The Real Awakener



The Light of lights

Words of Sri Aurobindo – 22

24th November, 2020

Volume 19 **Issue 1**

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"It is an hour not yet of accomplishment, but of travail and inception. What will be born of this dim travail, these shapeless or half-shaped beginnings, is no doubt already decided in the secret spirit of the age and in the subconscient mind of the people. Behind the waverings and strivings of our twilit surface minds the soul of India knows no doubt what it intends and is moving us to great fulfilments. But it is well also for us to ponder and inquire what it is the national soul and the soul of humanity demand from us and on what paths we are most likely to give our energies and efforts the maximum power and serviceableness to the great age of mankind and of India on which we are entering."

– Sri Aurobindo

(CWSA 12: 399)

Essays Divine and Human (CWSA 12)

I. Notes and Fragments on Various Subjects*

1. The Human Being in Time*

*a. The Marbles of Time**

"Institutions, empires, civilisations are the marbles of Time. Time, sitting in his banqueting hall of the Ages, where prophets and kings are the spice of his banquet, drinking the red wine of life and death, while on the marble floor at his feet are strewn like flowers the images of the same stars that shone on the pride of Nahusha, the tapasya of Dhruv and the splendours of Yayati, that saw Tiglath-Pileser, Sennacherib and the Egyptian Pharaohs, Pompey's head hewn off on the sands of Egypt and Caesar bleeding at Pompey's sculptured feet, Napoleon's mighty legions thundering victorious at the bidding of that god of war on the field of Austerlitz and Napoleon's panic legions fleeing disordered with pursuit and butchery behind them from that last field of Waterloo, – Time, the Kala Purusha, drunk with the fumes of death and the tears and laughter of mortals, sits and plays there with his marbles. There are marbles there of all kinds, marbles of all colours, and some are dull and grey, some glorious with hearts of many colours, some white and pure as a dove's wings, – but he plays with them all equally and equally he thrusts them all away when he has done with them. Sometimes even, in his

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

drunkenness, he hurls them out of his window or lifts his mace and deals blows here and there smashing into fragments the bright and brittle globes, and he laughs as they smash and crumble. So Time, the god, sits and plays for ever with his marbles." (379)

*b. A Theory of the Human Being**

"It is a superstition of modern thought that the march of knowledge has in all its parts progressed always in a line of forward progress deviating from it, no doubt, in certain periods of obscuration, but always returning and in the sum constituting everywhere an advance and nowhere a retrogression. Like all superstitions this belief is founded on bad and imperfect observation flowering into a logical fallacy. Our observation is necessarily imperfect because we have at our disposal the historical data and literary records of only a few millenniums and beyond only disjected and insufficient indices which leave gigantic room for the hardly-fettered activity of the mind's two chief helpers and misleaders, inference and conjecture. Our observation is bad because, prepossessed by the fixed idea of a brief & recent emergence from immemorial barbarism, imagining Plato to have blossomed in a few centuries out of a stock only a little more advanced than the South Sea islander, we refuse to seek in the records that still remain of a lost superior knowledge their natural and coherent significance; we twist them rather into the image of our own thoughts or confine them within the still narrow limits of what we ourselves know and understand.

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

The logical fallacy we land in as the goal of our bad observation is the erroneous conception that because we are more advanced than certain ancient peoples in our own especial lines of success, as the physical sciences, therefore necessarily we are also more advanced in other lines where we are still infants and have only recently begun to observe and experiment, as the science of psychology and the knowledge of our subjective existence and of mental forces. Hence we have developed the exact contrary of the old superstition that the movement of man is always backward to retrogression. While our forefathers believed that the more ancient might on the whole be trusted as more authoritative, because nearer to the gods, and the less ancient less authoritative because nearer to man's ultimate degeneracy, we believe on the contrary that the more ancient is always on the whole more untrue because nearer to the unlettered and unenquiring savage, the more modern the more true because held as opinion by the lettered and instructed citizen of Paris or Berlin. Neither position can be accepted. Verification by experience & experiment is the only standard of truth, not antiquity, not modernity. Some of the ideas of the ancients or even of the savage now scouted by us may be lost truths or statements of valid experience from which we have turned or become oblivious; many of the notions of the modern schoolmen will certainly in the future be scouted as erroneous and superstitious.

