

THE REAL AWAKENER



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“To enter into the entire consciousness of the Divine Reality with all our being and all parts and in every way of our being and to change all our now ignorant and limited nature into divine nature so that it shall become the instrument and expression of the Divine Reality that in our self and essence we are, – this is the complete fulfilment of our existence and this is the integral Yoga.

*– Sri Aurobindo
(CWSA 12: 356-57)*

Essays Divine and Human (CWSA 12)

I. Man and Superman*

1. Man and the Evolutionary Process*

“Man is not final, he is a transitional being. Beyond him awaits formation the diviner race, the superman.

God is the beginning, middle and end of all things; but in the beginning He is concealed, in the middle partly and progressively manifest, in the end revealed.

The universe is such a manifestation of God under certain conditions and in the terms of a gradually unfolding harmony. These conditions and the movements which govern the rhythms of the harmony are the universal laws.

In this manifestation the two terms are involution and evolution. The material universe starts from an involution of God in the movement of inconscient Force and the forms of inert Matter and it is impelled by the divine impulse within it to the evolution of God through the increasing manifestation of consciousness and conscious power which must culminate in a perfect and infinite self-knowledge, self-mastery and self-delight. By the involution we mean a self-concealing of the Divine in a descent of which the last rung is Matter, by the evolution a self-revealing of the Divine in an ascent of which the last rung is Spirit.

Since evolution or a gradual self-unfolding is the essential movement of the universe, the impulse of all life in the universe must be to self-fulfilment and the realisation of its

* The titles marked with an * are from the original. All the unmarked titles in the text are from the editor.

utmost potentialities. Behind each form of life there is a divine idea which determines its form and its limits and the form circumscribes the potentialities of the life. Therefore the self-fulfilment of the life is contained within certain limits fixed by the nature of the life and the law of its being and action which that nature determines.

The idea which thus determines is the cause and the form which thus limits the sign of the Finite in the universe. The universe is an infinity creating innumerable finite expressions of itself in idea and form within its own infinite being. The one and infinite is the soul and reality of each finite; the multiple finite is the rhythm, movement and harmony of the infinite.

Therefore in and behind all finite life in the universe there is an infinite reality seeking to arrive at itself which must in its self-unfolding create finite forms of life which are yet able in their consciousness and movement to manifest and realise the infinite. Man is such a finite-infinite and the sole type of such a form of life that yet exists upon the earth.” (221-22)

“All life and mind on earth is the story of a Being, a Consciousness, a Power, a Joy that is darkly imprisoned in the apparent inconscience of Matter and is struggling for liberation. Blinded, cabined, drugged, immured, it is yet ever striving to come out of the black cell of this obscurity into its own light, wideness, conscious sight and force, self-aware action, bliss, freedom, harmony, perfection. It starts with small beginnings, as a vibration in the metal, as a feeling out and drawing in and a groping and [?]infusing] in the plant, as a crude or minute power of sensory life-urge

* *The numbers at the end of the quotations are the page numbers of the original reference.*

rising to an instinctive reason and mind and purposeful force in the insect, as a more organised and conscious and emotional, even a roughly and narrowly thinking and planning vital being in the animal, and has persevered till it has broken into some half opening on itself in the thinking, reasoning, willing and aspiring nature of man, the Manu, the mental creature.” (222-23)

“This evolution, it is sometimes pretended, ends in man, man is the term and end; but this is because we miss the real values of the process. At first indeed we see this Spirit spending numberless millions of years to evolve a material system of worlds empty in the beginning of life, a lesser but vast enough series of millions to develop an earth on which life can inhabit, a lesser series of millions to make possible and train, raise life itself with but a feeble and restricted apparatus of mind; but once it has found a body, a brain, a living apparatus not perfect, but still sufficient it is no longer concerned mainly with evolving a body or [. . .] an embodied life but can at last grapple with its own proper business. Evolution henceforth means the evolution of the consciousness, of mind and, if any such thing there be, of what is beyond mind, – and in that case as its last stride has been the evolution of the mental being, man, out of the vital being, the animal, so its next stride will be to evolve out of mental man a greater spiritual and supramental creature.” (223)

“All mind and life on earth are the progressive manifestation of a Spirit or Being that has involved itself in Matter and is slowly evolving in Matter, against the inconscient resistance of a first rigid material self-formation and under

its conditions, its own secret powers and nature. In the Inconscience in which it has involved itself, these powers, this nature seem not only to be hidden but contradicted; cast into their own opposites they emerge with difficulty and labour at first in flickers and faint glimpses, then growing into a better but still much diminished figure. But the evolution cannot be considered at an end until these diminished figures growing more and more free, developed, powerful arrive at their own complete fulfilment, revelation of their truth, native perfection, beauty and greatness. This is the aim of terrestrial existence – to reveal in Matter, in Time-Space, in figure and body what was once self-held only in an eternal unembodied self and spirit.

In order that this evolution might be, an implacable plunge of supreme Consciousness and Being into an apparent void of insentience, inconscience, non-existence was inevitable; for without that plunge, immergence, seeming yet effective annihilation [in] its opposite the creation of that phenomenon of cosmic Energy which we call Matter would have been impossible. Yet however effective this appearance is only an appearance. In the void of that Non-Existence all the powers of being are held involved and latent; in the impenetrable darkness of that Inconscience all the possibilities of consciousness lie ready to be evolved; in that insentience is a drowned Delight of Existence which emerging in the contradictory figures of pleasure and pain can struggle upwards towards cosmic expression of its own truth of the Bliss that supports all things.

To ask why this plunge was taken at all, why such an evolution slow, gratuitous, painful should ever have been

undertaken is natural for man struggling painfully with his own transience, ignorance and suffering – inevitable consequences of that plunge or fall – but from the cosmic point of view irrelevant and otiose. A possibility was there in the Infinite and outlined itself for manifestation, the lines of an evolutionary world amidst the numberless possibility or numbered reality of various universes, and it was undertaken because the Spirit in things is afraid of no possibility of itself but is rather ready to sanction all by its will towards manifest existence. To the Cosmic Spirit which sees things as a whole, the working out of this universe or any universe is self-justified, the obscure labour of the emergence no less than the glory of its completion and final perfection in a yet unattained light, bliss and greatness.

At any rate into this world of evolution something of the eternal spirit has thrown itself, with all in it that consented to the descent and to fulfil the world, not to escape from it, is the deepest meaning of the Spirit and Godhead within us and the universe.

This then must be our will in terrestrial existence – being mind in matter to grow into the Spirit, being man-animal to emerge into the Godhead, to expand out of our limited sense of existence into freedom and infinite wideness, out of the half figure of consciousness we have realised to be illumined into true consciousness, out of weakness to realise divine Mastery, out of the dual experience of pain and pleasure to emerge into possession of the cosmic Bliss of existence, out of the dull chrysalis of our limited selves to flower into oneness with the Divine Self that we are. For this is not an egoistic will in us but the meaning of the Divine Inhabitant for which he

has undertaken bodily life and terrestrial existence.” (224-25)

“Man the thinker and seeker would not be here if he were not an embodied portion of an all-conscious Infinite that is superconscient above him but lies also hidden in the inconscience of the material universe.

The development of forms is not the most important or the most significant part of the evolutionary process; it is one sign of the thing that is being done, but it is not its essence. Material form is only a support and means for the progressive manifestation of the Spirit.

If all were chance or play of inconscient or inconsequent Force, there would be no reason why man with all his imperfections should not be the last word of this feat of unconscious intelligence or this haphazard miracle. It is because the Divine Spirit is there and his manifestation the meaning of the movement that a new power must emerge in the series that started from Matter.

The material universe would be a waste if wonderful desert if Life had not appeared as the first index to some marvellous utility and an ultimate profound and moving significance. But life too by itself would be a movement without sequence to its purposeful initiation or any light to its own mystery if in Life there were not concealed an interpretative or at least a seeking power of consciousness that could turn upon its powers and try to grasp and direct them towards their own realised issue.

Our life is neither an accident nor a mechanism; it is not a freak of some wide-spread self-organising Chance, nor is it the result of a blind unaccountable material Necessity.

What we call Chance is a play of the possibilities of the

Infinite; what we call Necessity is a truth of things working itself out in a Time-sequence of the Infinite.” (226-27)

“What we see in and around us is a play of God, a “Lila”. It is a scene arranged, a drama played by the One Person with his own multitudinous personalities in his own impersonal existence, – a game, a plan worked out in the vast and plastic substance of his own world-being. He plays with the powers and forces of his Nature a game of emergence from the unconscious Self out of which all here began, through the mixed and imperfect consciousness which is all we have now reached, towards a supreme consciousness, a divine nature.

This we cannot now know; our eyes are fixed on a partial outer manifestation which we see and call the universe – though even now we see and know very little of it or about it, know perhaps a few of its processes but nothing fundamental, nothing of its reality, – and an inner partial manifestation which we do not see but experience and feel and call ourselves. Our mind is shut up in a cleft between these two fragments and tends to regard it as the whole of things and the only tangible and real existence.

It is so that the frog regards himself and his well. But we have to grow out of this frog consciousness and exceed the limits of this well. In the end we come to perceive that we have a truer and divine being of which our petty personality is only a surface and corrupted output, a truer and divine Consciousness in which we must become self-aware and world-aware discarding our present fragmentary and bounded mental vision of self and things.

The term of our destiny is already known to us; we have to grow from what we are into a more luminous existence,

from pleasure and pain into a purer and vaster and deeper bliss, from our struggling knowledge and ignorance into a spontaneous and boundless light of consciousness, from our fumbling strength and weakness into a sure and all-understanding Power, from division and ego into universality and unity. There is an evolution and we have to complete it: a human animality or an animal humanity is not enough. We must pass from the inadequate figure of humanity into a figure of the Godhead, from mind to supermind, from the consciousness of the finite to the consciousness of the Infinite, from Nature into Supernature.” (227-28)

2. The Species called Man

“The perfection of species or of types is not what is aimed at; the type is often perfect [within its] limits, for it is the limits that make the type; the species too can be perfect in itself, perfect in its own variation of the genus and the genus perfect by the number and beauty or curiosity of its variations. But what we see in Nature is that it strives ever to exceed itself, to go beyond what it has yet done. For having achieved in the animal the whole of which animality was capable, it did not in achieving man endeavour to produce the perfect synthetic animal, it began at once working out something more than the animal. Man is to a certain extent a synthesis of several animals; he might even be said to synthesise all, from the worm and the skink, to the elephant and the lion; but as an animal he is terribly imperfect. His greatness lies in his being more than an animal and by this new nature he has exceeded the animal and made up for all his deficiencies even in the region of the struggle for life. Comparatively defenceless at first, he has become the master of the earth; he is not merely *primus inter*

pires; he is a sovereign and the others are not any longer, even if they were ever his equals.” (229)

“The world we live in is not a meaningless accident that has unaccountably taken place in the void of Space; it is the scene of an evolution in which an eternal Truth has been embodied, hidden in a form of things, and is secretly in process of unfoldment through the ages. **There is a meaning in our existence, a purpose in our birth and death and travail, a consummation of all our labour. All are parts of a single plan; nothing has been idly made in the universe; nothing is vain in our life.**” (229-30)

“Man is a transitional being, he is not final. He is too imperfect for that, too imperfect in capacity for knowledge, too imperfect in will and action, too imperfect in his turn towards joy and beauty, too imperfect in his will for freedom and his instinct for order. Even if he could perfect himself in his own type, his type is too low and small to satisfy the need of the universe. Something larger, higher, more capable of a rich all embracing universality is needed, a greater being, a greater consciousness summing up in itself all that the world set out to be. He has, as was pointed out by a half blind seer, to exceed himself; man must evolve out of himself the divine superman: he was born for transcendence. Humanity is not enough, it is only a strong stepping stone; the need of the world is a superhuman perfection of what the world can be, the goal of consciousness is divinity. The inmost need of man is not to perfect his humanity, but to be greater than himself, to be more than man, to be divine, even to be the Divine.

