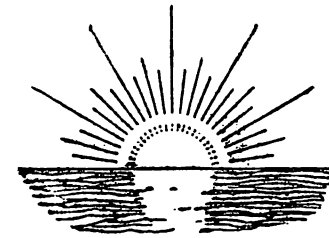


WISDOM OF THE EAST

VEDIC HYMNS

TRANSLATED FROM THE RIGVEDA
WITH INTRODUCTION AND NOTES

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LONDON
JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET, W.

1923

4. Whose are the snowy mountains through his greatness, whose, as they say, are the ocean and the Rasā,¹ whose are the regions, whose the arms²—what God with our oblation shall we worship ?

5. Through whom the mighty heaven and the earth have been fixed, through whom the sun has been established, through whom the firmament ; who in the middle sky measures out the air—what God with our oblation shall we worship ?

6. To whom the two realms (heaven and earth), sustained by his aid, looked up, trembling in spirit, over whom the risen sun shines—what God with our oblation shall we worship ?

7. When the great waters came, bearing all as the Germ, and generating fire (Agni), then arose the one life-spirit of the Gods—what God with our oblation shall we worship ?

8. Who through his greatness beheld the waters, that bore power and generated the sacrifice, who was the one God above the Gods—what God with our oblation shall we worship ?

9. May he not injure us, who is the generator of the earth, he of true ordinances, who produced the heaven, who produced the shining mighty waters.

¹ A mythical river surrounding the world. See note, p. 52.

² Perhaps the all-embracing arms of Prajāpati. Sāyana understands the four quarters, and by the regions the intermediate quarters.

10. O Prajāpati, none other than thou has encompassed all these created things. May that for which we desiring have invoked thee be ours. May we become lords of wealth.

LXI

THE BEGINNING OF THINGS

The word translated "creation" (*visṛiṣṭi*) means strictly "emitting, discharging." Creation in the sense of making out of nothing is unknown to Indian thought. In later speculation the universe emanates from the unmanifested, and returns to it periodically. It is the conception, already implied here, not of the imposing of qualities on a formless matter, but of the emanation or emerging of what is already implicit. It leads either to making a Creator superfluous, or to identifying him with the All.

1. The non-existent was not, the existent was not then ; air was not, nor the firmament that is beyond. What stirred ? Where ? Under whose shelter ? Was the deep abyss water ?

2. Death was not, immortality was not then ; no distinction was there of night and day. That One breathed, windless, self-dependent. Other than That there was nought beyond.

3. Darkness there was, plunged in darkness in the beginning ; undistinguished water was all this. That which was, was covered with the void ; through the power of heat was produced the One.

4. Desire first stirred in it, desire that was the first seed of spirit. The connection of the existent in the non-existent the sages found, seeking in their hearts with wisdom.

5. Their cord was stretched across. Was there a below ? Was there an above ? Impregnators there were ; powers there were ; will was below ; endeavour was above.

6. Who verily knows ? Who will here declare whence this creation is born, whence it is ? On this side are the Gods¹ through the creation of this universe ; who then knows whence it has come into existence ?

7. Whence this creation has come into existence, whether he established it or did not, he who is its overseer in the highest firmament, he verily knows, or he knows not.

¹ I.e. the gods being part of the creation do not know what was before it. According to the Brāhmanas the gods were originally mortal. See Dr. Barnett, *loc. cit.*, p. 57.