Among the ancient documents held by the ancients to be deep mines of profound and fertile truth but to us forgetful and blind of their meaning the Veda & Upanishads rank among the very highest." (380-381)

2. The East and the West*

*a. A Misunderstanding of Continents**

"The peculiar and striking opposition of thought, temperament, culture and manners between Asia and Europe has been a commonplace of observation and criticism since the times when Herodotus noted in his history the objection of both men and women to be seen naked as a curious and amusing trait of Asiatic barbarism. Much water has flown under the bridges since Herodotus wrote and in this respect Asia seems not only to have infected Europe with this "barbaric" trait of manners, but to have been far outstripped by her pupil in the development of sartorial superfluities. Excessive wealth and gorgeous splendour was also quoted as a characteristic of Asiatic barbarism from the time of the classical poets. Europe has seen to it that this charge shall only apply now in a very minimum quantity to the eastern continent. Asia now stands, not only by choice of her ascetics, but by economic compulsion for the simple life, and the ostentation of wealth which was once depreciated as a sign of oriental barbarism now parades itself, much vulgarised, at least to our barbaric eastern notion of aesthetics as the splendid face of occidental civilisation. But if circumstances have changed, the essential opposition abides; East is still East in its soul and West is still West and the misunderstanding of continents still flourishes, not only in the minds of politicians and "statesmen", – where one would naturally expect to find it, since it is there that vulgar prejudices, half-truths, whole untruths and unintelligent commonplaces assume their most solemn and sententious form, coin themselves into glittering phrases or flow in rhetorical periods, – but in the minds too

of critics, poets and leading intellectuals. Faced with this continued misunderstanding, one is obliged to ask whether it is really incurable, an antinomy on which Nature is resolved to insist until the end of this cycle." (389)

"For my part I hold that all antinomies and opposed powers in this world of contradictions would be much better for an attempt to understand each other's souls and find their meeting point, would find something helpful not only to tone down their own exaggerations, but to fill in and round themselves without losing what is essential to their own spirit." (390)

*b. Towards Unification**

"The progress of distance-bridging inventions, our modern facility for the multiplication of books and their copies and the increase of human curiosity are rapidly converting humanity into a single intellectual unit with a common fund of knowledge and ideas and a unified culture. The process is far from complete, but the broad lines of the plan laid down by the great Artificer of things already begin to appear. For a time this unification was applied to Europe only. Asia had its own triune civilisation, predominatingly spiritual, complex and meditative in India, predominatingly vital, emotional, active and simplistic in the regions of the Hindu Kush and Mesopotamia, predominatingly intellectual, mechanical and organised in the Mongolian empires. East, West and South had their widely separate spirit and traditions, but one basis of spirituality, common tendencies and such commerce of art, ideas and information as the difficulties of communication allowed, preserved the fundamental unity of

Asia. East & West only met at their portals, in war oftener than in peace and through that shock and contact influenced but did not mingle with each other. It was the discovery of Indian philosophy and poetry which broke down the barrier. For the first time Europe discovered something in the East which she could study not only with the curiosity which she gave to Semitic and Mongolian ideas and origins, but with sympathy and even with some feeling of identity. This metaphysics, these epics and dramas, this formulated jurisprudence and complex society had methods and a form which, in spite of their diversity from her own, yet presented strong points of contact; she could recognise them, to a certain extent she thought she could understand. The speculativeness of the German, the lucidity of the Gaul, the imagination and aesthetic emotionalism of the British Celt found something to interest them, something even to assist. In the teachings of Buddha, the speculation of Shankara, the poetry of Kalidasa their souls could find pasture and refreshment. The alien form and spirit of Japanese and Arabian poetry and of Chinese philosophy which prevented such an approximation with the rest of Asia, was not here to interfere with the comprehension of the human soul & substance. There was indeed a single exception which remarkably illustrates the difficulty of which I speak. The art of India contradicted European notions too vitally to be admitted into the European consciousness; its charm and power were concealed by the uncouthness to Western eyes of its form and the strangeness of its motives and it is only now, after the greatest of living art-critics in England had published sympathetic appreciations of Indian art and energetic propagandists like Mr. Havell had persevered in their labour, that the European vision is opening

to the secret of Indian painting & sculpture." (391-392)