* *Bold letters in the text, used here for emphasis, are from the Editor and are not there in the original.*

To rest in humanity is to rest in imperfection; the perfect man would be a self-contented finality of incompleteness. His nature is transitional and there is therefore in it an innate tendency to strive towards something more.” (230)

“ – Unless indeed he turned aside from his destiny, became a two-legged termite content with a perfectly arranged or sufficiently comfortable material order.” (230)

“The saint, the sage, the seer, the inspired man of action, the creator, – these are his summits of being. Beyond him is the supramental being, the spiritual superman.” (231)

3. Consciousness

“The nature of evolution according to physical Science is a development of forms more and more suitable to an increasingly complex and subtle development of Life and incidentally only to a more and more complex and subtle consciousness serving the ends of Life. This consciousness is a temporary phenomenon beginning in each form with birth and ending with death of the body. Consciousness then is a circumstance of body and incapable of survival of the body. There is no such thing per se as consciousness. A consciousness not dependent on the body, expressing itself in it as its instrument, a soul or spirit, is therefore a myth, an imagination; if it existed, it would be an unwarrantable intrusion into the nature of things as seen in this material universe; or, since everything in this universe is dependent on Matter, arose from Matter, is a circumstance or result of Matter and returns to Matter, soul too would be a circumstance or result of Matter, would act by it and in it only, would return finally to Matter. Consciousness itself is a phenomenon of Matter, is nothing

but Matter in action, a combination of phenomenal action of chemical or other physical entities and operations and can be nothing else. It is unproven and unprovable, – though it may be that it is also not disproved and not disprovable. Either it must be left in a barren light or no light of agnosticism or is at most a matter of faith and not of knowledge.

But all this only means that Science has not any adequate means to deal precisely with the supraphysical nor can it collect and handle all the necessary data; it can deal only with the physical and with the physical side of the supraphysical; and that is not enough. Faith and knowledge are themselves supraphysical things with which Science cannot deal; for psychology at present is not a science; it is only a dispute between different bundles of inferences and guesses.” (231-32)

“If man’s knowledge and his way of knowledge are imperfect, still more imperfect are his living and his doing. [His] works sometimes attain perfection. Some men have done well in poetry and the arts and crafts, more have done badly, most are conventional copyists or botchers. In science and works with a scientific basis, men have certainly done well and their works were often efficient or masterly, for there all is method and rule and there the human mind seeks to master and execute what he has to do and that he can always do. Few have insight in works, fewer have any originality. Journeyman’s work he can do, for man is essentially a journeyman. He is skilful in putting things [up], buildings, a job, a swindle. In pulling down he is perfect, a destroyer ne plus ultra. The world is full of his constructions, but more pervasive is his

destruction; but that leaves few traces. But still the great doers are few in number, the good doers are many, the poor doers are legion, the evil doers hardly less. All this shows that he is a transitional and evolving animal, the highly evolved are rare, the poorly evolved numerous, the ill-evolved a multitude.

Living is more difficult than doing; though it is universal, and ought to have become easy by practice, it is commonly ill done, almost universally botched or half worked out. Human society is a ramshackle affair; it is top-heavy, over-elaborate and opulent at the top, below a multitudinous level. When he tries to reform his world, he sets out to level everything down towards or even to the worst. He can force all things down to the level of a universal proletariat, but he cannot make of the proletariat a universal aristocracy.” (234-35)

“There are two states of being, two levels or limits between which all existence stands or moves, a highest limit of supreme consciousness, an omniscient Superconscience, a nethermost limit of supreme unconsciousness, an omnipotent Inconscience. The secret of consciousness reveals itself only when we perceive these two limits and the movement between them which we call the universe.” (235)

“The Superconscient is hidden from us because it is wrapped in its own being of illimitable light; the Inconscient escapes our search because it is plunged in its own veil of impenetrable darkness.

All that manifested from the Eternal has already been arranged in worlds or planes of its own nature, planes of subtle Matter, planes of Life, planes of Mind, planes of Supermind, planes of the triune luminous Infinite. But these worlds or planes are not evolutionary but typical.

A typical world is one in which some ruling principle manifests itself in its free and full capacity and energy and form are plastic and subservient to its purpose. Its expressions are therefore automatic and satisfying and do not need to evolve; they stand so long as need be and do not need to be born, develop, decline and disintegrate.

For evolution to be necessary there must be an opposing medium or recalcitrant instruments or an involution of the thing in its opposite. This is what has happened in the terrestrial world. Spirit has to evolve out of matter, consciousness out of the Inconscient, life out of inanimation, mind out of a life that is void of thought; out of mind and its fragmentation and difficult piecing together of things the automatic completeness of the supramental knowledge.

There is a secret self-compulsion in the Inconscient to manifest what is involved – gaoled, suppressed and inactive within it, but also there is a stupendous Inertia, as of some fathomless cosmic sleep, that resists the will to manifest and retards the evolution. There is thus an upward levitation towards the luminous eternity of the Spirit strongly countered by a downward gravitation back towards the Inconscience.

This Inertia was needed in order that the evolution might be gradual by aeonic process and not an explosion of the concealed elements either into a rapid self-ordered typical series or into their original superconscience.

As a consequence of this retarding force what is involved evolves with difficulty and slowly. Evolution is a struggle between an insistent call to manifestation and an iron retardatory reluctant Inertia. Evolutionary existence is

precarious because the downward gravitation back to its source contradicts powerfully both the stress from within towards permanence and the pull from above towards self-transcendence. Matter in our world can easily dissolve into its elements, life sink back into death, mind relapse into unconsciousness. A type evolved, animal or man, struggles slowly and with much difficulty into manifestation, it is less difficult for it to disappear, as disappeared the mastodon and the dinosaur. Hence the law of a precarious impermanence laid on the forms of Matter which is corrected only for a time by the lavish will to reproduction in Nature.” (236-37)

“The call to manifestation is composed of a double current of Force moving between two poles. There is a will or at least an urge in the Inconscient itself, slow, dumb, obscure but imperative and inevitable towards the revelation of its involved contents. But there is also a pressure from above from the already established Powers for their manifestation in Space-Time here and for their evolutionary possibilities in the world of Matter. A world of subtle Matter presses on the shapeless Inconscient for the manifestation of forms; a world of essential Life presses on form of Matter for the manifestation of an embodied life; a world of essential Mind presses on animate life for the manifestation of mind in the living body. This compulsion is so great as to contradict and counteract finally the refusing and retarding Inertia.

Above on the summits of existence is all that is beyond Mind and all that is the complete splendour of the Spirit. These too wait for their hour of manifestation, their turn for revelation in Time and Space and the evolving series of the powers of the Eternal.” (238)

4. The Self

“The Self is an immortal and unseizable essence and substance of all things, it is a pure omnipresent omniscient omnipotent existence. It appears to our experience when we emerge from the subconscious as a mysterious Void or Nihil, indeterminable yet from it all things and forms are, inconscient yet flowering into consciousness, inert yet manifesting enormous energies, lifeless yet the parent of life, insensible yet a fountain of pain and pleasure.” (239)

“The Self, the Spirit is a pure existence, a spiritual substance that is self-aware and therefore all-aware. It is in its nature an absolute and omniscient consciousness, eternally comprehending all itself, all in itself and would naturally manifest as an absolute, unwallled, indivisible knowledge.” (239)

“This material world sprung from the subconscious Infinite appears to us as if [it] were the sole actual universe and even perhaps the only creation possible. But that is because we are limited by our senses which we now know to be restricted in their field and even there fallible. The material senses by their very nature can perceive only material things and from that our still infantile external reason infers that only material things exist and there is nothing else. All forms that are immaterial or of another substance than ours are and cannot but be illusions, hallucinations, unreal images. But a being otherwise constituted in consciousness or sense could well see this world in other figures than present themselves to ours. Another would see perhaps other worlds made of another, a subtler material or an essentially mental or vital or spiritual substance. A world is only an arrangement of things

as experienced by consciousness of the Spirit and this consciousness can see all kinds of things in all kinds of ways according to whatever plane of itself, whatever medium and whatever instruments it has produced for its cosmic purpose. We shall understand nothing of existence if we confine our vision to the particular view of things our primary consciousness and its instruments which are physical impose upon us; for this consciousness is only a surface phenomenon of ourselves and our total being is far deeper, higher and vaster than that, our possibilities extend infinitely beyond their present limit, and the world also is far more complex than the first crude inexplicable mystery of Matter would lead us to imagine.

The immense material world in which we live is not the sole reality but only one of innumerable potential and existent universes; all of them need not have either Matter as we know it or the Inconscient for their base. Indeed this world of matter is itself dependent on many planes of consciousness and existence which are not material; for these have not this gross substance as their foundation or as the medium of their instrumentation of energy and consciousness or their primary condition of existence.” (240-41)

“Science has discovered a physical evolution hidden in the past history of the earth of which the living record remains in the embryo; but the physical evolution is only an outward sign, means and material condition of a still more secret evolution. **A spiritual evolution, an evolution of consciousness is the inner fact which alone illumines the problem of earth existence and opens to it its true solution; apart from it our life here has no intelligible significance.**

Ancient Indian thought discovered an evolution from birth to birth, from the life of tree and plant to the life of insect and animal, from the life of the animal to the life of man, attained with difficulty through the ages. This slowly attained human life it took to be the key of release from the baffling circle of the enigma. After some eighty and more lakhs of births, says the Tantra, a soul reaches the human form and consciousness and sooner or later finds the secret of escape from birth in time into the birthless and deathless Eternity from which it came.

These two discoveries seem at first sight quite unconnected and disparate. In one it is a physical Life in the cosmos that evolves and the individual is only an ephemeral member of the species, the species a means of this cosmic evolution. Mind is indeed the term and the mental human being the crown of this inexplicable emergence; when human progress is over, when the race decays and perishes, the cosmic evolution will be at an end, for it has nothing more then it can do. In man it has shot its bolt; nothing more is possible. Consciousness emerging out of the Inconscient has achieved this shoddy and splendid, this winging and limping miracle of the ever-seeking creative Mind of Man and sinks back into the Inconscient; its emergence had no discoverable significance, its brief play and cessation make no difference to the meaningless rounds of an inconscient universe.

In the Indian view it is the individual that evolves from birth to birth and the hierarchy of the vegetal, animal, human kinds [is] a fixed unchanging ladder for its ascent. A successive creation of higher and higher species is envisaged in the Upanishads as well as the Puranas and heredity affirmed as a

means of conscious continuity of the human embodiment of the Spirit, but still the evolution is individual and not cosmic, spiritual not physical. Yet here too this persistent phenomenon of spiritual embodiment appearing from the bodiless Spirit and evolving back into the bodiless Spirit seems to be devoid of significance.

