

PRESENTED BY

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श्रीगुरुदेव

Sujna Gokulaji S. Zâlâ.

PREFACE.

IN presenting this revised and extended second edition of the Sketch of the Vedânta Philosophy, and that of the Life of Sujna Gokulaji Zâlâ, which originally formed the English introduction to a larger Gujarâti work entitled '*Sujna Gokulaji Zâlâ and the Vedânta*,' the writer has to express his sincere thanks to the public for the kind appreciation accorded to the first edition published in 1881.

For the necessarily limited number of students interested in poetry, religion, and philosophy, at one and the same time, an observation of a seeker after truth may be given here in reference to the Vedânta sketch, namely, that the best way of judging philosophical thoughts is to try to enter fully into the opinions of those whom we read, to make them, for a time at least, our own, till at last we discover the point of view from which the writers looked at the facts before them, and catch the light in which they struck the mental vision of the writers.

The writer of this sketch purposes humbly to offer a garland of choice flowers of the Vedânta philosophy—of which the central thread is the right knowledge of Brahman (ब्रह्मज्ञान)—to encircle our life with the fragrance and hues of Heaven. Such garland, it is hardly necessary to remind the reader,

does not include the earth, root, stem, branches, leaves, or dust of the plant, and yet it is none the less genuine. Similarly, matters open to discussion, explanation, and criticism are absent from this sketch, the principal aim being, not to controvert, but to understand and unfold truths for the adoption of those with whom they might find favour, and who wish to awaken within themselves the diviner mind and to rouse themselves to a consciousness of what is best in man and Nature, in themselves and others, and to live a noble life dedicated to the glory of God and the relief of man's estate.

The true and felt knowledge of Brahman, the Highest Self, God, the Infinite, the All, the One and only Substance, the Sole Being, the Sole Reality, the all-satisfying Good, with that of the relations of man and of the universe to It, is the means of man's highest well-being and the security of his upward progress and final release.

The writer is deeply and firmly convinced that the Vedānta in its pursuit of truth teaches this very satisfactorily, and hence his humble attempt to give a sketch of it hereby. The Vedānta is 'the desire of the thoughtful among all nations of the waiting world,' because it has power to transform the whole man and make him see in the living consciousness of union with God the highest effort of human genius. In short, it teaches us to feel, in

the moments of spiritual exaltation, that 'we are greater than we know.' We experience therein a 'peace that passeth understanding,' a 'joy unspeakable and full of glory.'

All that needs saying here is that to realise the great, noble and Divine truths contained in the Vedânta, we must read and re-read it till its music and its spirit become a part of our nature. The subject is to be thought over, digested and assimilated till its ideal world habitually surrounds us in the midst of the practical world. We have need, hour by hour, to have our mind enlightened and warmed by its truths: just as we need each day to have our eyes filled by the light of heaven and our blood warmed by the glow of the sun.

The writer begs permission to repeat here what he has said in his Essay 'The *Astôdaya*,' that he 'has tried to keep in view the well-known rule, namely, to learn the best that is known and thought in the world, and to propagate it for the benefit of others.'

NADIÂD IN GUJARÂTA.
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M. S. TRIPÂTHI.

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