"Asiatic civilisation has entered into Europe as definitely though not so victoriously as European civilisation into Asia. It is only the beginning, but so was it only the beginning when a few scholars alone rejoiced in the clarity of Buddhistic Nihilism, Schopenhauer rested his soul on the Upanishads and Emerson steeped himself in the Gita. No one could have imagined then that a Hindu monk would make converts in London and Chicago or that a Vedantic temple would be built in San Francisco and Anglo-Saxon Islamites erect a Musulman mosque in Liverpool." (392)

"How significant is this fact when we remember that these are the two powers, Europe & Asia, the victorious intellect and the insurgent spirit, which are rising at this moment to do battle for the mastery of the unified world. Nevertheless it is not the public library reader, that man in the street of the literary world, but the increasing circle of men of culture and a various curiosity through whom the Orient & the Occident must first meet in a common humanity and the day dawn when some knowledge of the substance of [the] Upanishads will be as necessary to an universal culture as a knowledge of the substance of the Bible, Shankara's theories as familiar as the speculations of Teutonic thinkers and Kalidasa, Valmekie & Vyasa as near and common to the subject matter of the European critical intellect as Dante or Homer.

It is the difficulties of presentation that prevent a more rapid and complete commingling." (393)

*c. China, Japan and India**

"It is significant of the tendencies of the twentieth century

that all its great and typical events should have occurred no longer as in the last few centuries in Europe, but in Asia. The Russo-Japanese war, the Chinese Revolution, the constitutional changes in Turkey & Persia and last but most momentous the revival however indeterminate as yet of the soul of India, are the really significant events of the young century. In Europe except in its one Asiatic corner there has been no event of corresponding magnitude & importance. The abortive orgy of revolutionary fury in Russia, the growth of enormous strikes, the failure of the peace movement, the increase of legislation stamped with the pressure of a materialistic Socialism, although they may hold in themselves germs of greater things, are so far mere indistinct material symptoms of disorganisation & a disease vainly doctored with palliatives, not events of a definite movement of new birth & regeneration. The importance of this new tendency lies in the fact that great events in Europe, even when they are outwardly spiritual, have usually an intellectual or social trend & significance, but great events in Asia have even when they are outwardly intellectual, social or political a spiritual significance. Therefore when Asia once more becomes the theatre of the world's chief events, it is a sure sign that some great spiritual revolution, perhaps a great age of spirituality is preparing for humanity." (394)

II. India*

1. Renascent India*

"Everybody can feel, even without any need of a special sense for the hidden forces and tendencies concealed in the apparent march of things, for the signs are already apparent, that India is on the verge, in some directions already in the first movements of a great renascence, more momentous, more instinct with great changes and results, than anything that has gone before it. Every new awakening of the kind comes by some impact slight or great on the national consciousness which puts it in face of new ideas, new conditions, new needs, the necessity of re-adaptation to a changing environment. The spirit of the nation has to take account of its powers and possibilities and is stirred by a will to new formation and new creation." (397)

"And the question arises what in the great play of modification and interchange around us are we going to take from the world around us, how are we going to shape [it] in the stress of our own spirit and past traditions, and what are we going to bring out of ourselves and impress upon the world in exchange? In what new forms is the spirit of India going to embody itself and what relations will its new creations have with the future of the world?" (397)

2. Where We Stand in Literature*

"Where we stand, not only in literature, but in all things, is at or near a great turning point in which the thoughts and forms of East and West, both in an immense ferment of change, are working upon each other to produce something

great, unforeseeable and unprecedented. From the less worldwide viewpoint which most nearly concerns us in this country, we may say, that we find ourselves in a great hour of rebirth of the ancient soul of India. The momentous issues of this hour are producing their inevitable upheaval, change and effort at creation in the whole national life, politics, society, economical conditions, industry, commerce, as well as and more noisily than in literature. But it is perhaps in art, literature and science that the future will see what was most definitive in the creations of the present hour, the most significant thing in the Indian renascence; for these things reveal most freely the spirit which is coming to birth; they have found their field, discovered their motive; the rest is still only a primary effort to escape out of unnatural conditions; the field has there yet to be made clear, before the struggling spiritual motive can make itself dominant and create its appropriate forms. Especially, is the movement of literature most revelatory; for while music and art reveal perhaps more absolutely the soul of a nation, literature is the whole expression of its mind and psychology, – not only of what it is in action, or what it is in essence, but its thought, character and aspiration." (398)