If stripped of their limitations the two discoveries can be regarded as complementary rather than disparate.” (242-43)

“If we can add that in the mental formula, in the mentalised life and body of man, a spiritual emergence is in process which has not yet reached its full possibility and that possibility is the emergence of the spiritual man or supramental being, then the object of the physical evolution and its significance becomes clear. The evolution of bodies is only a means for the evolution of consciousness and the spiritual formulation will be that in which the cosmic Existence will find its own full affirmation, manifest through the original veil of Matter its self-awareness, self-knowledge, self-realisation. The Cosmic Spirit hidden in the Inconscience is then the Alpha, its manifestation in the consciousness of spiritualised man the Omega.” (244)

5. Ascent of Man

“At each capital step of Nature’s ascent there is a reversal of consciousness in the evolving spirit. As when a climber turns on a summit to which he has laboured and looks down with an exalted and wider power of vision on all that was once above or on a level with him but is now below his feet, the evolutionary being not only transcends his past self, his

former now exceeded status, but commands from a higher grade of self-experience and vision, with a new apprehending feeling or a new comprehending sight and effectuating power, in a greater system of values, all that was once his own consciousness but is now below his tops and belongs to an inferior creation. This reversal is the sign of a decisive victory and the seal of a radical progress in Nature.

The new consciousness attained in the spiritual evolution is always higher in grade and power, always larger, more comprehensive, wider in sight and feeling, richer and finer in faculties, more complex, organic, dominating than the consciousness that was once our own but is now left behind us. There are greater breadths and spaces, heights before impossible, unexpected depths and intimacies.” (250)

“Mark too that each of the great radical steps forward already taken by Nature has been infinitely greater in its change, incalculably vaster in its consequences than its puny predecessor. There is a miraculous opening to an always richer and wider expression, there is a new illuminating of the creation and a dynamic heightening of its significances. There is in this world we live in no equality of all on a flat level, but a hierarchy of ever-increasing precipitous superiorities pushing their mountain-shoulders upwards towards the Supreme.” (251)

6. Mind

“Because man is a mental being, he naturally imagines that mind is the one great leader and actor and creator or the indispensable agent in the universe. But this is an error; even for knowledge mind is not the only or the greatest possible

instrument, the one aspirant and discoverer. Mind is a clumsy interlude between Nature's vast and precise subconscious action and the vaster infallible superconscious action of the Godhead.

There is nothing mind can do that cannot be better done in the mind's immobility and thought-free stillness.

When mind is still, then Truth gets her chance to be heard in the purity of the silence.

Truth cannot be attained by the mind's thought but only by identity and silent vision. Truth lives in the calm wordless Light of the eternal spaces; she does not intervene in the noise and cackle of logical debate.

Thought in the mind can at most be Truth's brilliant and transparent garment; it is not even her body. Look through the robe, not at it, and you may see some hint of her form. There can be a thought-body of Truth, but that is the spontaneous supramental Thought and Word that leap fully formed out of the Light, not any difficult mental counterfeit and patchwork. The supramental Thought is not a means of arriving at Truth, for Truth in the supermind is self-found or self-existent, but a way of expressing her. It is an arrow from the Light, not a bridge to reach it.

Cease inwardly from thought and word, be motionless within you, look upward into the light and outward into the vast cosmic consciousness that is around you. Be more and more one with the brightness and the vastness. Then will Truth dawn on you from above and flow in on you from all around you.

But only if the mind is no less intense in its purity than its

silence. For in an impure mind the silence will soon fill with misleading lights and false voices, the echo or sublimation of its own vain conceits and opinions or the response to its secret pride, vanity, ambition, lust, greed or desire. The Titans and the Demons will speak to it more readily than the divine Voices.

Silence is indispensable, but also there is needed wideness. If the mind is not silent, it cannot receive the lights and voices of the supernal Truth or receiving mixes with them its own flickering tongues and blind pretentious babble. Active, arrogant, noisy, it distorts and disfigures what it receives. If it is not wide, it cannot house the effective power and creative force of the Truth. Some light may play there but it becomes narrow, confined and sterile. Or the force that is descending is cabined and thwarted and withdraws again from this rebellious foreign plane to its vast native heights. Or even if something comes down and remains, it is a pearl in the mire; for no change takes place in the nature or else there is formed only a thin intensity that points narrowly upward to the summits but can hold little and diffuse less upon the world around it.” (255-56)

7. Reason

“Reason is a clarified, ordered and organised Ignorance. It is a half-enlightened Ignorance seeking for truth, but a truth which it insists on founding upon the data and postulates of the Ignorance. Reason is not in possession of the Truth, it is a seeker. It is [unable to] discover the Truth or embody it; it leaves Truth covered but rendered into mental representations, a verbal and ideative scheme, an abstract algebra of concepts,

a theory of the Ignorance. Sense-evidence is its starting point and it never really gets away from that insecure beginning. Its concepts start from sense-data and though like a kite it can fly high into an air of abstractions, it is held to the earth of sense by a string of great strength; if that string is broken it drifts lazily [in] the clouds and always it falls back by natural gravitation to its original earth basis – only so can it receive strength to go farther. Its field is the air and sky of the finite, it cannot ascend into the stratosphere of the spiritual vision, still less can it move at ease in the Infinite.” (256-57)

“Mind can never be a perfect instrument of knowledge. For even if it could be free from all positive error, even if it could be all intuitive and infallibly intuitive, it could still present and organise only half truths or separated truths and these too not in their own body but in luminous representative figures put together to make an accumulated total or a massed structure[.]

The office of intellect is not to fathom reality, but to fabricate and preside over action; intellect cannot comprehend life and reality.” (257)

8. Intuition

“Intuition is a direct knowledge self-existent and independent of means and devices; it is naturally self-existent and founded upon a knowledge by identity; or when it is gained, it is either by identification or by a knowledge arising from some intimate contact made possible by an underlying or occult identity.” (258)

“I mean by the supermind a power, a level, an organisation of consciousness which is not only above the

human mind, but above all that can be called mind, – another higher and wider essence and energy of consciousness altogether. Mind is that which seeks after truth of any kind or of all kinds within its range, labours to know it, attempts to direct and utilise it. But by supermind I mean a divine awareness which inherently possesses truth, knows it by its own intrinsic identity with it and puts it into action or effect spontaneously by its own sovereign power without any need of endeavour or labour.” (259-60)

9. The Emergence of the Superman*

a. The Face of Material Nature and the Meaning of our Existence

“A god has veiled himself in the earth & mire and beauty and perfection lie unevolved in masses of ordure. This is the play of God with His substance in Matter.

In the atom there is hidden all the will & intelligence & joy that created the universe. In Man they have emerged, but blinking & dazzled by the gleam of their own sunlight, bewildered at themselves & each other. They stumble up against each other, strive & wrestle blindly; for they cannot even [in] the highest man accomplish altogether their own unity & harmony.

An ignorance in which is packed up all knowledge, a mighty inertia in which all cosmic force strives helplessly, an insensibility which conceals the pain and strain of all ecstasy present, but held back, this is the outer face of material Nature and our starting point.

The Spirit awakening out of this veil gradually and with

difficulty but inevitably is the secret sense of life. The power to accomplish the perfect awakening against accumulated difficulties, is God's offer to man throughout his cycles." (260)

"This is the meaning of our existence here, its futuristic value and inherent trend of power, to rise above ourselves, to grow into gods, to reveal God in a world of material forms and forces.

Earth and conscious life upon earth are not a freak of cosmic Chance, a meaningless accident in the vacant history of nebula and electron and gas and plasm; they are the field of a game of the Gods with the destiny of our souls as the stake of their wager.

To evolve Godhead out of the mud of matter, some divinest consciousness out of a primal inconscience and a struggling ignorance, immortality out of death, undying bliss out of pain and sorrow, the everlasting Truth out of the falsehoods and denials of this relative world is their great and daring gamble." (261)

b. The Struggle and Goal of our Journey

"An air from a consciousness greater than mind has already been felt by many of those who have climbed to the human summits and to the glow that has come from above they have given many names, bodhi, intuition, gnosis. But these things are only the faint edge of that greater light thrust into the pallid twilight that we call mind. Only when the lid between mind and supermind has been utterly rent apart and the full power of the sun of a divine Gnosis can pour down – not trickling through mind as in diminished and deflected beams – and transform the whole mind and life and body of the

human creature, can man's labour finish. Then only shall begin the divine play and the free outpouring of the liberated self-creating Spirit.

To rise into this greater consciousness above our mental level of humanity as man has risen above the level of the life-mind of the beast, to grow from mind into supermind, from twilight into light, from the mind's half-consciousness into what is now to us superconscient, from a narrow imprisoned ego into the transcendent and universalised individual, from a struggling half effective into a throned and master power, from little transient joys and sorrows into an unalloyed divine delight, this is the goal of our journey, the secret of our struggle.

This is our way of emergence from the now dark riddle of the earth and unsolved problem of human life. If there were not this secret sense in all we are and do, there would be no significance in the material world and no justification for our earth-existence.

A gnostic superman is the future master of the earth and rescuer of the divine meaning out of the ambiguous terms of this great world-enigma." (262)

"All that baffles us in existence can find its solution, if we can read it in the light of intention that comes from its source. The original Light points us from our preoccupation with our roundabout and puzzling course to the revealing significance of its aim; for the world's source and origin and its aim are one.

The Cause and Fount of all things is the Divine and the end and aim of all things is the Divine. The finite in Time reveals its own deep and abiding sense when it opens to the

Eternal and throws itself into the Infinite.

The only true knowledge – for all the rest is either false or only true in a limited field, half-true and therefore, from the vision of the whole, false – is that which reads everything in the sense and light of the Divine. If man would open himself to the Divine Light, he would begin at last to know; but he prefers always to read everything in the light of man's consciousness, man's sense, man's aims and hopes in his little half lit circle.

But man was not the beginning of the manifested universe or even of the earth-cycle, so also he is not its end and fulfilment. There was much before he appeared; there will be much after he has gone – or fallen into a subordinate place.

Human consciousness is a half term in earth nature's climb from the electron and atom, gas and metal through the vegetable and animal and human formulas to the god and Titan and through the god to the Divine. It is not in the light of the realised alone that we should read the earth-riddle; it is in the light of the unrealised that we shall understand the realised and know why all was and to what all was moving in Nature." (262-63)

c. The Transition from Manhood to Supermanhood

"The transition from manhood to supermanhood is, in one sense, a self-exceeding, a ceasing to be what we now are in order to become something else or more. In another sense it is a self-becoming, a flowering out of something concealed by our present state, a latent godhead that already is and always was our true being.

Supermanhood is for us a self-exceeding because man, pragmatically and to his own surface awareness, is a small, confused, limited, still ignorant formation of evolutionary Nature, – if supermanhood is intended, then either he has himself to become superman or, if he cannot or will not achieve it, he must make way for some creature greater than he who will have both the will and the power.” (264)

d. The Evolution of Humanity

“Humanity is one step in the destiny of the evolving spirit, the last before it assumes something of its own divinity delivered and apparent; his imperfect life and consciousness must develop itself into the type of the fully conscious being, after man or out of him must be born the superman.

