungs and throat, a distinct effect is produced upon the human body. In Aph. 28 the name is used in its highest sense, which will necessarily include all the lower. All utterances of the word OM, as a practice, has a potential reference to the conscious separation of the soul from the body.

29. From this repetition and reflection on its significance, there comes a knowledge of the Spirit and the absence of obstacles to the attainment of the end in view.—Mr. Judge's translation of Patanjali's Yoga Aphorisms.

STANLEY ON THE AMEN.

The "thanksgiving" or "blessing" of which Paul speaks (1 Corinthians xiv. 16), seems to be that which accompanied the Lord's Supper, and whence it derived its name of the "eucharist." In answer to this thanksgiving the congregation utter their "Amen." After the prayers," says Justin, (Ap. c. 65 67), "bread is offered and wine and water, and the president offers, according to his power, prayers and thanksgiving at once, and the people shout the Amen. The president offers praise and glory to the Father of all, through the name of His Son and of the Holy Spirit, and at length returns thanks to God for having vouchsafed us to partake of these things. When he has finished the prayers and thanksgivings, all the people present shout, saying 'Amen,' which is the Hebrew for 'so be it.'"

The "Amen" thus used was borrowed from the worship of the synagogue, and hence, probably, the article is prefixed as to a well-known form. It was then regarded as the necessary ratification of the prayer or blessing. "He who says Amen is greater than he that blesses" (Barashoth viii. 8). "Whoever says Amen, to him the gates of paradise are open" according to Isaiah xxvi 2, whence they read "open ye the gates, that the righteous nation which keepeth the Amen may enter in."—Wetstein. An "Amen" if not well considered was called an "orphan Amen"—Lightfoot. "Whoever says an orphan Amen, his children shall be orphans, whoever answers Amen hastily or shortly his days shall be shortened, whoever answers Amen distinctly and at length, his days shall be lengthened."—Barashoth xlvii 1, Schottgen. Compare the use of the word as uttered by the vast assembly of pilgrims at Mecca, to express their assent to the great sermon at the Kaaba.—Burton's Pilgrimage iii p. 314.

So in the early Christian liturgies, it was regarded as a marked point in the service, and with this agrees the great solemnity with which Justin speaks of it, as though it were on a level with the thanksgiving. "the president, having given thanks and the whole people having shouted their approbation." And in later times, the Amen was only repeated once by the congregation, and always after the great thanksgiving, and with a shout like a peal of thunder.