"**It is an hour not yet of accomplishment, but of travail and inception. What will be born of this dim travail, these shapeless or half-shaped beginnings, is no doubt already decided in the secret spirit of the age and in the subconscient mind of the people. Behind the waverings and strivings of our twilit surface minds the soul of India knows no doubt what it intends and is**

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moving us to great fulfilments. But it is well also for us to ponder and inquire what it is the national soul and the soul of humanity demand from us and on what paths we are most likely to give our energies and efforts the maximum power and serviceableness to the great age of mankind and of India on which we are entering. For at such a moment there are usually many false starts and many misdirected aims and by seeing our way and our goal more clearly we may better be able to avoid the waste of energy, talent and even genius to which they give rise." (399)

III. Genius, Poetry, Beauty*

1. The Origin of Genius*

"When the human being puts forth a force in himself which is considerable but acts normally, we call it talent; when it is abnormal in its working we call it genius. It would seem, therefore, that genius is in reality some imperfect step in evolution by which mankind in its most vigorous and forward individuals is attempting to develop a faculty which the race as a whole is not strong enough as yet to command or to acclimatise. As always happens in such a movement, there is a considerable irregularity in the working of the new phenomenon. Sometimes Nature seems to prepare by heredity for these its new experiments & fine flowers of humanity[.]" (403)

2. Poetic Genius*

"The greatest poets are usually those who arise either out of a large simple and puissant environment or out of a movement of mind that is grandiose, forceful & elemental. When man becomes excessively refined in intellect, curious in aesthetic sensibility or minute & exact in intellectual reasoning, it becomes more & more difficult to write great and powerful poetry. Ages of accomplished intellectuality & scholarship or of strong scientific rationality are not favourable to the birth of great poets or, if they are born, not favourable to the free & untrammelled action of their gifts. They remain great, but their greatness bends under a load; there is a lack of triumphant spontaneity and they do not draw as freely or directly from the sources of human action

& character. An untameable elemental force is needed to overcome more than partially the denials of the environment. For poetry, even though it appeals in passing to the intellect & aesthetic sense, does not proceed from them but is in its nature an elemental power proceeding from the secret & elemental Power within which sees directly & creates sovereignly, & it passes at once to our vital & elemental parts. Intellect and the aesthetic faculties are necessary to the perfection of our critical enjoyment; but they were only assistants, not the direct agents of this divine birth." (404)

3. The Voice of the Poets*

"We whose souls are drying up in this hard and parched age of utilitarian and scientific thought when men value little beyond what gives them exact and useful knowledge or leads them to some outward increase of power & pleasure, we who are beginning to neglect & ignore poetry and can no longer write it greatly & well, – just as we have forgotten how to sculpture like the Greeks, paint like the mediaeval Italians or build like the Buddhists, – are apt to forget this grand utility of the poets, one noble faculty among their many divine and unusual powers. The kavi or vates, poet & seer, is not the manishi; he is not [the] logical thinker, scientific analyser or metaphysical reasoner; his knowledge is one not with his thought, but with his being; he has not arrived at it but has it in himself by virtue of his power to become one with all that is around him. By some form of spiritual, vital and emotional oneness, he is what he sees; he is the hero thundering in the forefront of the battle, the mother weeping over her dead, the tree trembling violently in the storm, the flower warmly penetrated with the sunshine. And because he is these things,

therefore he knows them; because he knows thus, spiritually & not rationally, he can write of them. He feels their delight & pain, he shares their virtue & sin, he enjoys their reward or bears their punishment. It is for this reason that poetry written out of the intellect is so inferior to poetry written out of the soul, is, – even as poetical thinking, – so inferior to the thought that comes formed by inscrutable means out of the soul. For this reason, too, poets of otherwise great faculty, have failed to give us living men and women or really to show to our inner vision even the things of which they write eloquently or sweetly, because they are content to write about them after having seen them with the mind only, and have not been able or have not taken care first to be the things of which they would write and then not so much write about them as let them pour themselves out in speech that is an image of the soul. They have been too easily attracted by the materials of poetry, artha & shabda; drawn by some power & charm in the substance of speech, captivated by some melody, harmony or colour in the form of speech, arrested by some strong personal emotion which clutches at expression or gropes for expression in these externals of poetry they have forgotten to bathe in the Muse's deepest springs.