This consummation can only take place by an evolution of the consciousness of the individual and humanity beyond its present stage of development; it can take place only if man is ready to take the turn towards which Nature has been slowly leading him, to discover himself, to know himself as soul and spirit, to see and lay firm hold on the Reality behind world and life and things after which he has been seeking through the ages. Nature’s first evolution has been an evolution of Matter, of physical objects, of the stage, scenery, external conditions and instruments of the drama of an evolving conscious Life in Matter. In life itself she has been content at first to organise a physicality, an externality of life; the evolution of the body has been the sign, the instrument, the apparent cause of the evolution of consciousness. Even when she has arrived at the evolution of Mind, the mind of a humanity which is capable not only of knowing outwardly

the external world but of going within itself, of knowing itself, of knowing the secret things, powers, forces which are behind itself and behind the works of a surface external Nature, still she has been most careful to organise a surface Mind dealing with surface and external things and an organisation of personality which is superficial and not the whole of ourselves, a wave only of the ocean of our hidden being, our secret reality. To build an ego which will deal with material life and nature as its user but also as its subject, a life that is bound by matter, a mind that is bound by both matter and life has been her main preoccupation. But still the evolution of consciousness is the real and central fact which gives a significance otherwise altogether lacking to the mechanical structure of the universe. Man is here not merely to utilise his world for the service of his individual and collective ego; he is here as a medium in which the Spirit within, the secret growing Consciousness can evolve farther its self-manifestation, arrive from a partial to a complete consciousness and, since life itself is there only as a means of this evolution and an image of it, at a complete and perfect individual and social life. If the psychological truth of our being is the real and central truth, more central and important than the physical, this must be its true nature, a conscious being growing towards its own completeness of consciousness and growing too towards its expression and formation in a complete individual and social life.” (266-68)

II. Psychology

The Science of Consciousness*

1. The Triple Enigma*

“Existence, consciousness and the significance of our conscious being, – a triple enigma confronts us when we look at them to discover their origin, foundations, nature, their innermost secret. We begin with a riddle, we end with a mystery.

Existence itself is the first riddle. What it is we do not know, we are ignorant how it came to be at all, we cannot say whether it is an eternal fact or a temporary phenomenon.” (271)

“Consciousness of existence is a second insoluble miracle. It seems not to have been and now is and it may be that some day it will not be; yet it is a premier fact and without it being would not know of its own existence. Things might exist, but only as a useless encumbrance of a meaningless space, – consciousness makes being self-aware, gives it a significance. But what then is consciousness?” (271)

“The significance of our conscious being in an inconscient material world is the last and worst enigma. What is the sense and justification of the individual, his consciousness, his feeling of self, his personality? Is our individuality real or apparent, temporary or permanent, a minor circumstance or a central secret of the whole? Has it a meaning in the universe or in something beyond the universe? or is it only a chance outburst of Nature with no sense in it or any but a mechanical purpose?

All these problems arise in our consciousness and in our consciousness alone can be found their solution – or to it or through it perhaps from a greater consciousness the solution must come. On the nature and validity of our consciousness depends the nature and validity of the discovery we shall make or the conclusions to which we can come. On the power of our consciousness depends the possibility or impossibility of putting into the terms of life the solutions our knowledge discovers.” (271-72)

2. In Understanding Consciousness Lies the Riddle and the Solution

“All the problem of existence turns around three things, the nature of being, the nature of consciousness and the secret of the dynamics, the energy of existence by which being and consciousness find each other and manifest what is within them. If we can discover these three things, all is known which we fundamentally need to know; the rest is application and process and consequence.

The problem of consciousness is the central problem; for it links the other two together and creates their riddle. It is consciousness that raises the problem it has to solve; without it there would be no riddle and no solution.” (272)

“Existence would be a fact without significance, the universe an inanimate machine turning for ever – or for a time, – without any reason or issue in its turning. For it to have any significance there must be either a Mind or some other kind of Awareness that observes it, originates it perhaps, has joy in its turning, works out something by the turning of the machine for its own satisfaction or dissatisfaction; or there

must be a consciousness that emerges by the turning and reveals being and energy to themselves and leads them to some kind of fulfilment.” (273)

“Even if what fundamentally is in being, is not consciousness but a superconscience, yet that must be one supreme kind of self-awareness, if not also all-awareness; for otherwise there would be no difference between superconscience and inconscience; the two would be only top-side and bottom-side of the same blank, yet mysteriously but vainly fruitful reality.” (273)

“It would not materially affect the fundamental satisfactoriness of this explanation that the world we live in is not a world of bliss, not a world of consciousness, – though it is in its evident appearance, a world of being and of energy of being, that it is in its phenomenal basis inconscient and works itself out through process and labour and, when consciousness appears, through joy of being but also through pain of being. If the eternal creative Energy takes joy in that, has the Ananda of it (and without consciousness there can be no joy or Ananda), as a poet in the creation of his tragedy or comedy, then that would be a sufficient explanation of the existence of this universe, though we would still have to seek for its significance, the reason of this choice of pain and labour.

Consciousness then is the centre of the riddle. If we know what is Consciousness, where its action begins and ends – if it has a beginning and an ending, what is its process and the significance of its temporal appearance and action, we shall then be able to look deeply into being and its energy and understand and solve all their enigma.” (273-74)

3. The Materialist Hypothesis of Consciousness

“According to the materialist hypothesis consciousness must be a result of energy in Matter; it is Matter's reaction or reflex to itself in itself, a response of organised inconscient chemical substance to touches upon it, a record of which that inconscient substance through some sensitiveness of cell and nerve becomes inexplicably aware. But such an explanation may account, – if we admit this impossible magic of the conscious response of an inconscient to the inconscient, – for sense and reflex action [yet] becomes absurd if we try to explain by it thought and will, the imagination of the poet, the attention of the scientist, the reasoning of the philosopher. Call it mechanical cerebration, if you will, but no mere mechanism of grey stuff of brain can explain these things; a gland cannot write Hamlet or pulp of brain work out a system of metaphysics. There is no parity, kinship or visible equation between the alleged cause or agent on the one side and on the other the effect and its observable process. There is a gulf here that cannot be bridged by any stress of forcible affirmation or crossed by any stride of inference or violent leap of argumentative reason.” (274-75)

“It is certainly possible, *prima facie*, that Consciousness may be a subordinate phenomenon dependent on Matter or, more accurately, on the Energy that formulates Matter. Our need then is to discover its exact nature, origin, function in a material world and the utmost limit of its possibilities for the human being; for to man matter is only a basis of his life, a material of his works, an opportunity; what is really important to him is consciousness, for it is his consciousness and use of consciousness that gives him his significance and importance

to himself and the world; without it he would be nothing and mean nothing.

At any rate this is the fact that faces us, that there is an apparent Energy that seems to have built up this world which first in the animal and then more amply in man has become and works as a conscious Energy and that this transformation is the crucial and capital fact of our universe. It may well be that in it lies the secret of the significance of that universe. It may turn out on deeper enquiry that a Conscious Energy has created as its field an inconscient substance and is veiled in its creation and emerges in it, a Power, a Godhead releasing itself slowly and with difficulty out of its self-made chrysalis of material Inconscience.

It is not sufficient to examine the material, the physiological processes accompanying the functioning of consciousness and attempt to explain the functioning by its physical processes. This leaves consciousness itself unexplained; if it accounts to some extent, but imperfectly, for sense phenomena or mechanical thinking, it does not account in the least for the most important powers of our conscious energy; it does not account for reason, understanding, will, creative thought, conscious selection, the conscious intellectual and spiritual action and self-development of the human being. Yet these are of capital importance, for it is here that consciousness begins to unfold itself out of its chrysalis or matrix of inconscience and a half conscious first working and reveal its true nature. Here consciousness acts in its own right, in its own field and not as a product of the body. To see how the body uses consciousness may be within limits a fruitful science, but it is

more important to see how consciousness uses the body and still more important to see how it evolves and uses its own powers. The physiological study of the phenomenon of consciousness is only a side-issue; the psychological study of it independent of all reference to the body except as an instrument is the fruitful line of inquiry. A body using consciousness is the first outward physical fact of our existence, the first step of our evolution; a consciousness using a body is its inner spiritual reality, it is what we have become by our evolution and more and more completely are[.]” (276-77)

4. The Sophism Invented by the Materialist

“Consciousness, – but what is consciousness?”

And first of all we have to face the possibility that there is no such thing. For many hold that the word is an unreal generalisation invented to cover a class of material phenomena having their origin in Matter and material in their nature and essence, an operation of Matter on Matter and in Matter. Thoughts are only vibrations of the grey matter of the brain; they are not something other [than] that or capable of existing beyond the material plane; they cannot exist independently of the brain; brain is not their instrument of expression or manifestation; they are [its] instrument made of its substance, dependent on [its] substance, inexistent without it. Mind is an action of Matter, not a separate power or force; there is nothing in it superior to the physicality of the body; it exists by the body and as a part of its activity, lasts along with it, dies with it. Mind is a product of gases, some operation of Nature's chemistry, glandular influences, nervous stimulus; it is matter and records the operations of Matter.

But why then this appearance of mentality, of consciousness, of a conscious being? That too is only a trick of Matter. They are reflexes and reactions to the contacts of things outside, to other material objects, bodies, movements, forces.” (279-80)

“Evidently we are in face of a general sophism invented by specialists of a limited field of data, the data of inconscient Matter, who are determined to force everything into its characteristic formulas and refuse to admit everything else. We must at least recover the right to see this awareness and its movements as they are or as they present themselves to us and see how far it leads us and whether indeed, even if it occurs in matter and the body, it does not lead us to something other than the body and other than Matter. The materialist contention that consciousness is not a separate power or force or manifestation of energy like electricity or magnetism or steam, but only a name for a particular bundle of brain phenomena, cannot hide the startling fact that inconscient and insentient Matter has become sentient and conscient even if it be only at points, in jets, in small masses.” (280)

“In any case consciousness is the one thing by which we can consider or decide the question at all. It is the one thing by which we know at all that world exists or can inquire into its truth and its meaning. If consciousness has no reality and no value, then there is nothing by which we can know the truth, – one explanation of things has then as little value as the other, neither can be claimed as the truth. The consciousness by which we affirm the featureless sole Reality can be as fallacious as that by which we affirm our individual self and the universe.” (282-83)

5. Whole Creation can be Rendered in Terms of Consciousness

“All that exists or can exist in this or any other universe can be rendered into terms of consciousness; there is nothing that cannot be known. This knowing need not be always a mental knowledge. For the greater part of existence is either above or below mind, and mind can know only indirectly what is above or what is below it. But the one true and complete way of knowing is by direct knowledge.

All can be rendered into terms of consciousness because all is either a creation of consciousness or else one of its forms. All exists in an infinite conscious existence and is a part or a form of it. In proportion as one can share directly or indirectly, completely or incompletely in the eternal awareness of this Infinite, or momentarily contact or enter into it, or formulate some superior or inferior power of its consciousness or knowledge, one can know what it knows, in part or whole, by a direct knowing or an indirect coming to knowledge. A conscious, half conscious or subconscious participation in the awareness of the Infinite is the basis of all knowledge.

All things are inhabited by this consciousness, even the things that seem to us inconscient and the consciousness in one form can communicate with or contact the consciousness in another or else penetrate or contain or identify with it. This in one form or another is the true process of all knowledge; the rest is ignorant appearance.

All things are one self; it is the one Knower who knows himself everywhere, from one centre or another in the

multiplicity of his play. Otherwise no knowledge would be possible.” (285-86)

6. The Secret Below the Surface*

“All life, all existence is an enigma to the human mind, because the mind is a light which sees only the surfaces of things or at most a little below the surface and is moreover limited by its own circumscribed area of vision. It cannot see what is beyond those limits and yet there are an infinity of things beyond its circle. It cannot see what is above, it cannot see what is within, it cannot see what is below. But what is on the surface is never the truth of things; the surface presents us only with facts not with truths, with phenomena not with realities, with imperfect indications, not with the realisation of things in themselves. The secret, the truth, the reality of things is above, within, below, it is not on their surface.” (286)

III. Consciousness and the Inconscient*

1. Inconscient*

“If there is a consciousness in Matter, however secret and involved, there must be a consciousness secret and involved in the Inconscient.

But the question then arises whether such a thing can be any more than there can be a square circle [or] cold fire. “Not even a hundred declarations of the Veda,” says Shankara, “could prove the coldness of fire.” There are psychologists who deny that there is or can be any such thing as the subconscious, for it is a flat self-contradiction to speak of a consciousness which is below the level of consciousness. To be conscious is to be aware of self and things or at least of things, with whatever limitation, as a man’s or an animal’s waking mind is aware.

To a certain thought it might seem that only the surface of things is knowable, the rest either does not or cannot exist or must be left in the shadow of an inevitable agnosticism.” (293-94)

“If that were so, it would be impossible to have any true or whole knowledge. For our mind is an Ignorance searching for knowledge and arriving at representations or figures of it, it can never be except by a miraculous transformation something that knows, still less knows truly and knows all. But knowledge exists somewhere, knowledge is possible and a seeking ignorance is not our first and last fate. Our boundaries are lost [. . .], the depths teem [or] are no longer vacant, the sky above mind is peopled with winged realities.

The subconscious is disburdened of its strange contents, the superconscious becomes the top [of] consciousness, the peak of knowledge, there is a Conscious in unconscious things. Let us look then with the eye of the Ignorance first but also with the eye of this greater knowledge at the subconscious, at Inconscience, at the superconscious top of things. An immediate change will take place in our conception of self and our outlook on the universe.” (294)

2. Subconscious

“The subconscious is a fact of our mentality. It is not the fact that our whole being, even our whole mentality, is on the surface. There are concealed heights, there are hidden gulfs, there are crowded spaces behind the front wall, below the threshold, in the unseen mental environment. There is a vast unconscious below us, an infinite superconscience above us. All these are part of a secret consciousness in the world, but also part of our own hidden being of which we are not aware or only intermittently and ignorantly or only, in our ultimate evolution, eventually aware.

Even in our ordinary experience there are moments in which one or other of these things becomes apparent, acts in our daily actions or peers out above the surface and replaces our absent and inattentive mind. We start writing and finish the writing without knowing what we have written. We are walking with our mind aware and guiding our course, – the [outer] mind, – but we continue to walk and find ourselves after a time farther on the intended way or beyond the intended goal or turn and have to retrace our steps. In an unconscious or half conscious moment words pour from our

lips which we would never have spoken if we had used our fully awake mind and will. What is it that thus takes up the writing, the walk, the speech and completes our intention or betrays us? It must be either something of the mind behind or below its active surface movement or something of a driving life-force or action of the body.” (294-95)

“If it is a life-force that goes on with the works of the life when the mind is not attending to them, then only this must be a subconscious action and where it continues an action initiated by the conscious mind, then some sort of mechanical consciousness must be attributed to it. If it is the body that takes up the action, it must equally be credited with a subconscience that can do under certain circumstances the work of consciousness.

I have written a letter and proceed to put the name and address on the envelope, but my mind gets absorbed in something else and I find that I have written another habitual name and address, not the one I intended. Memory evidently has done this uncalled for work, but not a conscious memory with the mind aware of what it was doing. A subconscious layer of memory must have come to the surface mistaking the call, or there must have been a double action of memory one deliberate, the other automatic, the temporary suspension of the first giving room to an inadvertent action of the subliminal working.” (295-96)

“As consciousness descends from the supreme and the higher to the lower levels, it loses progressively its force and intensity till it reaches the nadir of inconscience.

The figure of Inconscience is the mask of an all-conscious Creator; the Inconscient creates with an unerring art, adaptation of means to end, ingenious originality, spontaneity and [. . .] of device. The conscious creator man cannot even come near the inconscient Creator, God. But [the] Inconscient is only a mask on a mobile face; its blank rigidity hides from us the expression of the face of the Omnipresent.” (296)

3. The Inconscient Energy*

“At one end of existence, the nether material end, we observe the reign of a complete phenomenal Inconscience. No creative consciousness or will can be detected there; we start from something that is but is not aware that it is, things that are but are unconscious that they are or that anything is. Yet it is this vast impalpable Inconscient that seems to have created Matter and the whole material universe.

There is, obvious and undeniable, an Energy that creates and there is a creation; these are the only two affirmations we can make which are beyond doubt. Even if we take the creation to be illusory, still the illusory creation is there and there is a Force or Energy or Power that has created it, whether it be mere unconscious Energy, Prakriti, or an energy of deceptive consciousness, Maya.” (296-97)

“Consciousness, being, force, energy (shakti), these are the three first terms of the fundamental truth of existence. What we have to know is how they work out together in ourselves and the universe.” (299)

“Chance, some say, does all; the phenomena of consciousness – for there is no such thing as consciousness in itself, only reactive phenomena of sense and mind provoked

by outward impacts – are, like everything else, the products of Chance.

But what is Chance, after all? It is only a word, a notion formed by our consciousness to account for things of which we have no true knowledge – and it does not account for them. When we do not know how or why a thing came to pass, we escape by saying, it was chance. We do not truly know how or why the universe happened or things in the universe, so we say “Chance made it; Chance did it.” An intellectual escape, nothing more. If we said “A selection, mysterious to us, out of infinite possibility,” then there would be some truth and some profundity in our thinking.

But the emergence of consciousness out of the Inconscient was more probably a necessity in the very being of being, in the innate movement of being, than merely a possibility. Necessity, then? an inevitable determination in Nature? or a self-determination in the conscious Spirit?” (299-300)

4. Consciousness and Immortality*

“Our existence is not a freak of some inconscient mechanical Force stumbling into consciousness nor an inexplicable activity on the surface of a blank Nothingness or an impassive inactive Infinite. There is a significance in our life, it moves towards a spiritual end, it fulfils the drive of an eternal reality.

Immortality is the nature of our being, birth and death are a movement and incident of our immortality. Birth is an assumption of a body by the spirit, death is the casting off [of] the body; there is nothing original in

this birth, nothing final in this death. Before birth we were; after death we shall be. Nor are our birth and death a single episode without continuous meaning or sequel; it is one episode out of many, scenes of our drama of existence with its denouement far away in time.” (300)

IV. The Science of Consciousness*

1. Vedantic Psychology*

“Body, brain, nervous system are instruments of consciousness, they are not its causes.

Consciousness is its own cause, a producer of objects and images and not their product. We are blinded to this truth because when we think of consciousness, it is of the individual we think.

We look at the world in the way and speak of it in the terms of individual consciousness; but it is of the universal consciousness that the world is a creation.

The individual participates subconsciously and superconsciously in the universal consciousness. But the embodied individual in his physical or waking mind does not so much participate as arrive at participation. He is not directly part of it, but reproduces it by a partial indirect action, and in reproducing selects and varies, combines, discombines, new combines and develops his selections.

In the body his waking mind receives its impressions from the outside world and reacts upon them. Body and nerves are his instrument for the impressions and the reaction; therefore all their apparent instrumentation is nervous, physical, atomically combined, a physiological apparatus for a battery of nervous energy.

Physical, nervous and sensory impressions are the means by which this individual is induced to put himself into waking relations with the physical universe. Physical, nervous and sensory reactions are his means for entering into that relation.” (302)

“Psychology is the knowledge of consciousness and its operations.

A complete psychology must be a complex of the science of mind, its operations and its relations to life and body with intuitive and experimental knowledge of the nature of mind and its relations to supermind and spirit.

A complete psychology cannot be a pure natural science, but must be a compound of science and metaphysical knowledge.” (305)

2. Towards a True Scientific Psychology*

“When the ancient thinkers of India set themselves to study the soul of man in themselves and others, they, unlike any other nation or school of early thought, proceeded at once to a process which resembles exactly enough the process adopted by modern science in its study of physical phenomena. For their object was to study, arrange and utilise the forms, forces and working movements of consciousness, just as the modern physical Sciences study, arrange and utilise the forms, forces and working movements of objective Matter. The material with which they had to deal was more subtle, flexible and versatile than the most impalpable forces of which the physical Sciences have become aware; its motions were more elusive, its processes harder to fix; but once grasped and ascertained, the movements of consciousness were found by Vedic psychologists to be in their process and activity as regular, manageable and utilisable as the movements of physical forces. The powers of the soul can be as perfectly handled and as safely, methodically and puissantly directed to practical life-purposes of joy, power and light as the

modern power of electricity can be used for human comfort, industrial and locomotive power and physical illumination; but the results to which they give room and effect are more wonderful and momentous than the results of motor-power and electric luminosity. For there is no difference of essential law in the physical and the psychical, but only a difference and undoubtedly a great difference of energy, instrumentation and exact process. The Supreme Existence which expresses itself equally in soul and matter, moves upon one fundamental principle on all its sevenfold levels, and even by one set of medial processes, but It varies their minute arrangement and organic functioning to suit the material which it is using and the objective which it has set before Itself in Its divine movement.” (314-15)

“We are dealing, therefore, in psychology with a more subtle, flexible and versatile material than in the physical sciences; its motions are more elusive, its processes harder to fix; but when once grasped and ascertained, its laws and activities are found to be quite as regular, manageable and utilisable as the processes of physical Nature. They give room to even more wonderful and momentous results. There is no difference of essential law in the physical & psychical, but a great difference of instrumentation and exact process.” (316)

“Psychology is the science of consciousness and its status and operations in Nature and, if that can be glimpsed or experienced, its status and operations beyond what we know as Nature.

It is not enough to observe and know the movements of our surface nature and the superficial nature of other living creatures just as it [is] not enough for Science to observe and

know as electricity only the movements of lightning in the clouds or for the astronomer to observe and know only those movements and properties of the stars that are visible to the unaided eye. Here as there a whole world of occult phenomena have to be laid bare and brought under control before the psychologist can hope to be master of his province.” (316-17)

“Our observable consciousness, that which we call ourselves, is only the little visible part of our being. It is a small field below which are depths and farther depths and widths and ever wider widths which support and supply it but to which it has no visible access. All that is our self, our being, – what we see at the top is only our ego and its visible nature.

Even the movements of this little surface nature cannot be understood nor its true law discovered until we know all that is below or behind and supplies it – and know too all that is around it and above.

For below this conscient nature is the vast Inconscient out of which we come. The Inconscient is greater, deeper, more original, more potent to shape and govern what we are and do than our little derivative conscient nature. Inconscient to us, to our surface view, but not inconscient in itself or to itself it is a sovereign guide, worker, determinant, creator. Not to know it is not to know our nether origins and the origin of the most part of what we are and do.

And the Inconscient is not all. For behind our little frontal ego and nature is a whole subliminal kingdom of inner consciousness with many planes and provinces. There are in that kingdom many powers, movements, personalities which

are part of ourselves and help to form our little surface personality and its powers and movements. This inner self, these inner persons we do not know, but they know us and observe and dictate our speech, our thoughts, feelings, doings even more directly than the Inconscient below us.

Around us too is a circumconscient Universal of which we are a portion. This Circumconscience is pouring its forces, suggestions, stimulus, compulsions into us at every moment of our existence.

Around us is a universal Mind of which our mind is a formation and our thoughts, feelings, will, impulses are continually little more than a personally modified reception and transcription of its thought-waves, its force-currents, its foam of emotion and sensation, its billows of impulse.

Around us is a permanent universal life of which our petty flow of life-formation that begins and ceases is only a small dynamic wave.” (317-18)

3. Yogic Psychology*

“The problem of consciousness can only be solved if we go back to a radical state of our existence in which things get back to their reality. For there they are no longer a mass of phenomena which have to be cleared up, classified, organised by the perceptions, conceptions and relative logic of the human intellect. These perceptions, these concepts, this logic belong to an imperfect instrument and the arrangements they make can only be provisional and, at that, one-sided and only half-true or a good deal less than half-true – and even that truth is of an inferior kind, a constructed representation and not truth itself in its own nature. In fact the intellect sees

only the phenomenon, it cannot go back behind it; when it tries, it only arrives at other and more occult phenomena. The truth of things can only be perceived when one gets to what may be called summarily the spiritual vision of things and even there completely only when there is not only vision but direct experience in the very substance of one's own being and all being." (320)

"One must look beyond the external appearances of things before one can know things in themselves: especially first appearances are apt to be deceptive. It is not by regarding a flash of lightning as a chance ebullition of fiery temper in a cloud that one can know the truth of electricity. We must go far and dig deep before we can get at the truth about the Force that manifested the lightning. Consciousness may similarly appear as a phenomenon, an outbreak of sentience in the obscurity of an originally nescient being; but we must go far beyond that specious appearance if we would know the true nature and origin and discover the entire possibilities of this apparently strange and anomalous force." (320-21)

"It is only by Yoga process that one can arrive at an instrumentation which will drive large wide roads into the psychological Unknown and not only obscure and narrow tunnels. The field of psychology needs a direct inner psychological instrumentation by which we can arrive at sure data and sure results in ourselves verified [by] equally sure data [and] results in our observation of others and of the hidden psychological world and its play of unseen forces. The physical is the outwardly seen and sensed and needs physical instruments for its exploration; the psychological is the physically unseen and unsensed, to be discovered only by an

organisation of the inward senses and other now undeveloped and occult means. It is through consciousness, by an instrumentation of consciousness only that the nature and laws and movements of consciousness can be discovered – and this is the method of Yoga.” (323)

V. Yoga: Change of Consciousness and Transformation of Nature*

1. The Way of Yoga*

a. Meaning of Yoga

“Yoga is a means by which one arrives at union with the Truth behind things through an inner discipline which leads us from the consciousness of the outward and apparent to the consciousness of the inner and real. Yoga consciousness does not exclude the knowledge of the outer apparent world but it sees it with the eyes of an inner, not an outer seeing and experience, alters and sets right all its values in the light of an inner deeper greater truer consciousness and applies to it the Law of the reality, exchanging the law of the creature's Ignorance for the rule of a divine Will and Knowledge.

A change of consciousness is the whole meaning of the process of Yoga[.]” (327)

“This consciousness is aware of external things not only through the physical mind and senses but by other though often similar means of Mind, an inner sense or senses, an inner tact or feeling such as a projective or responsive awareness of things at a slight or great distance, a premonitory sense of things about to happen [or] preparing to happen, a feeling of things or persons not seen, an inner vision of physical objects and happenings not before the eye and hundreds of other phenomena not normal to the ordinary mind. These phenomena are ordinarily labelled occult or psychic or described as hallucinatory according to the point of view of the speaker, but such epithets explain nothing. This range of

phenomena exists and for anyone who would know the nature and origin and possibilities of consciousness an examination of them is imperative.” (328)

“Yoga is in its essence a passage from the ordinary consciousness in which we are aware only of appearances into a higher wider deeper consciousness in which we become aware of realities and of the one Reality. Not only do we become aware of it, but we can live in it and act from it and according to it instead of living in and according to the appearance of things. Yoga is a passage from ignorance to self-knowledge, from our apparent to our true being, from an outer phenomenal mental vital material life-existence to an inner spiritual existence and a spiritualised nature.” (330)

“But by Yoga we become aware also that our own Self or true being is one with the cosmic Self and Spirit, our nature a play of the cosmic Nature; the wall between ourselves and the universe begins to disappear and vanishes altogether. We realise the selfsame Pantheos in ourselves, in others and in all universal existence.

But also by Yoga we become aware of something that is more than our individual being and more than the cosmic being, a transcendent Being or Existence which is not dependent on ours or the existence of the universe. Our existence is a manifestation of and in that Being, the cosmos also is a manifestation of and in that one Supreme Existence.” (330-31)

b. Union: The Aim of Yoga*

“It is the aim of all Yoga to pass by a change of consciousness into the Reality that is behind things and live

no longer in their appearance. To enter into some kind of union or communion or participation in that is the common object of all Yoga.” (331)

“And by union we mean, first, contact constant and increasing with the consciousness of the Divine or Infinite, then to assimilate it or assimilate ourselves to it, then to become not only like to it and full of it, but to enter into it and dwell in it, to become that divine consciousness and being, essence of its essence and so abolish all division that separates us from the Divinity from whom we came.” (332)

“To be one with the Eternal is the object of Yoga; there is no other object, because all other aims are included in this one divine perfection.

To be one with the Eternal is to be one with him in being, consciousness, power and delight. All that is is summed in these four terms of the infinite, for all else are but their workings.

To be one with the Eternal is also to live in the Eternal and in his presence and from his infinite nature, – sayujya, salokya, samipya, sadrishya. These four together are one way of being and one perfection.

To live in the Eternal is also to live with the Eternal within us. Whosoever consciously inhabits his being, his conscious presence inhabits. God lives and moves and acts in us when we live and move and act in him[.]” (332-33)

“The human being on earth is God playing at humanity in a world of matter under the conditions of a hampered density with the ulterior intention of imposing law of spirit on matter & nature of deity upon human nature. Evolution is

nothing but the progressive unfolding of Spirit out of the density of material consciousness and the gradual self-revelation of God out of this apparent animal being.

Yoga is the application, for this process of divine self-revelation, of the supreme force of tapas by which God created the world, supports it & will destroy it. It substitutes always some direct action of an infinite divine force for the limited workings of our fettered animal humanity. It uses divine means in order to rise to divinity.” (334)

c. Yoga Partial and Complete*

“The aim put before itself by Yoga is God; its method is tapasya.” (335)

“There are in every thing existing phenomenally or, as we shall say, symbolically, two parts, the thing in itself & the symbol, Self & Nature, res (thing that is) & factum (thing that is made), immutable being & mutable becoming, that which is supernatural in it & that [which] is natural.

Everything in existence has something in it which seeks to transcend itself; Matter moves towards becoming Life, Life moves towards becoming Mind, Mind moves towards becoming ideal Truth, ideal Truth rises to become divine & infinite Spirit.

The reason is that every symbol, being a partial expression of God, reaches out to & seeks to become its own entire reality; it aspires to become its real self by transcending its apparent self. Thing that is made is attracted towards Thing that is, becoming towards being, the natural to the supernatural, symbol towards Thing in itself, Nature towards God.” (335-36)

“By yielding to Nature, we fall away both from Nature & from God; by transcending Nature we at once fulfil all the possibilities of Nature & rise towards God. The human touches first the divine & then becomes divine.

There are those who seek to kill Nature in order to become the Self; but that is not God's intention in humanity. We have to transcend Nature, not to kill it.

Every movement of humanity which seeks to destroy Nature, however religious, lofty or austere, of whatever dazzling purity of ethereality, is doomed to failure, sick disappointment, disillusionment or perversion. It is in its nature transient, because it contradicts God's condition for us. He has set Nature there as a condition of His self-fulfilment in the world.

Every movement of humanity which bids us be satisfied with Nature, dwell upon the earth & cease to look upwards, however rational, clear-sighted, practical, effective, comfortable it may be is doomed to weariness, petrification & cessation. It is in its nature transient because it contradicts God's intention in us. He dwells secret in Nature & compels us towards Him by His irresistible attraction.

Materialistic movements are as unnatural & abnormal as ascetic & negatory religions & philosophies. Under the pretence of bringing us back to Nature, they take us away from her entirely; for they forget that Nature is only phenomenally Nature but in reality she is God. The divine element in her is that which she most really is; the rest is only condition, process & stage in her development of the secret divinity.

Not to be ensnared, emmeshed and bound by Nature,

not to hate & destroy her, is the first thing we must learn if we would be complete Yogins & proceed towards our divine perfection.

Being still natural in the world to transcend Nature internally so that both internally & externally we may master & use her as free & lord, swarat samrat, is our fulfilment.” (336-37)

“The attainment of God is the true object of all human effort for which all his other efforts political, social, literary, intellectual, are only a necessary condition & preparation of the race; but then there are both differences in the state of the attainment, differences in its range & effectivity. Three states of divine attainment may usefully be distinguished, touch with God, indwelling in Him & becoming He. The first is initial & elementary; unless passing the veil of our ordinary nature we touch the divine Being or He leaning down impose His touch [on] us, unless we come first into contact with Him either in our heart, our mind, our works or our being, we cannot go on to indwell in Him. If we are strong in spirit, the touch may indeed be rapid & summary & we may wake at once & stride forward to the state of divine indwelling, soul of man in the soul of God, the individual in the universal; but the touch must be there. To enforce this preliminary step, to bring man into some kind of contact with God, is the common and sometimes the sole preoccupation of human religions. It does not matter greatly to Nature for her purpose how it is done, – in however crude & elementary a way, through whatever intellectual errors & emotional blunders or ethical outrages, the touch must be established; this imperatively & above all things the religious spirit demands.” (338-39)

“Moreover the intellect of natural man is narrow, his effort soon exhausted & easily satisfied with imperfection. If he is led to think that his way of contact with the Divine is the only way, his own freedom of higher development is fettered or entirely taken away from him & in his intellectual & religious egoism he militates against the freedom of others. Most religions tend easily to believe that the contact with God once established, no matter with what limitations or of what kind, all is done that needs to be done, all fulfilled that God demands of us.” (339)

“Therefore Nature, still following her upward surge, has provided a mightier rank of human souls who are capable of going forward beyond this preliminary effort & having entered into the very being of God, of dwelling there in beatitude. Entering into the consciousness of the Infinite, feeling it all around them & in them, ever thrilling with its touch, aware of identity with It in nature, joy and inner awareness, they yet preserve a constant separateness of their special being in that identity. They do not plunge themselves wholly into the divine ocean or, if they go down into it, they keep hold on a fathomline which will preserve their touch with the surface. In their nature – whatever be their opinions – such men are Visishtadwaitins, souls not drawn towards entire oneness. But unless man plunges himself wholly into God caring not whether he re-emerge, unless the human sacrifices himself wholly to the divinity, keeping back no particle of his being, not even the least particle of separateness of the individual ego, jivatman, the divine purpose in man cannot be utterly accomplished. Therefore Nature or the Will of God – for Nature is nothing but the Will of God in action – has provided that some, having indwelt in God, human soul in divine soul,

shall be irresistibly called immediately, with brief respite or at long & last to the utter immersion. These go onward & throw away the last trace of Ego into God. Some of us, it has been said by a great teacher, are jivakotis, human beings leaning so pre-eminently to the symbol-nature that, if they have lost it utterly for a while in the Reality, they lose themselves; once immersed, they cannot return; they are lost in God to humanity; others are ishwarakotis, human beings whose centre has already been shifted upwards or, elevated in the superior planes of our conscious-existence from the beginning, was established in God rather than in Nature. Such men are already leaning down from God to Nature; they, therefore, even in losing themselves in Him yet keep themselves since in reaching God they do not depart from their centre but rather go towards it; arrived they are able to lean down again to humanity. Those who can thus emerge from this bath of God are the final helpers of humanity & are chosen by God & Nature to prepare the type of supernatural man to which our humanity is rising.”
(340-41)

VI. Partial Systems of Yoga*

1. Jnana Yoga: The Yoga of Knowledge*

“All Yoga starts from the perception that what we are now or rather what we perceive as ourselves and so call is only an ignorant partial and superficial formulation of our nature. It is not our whole self, it is not even our real self; it is a little representative personality put forward by the true and persistent being in us for the experience of this brief life; we not only have been in the past and can be in the future but we are much more than that in the present secret totality of our being and nature. Especially, there is a secret soul in us that is our true person; there is a secret self that is our true impersonal being and spirit. To unveil that soul and that self is one of the most important movements of Yoga[.]

The sense of a greater or even of an ultimate Self need not be limited to a negative and empty wideness whose one character is to be without limitation or feature. The first extreme push of our recoil from what we now are or think ourselves to be may and does often at first carry us over into this annihilating experience. A negation of our present error, a release from our petty irksome aching bonds may seem to be the only thing worth having, the only thing true. The rest is infinity, freedom, peace.” (345)

“The mind escaping from itself denies all thought, all form-making, all motion or play of any kind; for that would be a grievous return to itself, a miserable imprisonment and renewed hard-labour. The life released from the toil of labouring and striving and living, demands only immobility and no more to be, a sleep of force, the surety and rest of an

immutable status. The body accepts denial and dissolution, for to be dissolved is to cease to breathe and suffer. A bodiless, lifeless, mindless infinite breadth and supreme silence shows to us that we are in contact with the Absolute.” (346)

“This method of extinction is imposed on our mind and our mental ego, because all that is eternal, infinite, absolute is superconscious to mind; mind and its ego cannot remain awake in that greater consciousness, they must disappear. But if we can change or evolve from mental into supramental beings, then the superconscious becomes our normal consciousness. We can then hope to wake in That and not fall asleep in it, to grow into it and not abolish ourselves in it, to last in identity and not lose ourselves in identity with the supreme Existence.” (346)

“It is possible for the reason, the thinker in us to rest and cease satisfied in this sole spiritual experience and to discard all others on the ground that they are in the end illusory or of a minor phenomenal significance.” (346)

“But if the mind finds its account in cessation and release, the other parts of our being have in this solution to be cast away from us or put to silence. The heart remains atrophied and unfulfilled; the will is balked of its last dynamic significances. These too tend towards an absolute, the heart towards an absolute of ineffable Love and Bliss, the will towards an absolute of ineffable Power. And there is nothing to prove that the knowledge at which the reason arrives is alone true. There is no reason to suppose that the heart and will and the deeper soul within us have not too their own sufficient doors opening upon the Supreme, their key to the mystery of the Eternal.” (347)

2. Bhakti Yoga: The Yoga of Devotion*

“Three are the words that sum up the first state of the Yoga of devotion, faith, worship, obedience.

Three are the words that sum up the second state of the Yoga of devotion, adoration, delight, self-giving.

Three are the words that sum up the supreme state of the Yoga of devotion, love, ecstasy, surrender.

*

These are the seven ecstasies of Love –

The ecstasy of the body in the clasp of the Lover.

The ecstasy of the life consecrated and self-given to the Lord.

The ecstasy of the Mind made one in idea and [will] with the divine Consort.

The ecstasy of the supermind united with mind and body and enjoying the bliss of difference.

The ecstasy [of the] soul in the pure bliss of the Beatific.

The ecstasy of the spirit united in consciousness and force with the Universal.

The ecstasy of the pure being absolute and one with the Transcendent.” (348)

3. Karma Yoga: The Yoga of Works*

“All spiritual paths lead to a higher consciousness and union with the Divine and among the many paths one of the greatest is the Way of Works: it is as great as the Way of Bhakti or the Way of Knowledge.

Do not imagine that works are in their nature nothing but a bondage, they can be a powerful means towards liberation and divine perfection. All depends on the spirit in our works and their orientation towards the inner and the higher Light away from desire and ego.

Works are a bondage when they are done out of desire or for the sake of the ego, by a mind turned outwards, involved in the act and not detached and free, bound to the ignorance of this lower nature.” (348-49)

4. How Mental Ideals, Morals, Rules & Ethics are Disguises

“It is not a mental or moral ideal to which is turned the seeker of the Way, but a truth of the spirit, the experience of a hidden Reality living and concrete, a Light, a Power, a Joy that surpasses the mental understanding and is beyond any merely mental experience.

The ideals created by the mind are constructions in the air that have no sufficient foundation in our vital and physical nature; therefore they can change a side of our mind and colour a part of our actions, but they cannot transform our lives, cannot find here their physical body. Ideals touch and pass, mankind remains the same; after religions, ideals, moralities without end we keep always the same ignorant and imperfect human nature.

Moral rules and ideals are a harness for the ignorant soul, bridle and bit for the passions, reins that compel it to an assigned road, yoke and poles and traces that bind it to be faithful to the burden it carries. Morality checks and controls but does not purify or change the vital nature. In ethics there

is an artificial shaping of the mind's surfaces, but no spiritual freedom, no satisfying perfection of the whole dynamic nature.

The mind's ideals like the life's seekings are at once absolute each in its own demand and in conflict with one another; neither mind nor life knows the means either of their complete or their harmonised fulfilment. The mind labours through the centuries but human nature remains faithful to its imperfections and man's life amid its changes always the same.

Beyond mind on spiritual and supramental levels dwells the Presence, the Truth, the Power, the Bliss that can alone deliver us from these illusions, display the Light of which our ideals are tarnished disguises and impose the harmony that shall at once transfigure and reconcile all the parts of our nature.” (350)

5. The Secret of Karma Yoga

“But even to do that little is not easy to the physical mind of man, even when his higher mind and will consent and demand it. There is something in us wedded to ignorance, eternally in revolt against all surrender, attached to its own blind activity, its own freedom of will, a “freedom” that rattles its hundred chains at every step; – but to that element in us even that seems a divine music. And our human mind will invent a hundred good reasons against any such surrender to something not ourselves or even to our highest Self, – unless that be nothing more than a magnified reflection of our ego; for then it will be willing enough to surrender. And even our highest spiritual achievement on the mental plane is tainted and limited, when it is not distorted, by this ever unredeemed element in our nature.” (354)

VII. Integral Yoga*

1. Integrality*

“There are many Yogas, many spiritual disciplines, paths towards liberation and perfection, Godward ways of the spirit. Each has its separate aim, its peculiar approach to the One Reality, its separate method, its helpful philosophy and its practice. The integral Yoga takes up all of them in their essence and tries to arrive at a unification (in essence, not in detail) of all these aims, methods, approaches; it stands for an all-embracing philosophy and practice.” (356)

2. Aim of our Yoga

“To enter into the entire consciousness of the Divine Reality with all our being and all parts and in every way of our being and to change all our now ignorant and limited nature into divine nature so that it shall become the instrument and expression of the Divine Reality that in our self and essence we are, – this is the complete fulfilment of our existence and this is the integral Yoga.

To enter into the Divine either by the way of the thinking mind or by the way of the heart or by the way of the will in works or by a change of the psychological nature-stuff or a freeing of the vital force in the body is not enough; all this is not enough. Through all these together it must be done and by a change of our very sense and body consciousness even to the material inconscience which must become aware of the Divine and luminous with the Divine.

To be one with the Divine, to live in and with the Divine,

to be of one nature with the Divine, this should be the aim of our Yoga.” (356-57)

“Our Yoga is the integral Yoga. Its object is the harmony of a total spiritual realisation and experience, a supreme consummation of the spirit and the nature.

Yoga is called the integral Yoga, first because its object is integral covering the whole field of spiritual realisation and experience. It takes existence at its centre and in all its aspects and turns it into a harmony at once single and entire. It is the method of an integral God realisation, an integral self-realisation, an integral fulfilment of the being, an integral transformation and perfection of the nature[.]” (357-58)

3. Character of Integral Yoga

“What is the integral Yoga?

It is the way of a complete God-realisation, a complete Self-realisation, a complete fulfilment of our being and consciousness, a complete transformation of our nature – and this implies a complete perfection of life here and not only a return to an eternal perfection elsewhere.

This is the object, but in the method also there is the same integrality, for the entirety of the object cannot be accomplished without an entirety in the method, a complete turning, opening, self-giving of our being and nature in all its parts, ways, movements to that which we realise.

Our mind, will, heart, life, body, our outer and inner and inmost existence, our superconscious and subconscious as well as our conscious parts, must all be thus given, must all become a means, a field of this realisation and transformation and

participate in the illumination and the change from a human into a divine consciousness and nature.

This is the character of the integral Yoga.” (358)

“That Yoga is full or perfect which enables us to fulfil entirely God's purpose in us in this universe.

All Yoga which takes the soul entirely out of world-existence, is a high but narrow specialisation of divine tapasya.

God's purpose in us is that we should fulfil His divine being in world-consciousness under the conditions of the Lila.

With regard to the universe God manifests Himself triply, in the individual, in the universe, in that which transcends the universe.

In order to fulfil God in the individual, we must exceed the individual. The removal of limited ego and the possession of cosmic consciousness is the first aim of our sadhana.

In order to fulfil God in the cosmos, individually, we must transcend the universe. The ascension into transcendent consciousness is the second aim of our sadhana.” (359-60)

“All Yoga done through the mind alone or through the heart or the will or the vital force or the body ends in some one aspect of the infinite and eternal Existence and rests satisfied there, as the mind imagines for ever. Not through these alone shall thy Yoga move, but through all these at once and, supremely, through that which is beyond them. And the end of thy Yoga shall be the integrality of thy entrance not into one aspect, but into all the Infinite, all the Eternal, all the Divine in all its aspects indivisibly unified together.

Whatever is beyond mind and life and body is spirit. But

spirit can be realised even on these lower levels, in the spiritualised mind, in the spiritualised life-force, even in the spiritualised physical consciousness and body. But if thou rise not up beyond the mind-level, then in these realisations the spirit must needs be modified by the medium through which thou attainest to it and its supreme truth can only be seized in a reflection, partial even in widest apparent universality, and the utmost essential integrality will escape thy seizure.

Rise rather into the supramental levels and then all the rest shall remain a part of thy experience, but wonderfully changed, transfigured by a supreme alchemy of consciousness into an element of the supramental glory. All that other Yogas can give thee, thou shalt have, but as an experience overpassed, put in its place in the divine Whole and delivered from the inadequacy of an exclusive state or experience.” (360-61)

4. The Supramental Yoga*

“But the Reality is an Absolute or an Infinite; our consciousness, even our spiritualised consciousness is that of a finite being. It is inevitable therefore that our spiritual experience should be not that of a concrete integrality of this Absolute or Infinite, but of aspects of it; we are, so long at least as we are mental beings, the blind men of the story trying to tell what the Elephant Infinite is in its totality by our touch upon a part of it, some member of its spiritual body, *tanum svam*. One experiences it as Self or Spirit. It may be a Self of himself in which he finds his spiritual consummation, integrality, infinity, perfection. It may be a Self of the universe in which his individuality loses itself forever. It may be a Self transcendent in which the Ego disappears, but cosmos too is

annulled forever in a formless Eternal and Infinite. Another may experience it as God; and God may be either the All of the Pantheist, a cosmic Spirit, an individual Deity, a supracosmic Creator; or all of these together. A Personal Godhead may be the spiritual Form in which He presents Himself to us or rather He may reject forms from his being [and] resolve Himself into an impersonal Existence. Moreover each of these aspects of the Reality can be variously experienced; for each suits itself to the grasp of our consciousness, even though it can be very apparent that it is the same Reality that these variations differently account for. But also there may [be] other realisations of the Reality such as the Zero of the Nihilistic Buddhists which is yet a mysterious All, a negation that is a positive Permanence. It is an error to take these variations as a proof that spiritual experience is unreliable. All religions, all philosophies are equally desperate in their attempts to give an account of the Real and Ultimate; science itself for all its matter of fact physical positivism draws back bewildered from the attempt to touch the Real and Ultimate. It is the nature of Mind to arrive at this result of uncertain certainty; our experience is true but it is not and cannot be the sole possible integral experience.” (362)

“To become one in our absolute being with the ineffable Divine and in the manifestation a free movement of his being, power, consciousness and self-realising joy, to grow into a divine Truth-consciousness beyond mind, into a Light beyond all human or earthly lights, into a Power to which the greatest strengths of men are a weakness, into the wisdom of an infallible gnosis and the mastery of an unerring and unfailing divinity of Will, into a Bliss beside which all human pleasure is as the broken reflection of a candle-flame to the all-

pervading splendour of an imperishable sun, but all this not for our own sake [but] for the pleasure of the Divine Beloved, this is the goal and the crown of the supramental path of Yoga.

This change is a thing in Nature and not out of Nature; it is not only possible, but for the growing soul inevitable. It is the goal to which Nature in us walks through all this appearance of ignorance, error, suffering and weakness.” (364)

“The supramental Yoga is at once an ascent of the soul towards God and a descent of the Godhead into the embodied nature.

The ascent demands a one-centred all-gathering aspiration of soul and mind and life and body upward, the descent a call of the whole being towards the infinite and eternal Divine. If this call and this aspiration are there and if they grow constantly and seize all the nature, then and then only its supramental transformation becomes possible.

There must be an opening and surrender of the whole nature to receive and enter into a greater divine consciousness which is there already above, behind and englobing this mortal half-conscious existence. There must be too an increasing capacity to bear an ever stronger and more insistent action of the divine Force, till the soul has become a child in the hands of the infinite Mother. All other means known to other Yoga can be used and are from time to time used as subordinate processes in this Yoga too, but they are impotent without these greater conditions, and, once these are there, they are not indispensable.

In the end it will be found that this Yoga cannot be

carried through to its end by any effort of mind, life and body, any human psychological or physical process but only by the action of the supreme Shakti. But her way is at once too mysteriously direct and outwardly intricate, too great, too complete and subtle to be comprehensively followed, much more to be cut out and defined into a formula by our human intelligence.

Man cannot by his own effort make himself more than man, but he can call down the divine Truth and its power to work in him. A descent of the Divine Nature can alone divinise the human receptacle. Self-surrender to a supreme transmuting Power is the key-word of the Yoga.

This divinisation of the nature of which we speak is a metamorphosis, not a mere growth into some kind of superhumanity, but a change from the falsehood of our ignorant nature into the truth of God-nature. The mental or vital demigod, the Asura, Rakshasa and Pishacha, – Titan, vital giant and demon, – are superhuman in the pitch and force and movement and in the make of their characteristic nature, but these are not divine and those not supremely divine, for they live in a greater mind power or life power only, but they do not live in the supreme Truth, and only the supreme Truth is divine. Only those who live in a supreme Truth consciousness and embody it are inwardly made or else remade in the Divine image.

The aim of supramental Yoga is to change into this supreme Truth-consciousness, but this truth is something beyond mind and this consciousness is far above the highest mind-consciousness. For truth of mind is always relative, uncertain and partial, but this greater Truth is peremptory

and whole. Truth of mind is a representation, always an inadequate, most often a misleading representation, and even when most accurate, only a reflection, Truth's shadow and not its body. Mind does not live in the Truth or possess but only seeks after it and grasps at best some threads from its robe; the supermind lives in Truth and [is] its native substance, form and expression; it has not to seek after it, but possesses it always automatically and is what it possesses. This is the very heart of the difference.

The change that is effected by the transition from mind to supermind is not only a revolution in knowledge or in our power for knowledge. If it is [to] be complete and stable, it must be a divine transmutation of our will too, our emotions, our sensations, all our power of life and its forces, in the end even of the very substance and functioning of our body. Then only can it be said that the supermind is there upon earth, rooted in its very earth-substance and embodied in a new race of divinised creatures.

Supermind at its highest reach is the divine Gnosis, the Wisdom-Power-Light-Bliss of God by which the Divine knows and upholds and governs and enjoys the universe[.]” (364-66)

“The first word of the supramental Yoga is surrender; its last word also is surrender. It is by a will to give oneself to the eternal Divine, for lifting into the divine consciousness, for perfection, for transformation, that the Yoga begins; it is in the entire giving that it culminates; for it is only when the self-giving is complete that there comes the finality of the Yoga, the entire taking up into the supramental Divine, the perfection of the being, the transformation of the nature.” (367)

5. The Yoga of Transformation – the Psychic

“I mean by the psychic the inmost soul-being and the soul nature. This is not the sense in which the word is used in ordinary parlance, or rather, if it is so used, it is with great vagueness and much misprision of the true nature of this soul and it is given a wide extension of meaning which carries it far beyond that province. All phenomena of an abnormal or supernormal psychological or an occult character are dubbed psychic; if a man has a double personality changing from one to another, if an apparition of a dying man, something of his mere vital sheath or else a thought-form of him, appears and stalks through the room of his wondering friend, if a poltergeist kicks up an unseemly row in a house, all that is classed under psychic phenomena and regarded as a fit object for psychic research, though these things have nothing whatever to do with the psyche. Again much in Yoga itself that is merely occult, phenomena of the unseen vital or mental or subtle physical planes, visions, symbols, all that mixed, often perturbed, often shadowy, often illusory range of experiences which belong to this intervening country between the soul and its superficial instruments or rather to its outermost fringes, all the chaos of the intermediate zone, is summed up as psychic and considered as an inferior and dubious province of spiritual discovery. Again there is a constant confusion between the mentalised desire-soul which is a creation of the vital urge in man, of his life-force seeking for its fulfilment and the true soul which is a spark of the Divine Fire, a portion of the Divine. Because the soul, the psychic being uses the mind and the vital as well as the body as instruments for growth and experience it is itself looked at as if it were some amalgam

or some subtle substratum of mind and life. But in Yoga if we accept all this chaotic mass as soul-stuff or soul-movement we shall enter into a confusion without an issue. All that belongs only to the coverings of the soul; the soul itself is an inner divinity greater than mind or life or body. It is something that once it is released from obscurity by its instruments at once creates a direct contact with the Divine and with the self and spirit.” (368-69)

“Yoga is not only a discovery of our concealed spiritual status but a dynamic spiritual self-creation; a triple transformation is the heart of its process and the revelation of its entire significance.

Its first step is the unveiling of the soul; for there [is a] secret psychic being, a divine element in our depths that is concealed even more than garbed by the mind, body and life. To bring it out of its seclusion where it lives like a spiritual king without apparent power served and replaced by its ministers, so that it may take over the whole active government of the nature is the first great unfolding, the initial potent self-discovery of the Yoga. Mind the thinker is the prime minister in us who covers the king, but mind too is dominated and led by the vital powers, the strong and violent of the realm, who force it to serve their purpose and these too can only act with the means given them by the body and physical nature, the inert hardly conscious subject existence whose passive assent and docile instrumentation is yet indispensable to its rulers. This is our present constitution and it amounts to no more than a sort of organised confusion, a feudal order that is an ignorant half anarchy and cannot make the most of the possibilities and resources even of the limited tract of

nature which we inhabit, much less reveal to us and exploit our spiritual empire. To reinstate the king-soul is the first step in a needed revolution – the soul directing the mind will exercise through it its sovereign power over the powers of life and subject to them in their turn an enlightened and psychically consenting body. But this is not all; for soul-discovery is not complete without a psychic new creation of the mental, vital and physical instrumentation of nature. The mind will be recast by the soul's intuition of Truth, the vital being by its perception of power and good, the body and whole nature by its command for light, harmony and beauty. Our nature will become that of a true psychic entity, not a brute creation unified by a precarious life and illumined by the candlelight of a struggling intelligence.” (369-70)

“The boon that we have asked from the Supreme is the greatest that the earth can ask from the Highest, the change that is most difficult to realise, the most exacting in its conditions. It is nothing less than the descent of the supreme Truth and Power into Matter, the supramental established in the material plane and consciousness and the material world and an integral transformation down to the very principle of Matter. Only a supreme Grace can effect this miracle.

The supreme Power has descended into the most material consciousness but it has stood there behind the density of the physical veil demanding before manifestation, before its great open workings can begin, that the conditions of the supreme Grace shall be there, real and effective. And the first condition is that the Truth shall be accepted within you entirely and without reserve before it can be manifested in the material being and Nature.

A total surrender, an exclusive self-opening to the divine influence, a constant and integral choice of the Truth and rejection of the falsehood, these are the only conditions made. But these must be fulfilled entirely, without reserve, without any evasion or pretence, simply and sincerely down to the most physical consciousness and its workings[.]” (372-73)

“Two things are needed if thou wouldst follow the steep and difficult way of Yoga, the need and will within thee and the call of the Spirit.

The need is the need of the soul, awakened or awaking or striving to come to the surface. For all other may be transitory or false; but the soul’s need is lasting and true.

Thy soul's need of divine light and the spirit’s perfection can alone bear thee across the darkness of the many nights through which thou must pass, beyond the open or hidden pitfalls of the road, past the dangers of the precipice and the morass, through the battle with giant forces and the clutching of hands that mislead and the delusions of the night and the twilight, through false light and illusive glamour, triumphant over the blows and ordeals and nets and temptations of the gods and on and up to the immeasurable summits[.]” (373)

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