Therefore among those ancient voices, even when the literature of the ages has been winnowed & chosen by Time, there are very few who recreate for us in poetic speech deeply & mightily the dead past, because they were that past, not so much themselves as the age & nation in which they lived and not so much even the age and nation as that universal humanity which in spite of all differences, under them and within them, even expressing its unity through them is the same in every

nation and in every age. Others give us only fragments of thought or outbursts of feeling or reveal to us scattered incidents of sight, sound and outward happening. These are complete, vast, multitudinous, infinite in a way, impersonal & many-personed in their very personality, not divine workmen merely but true creators endowed by God with something of His divine power and offering therefore in their works some image of His creative activity." (405-406)

4. Pensées*

"God has a personality but no character; He is as we say in our Eastern thought, Anantaguna, of an infinite variation of qualities without fixed limitation or rigid distinction and incompatibility. His superhuman cruelty melts into and harmonises with His ineffable pity; His fierce enmity is one mask of His intensest love. For, being alone existent, He is irresponsible and the harmonies He creates, are the figment of His own plastic will and governed by laws of aesthetics determined in His own unfettered but infallible fantasy. Out of His infinite personality He creates all these characters & their inevitable actions & destinies. So it is with every divine creator, – with Homer, Shakespeare, Valmiki, Kalidasa. It is perfectly true that each has his own style of language & creation, his own preferred system or harmony of the poetic Art, just as the creator of this universe has fashioned it in a particular style & rhythm & on certain preferred & fixed canons, differing from that of the other universes He may have built in His infinite Being. But within that style & harmony they are not bound by any fixed personality. It is rather the infinite they express though through their personality, than

their personality through their works. The writers who are limited by their personality may be among the fine artists of literature; they cannot be among the greatest creators; for to the creator freedom & infinity are necessary attributes. It is the infinite alone that can create; the finite can only manufacture, reproduce or at the most bring out a fine art & craftsmanship. Among all the Elizabethan dramatists Shakespeare alone has produced living men; the rest are only admirable, trivial or monstrous sketches, caricatures or images of men." (407)

5. A Dream*

"This is the story of a dream that often came & always fled, a dream that continued by snatches and glimpses through a succession of nights, at intervals of weeks, the mind returning again and again to the unfinished vision, the imagination and intuition filling in the gaps & interstices of a half told tale. Visions of waters blue in an immortal sunlight or grey in the drifting of a magic welter of cloud & rain, rocks swept by the surf and whistling in their hollows with the wind, island meadows & glades many pictured above the sea, rivers and haze-purpled hills, a scene of unimaginable beauty where forms moved that had not lost the pristine beauty of man before the clutch stiffened on him of early decay & death, of grief and old age, where hearts beat that had not lost the pulsations of our ancient immortality and were not yet attuned to the broken rhythms of pain & grief. The impression of such an atmosphere & background remains which the linking of ineffective details & the effort of words which are laden with the thoughts of an afflicted and oppressed humanity,

strive vainly to restore. For those colours we have lost. When we speak of brightness, it is a subdued brilliance that is the utmost our imaginations can conceive; we mean only a broken hint of rapture when we talk even most eagerly of enjoyment & bliss." (409)

6. The Beauty of a Crow's Wings

"It is not only that the sable blackness of the crow's wings has in it wonderful shades of green and violet and purple which show themselves under certain stresses of sunlight, but that the black itself, sable of wing or dingy of back & breast has itself a beauty which our prejudiced habits of mind obscure to us. Under its darkness, we see, too, a glint of dingy white." (410)

IV. Science, Religion, Justice

1. Claim of Reign of Science

"We live under the reign of Science, a reign which from the mouth of its hierophants claims to be a tyranny or at least an absolute monarchy. It makes this claim by right of the great things it has done, of the immense utilities with which it has served, helped, strengthened, liberated, mankind, right knowledge of the world, an increasing and already fabulous mastery of Nature, a clear and free intellectual vision of things and masterful dealing with them, liberation from the fetters of ignorance, from blind subjection to authority, from unquestioning political, social, religious and cultural tradition with all their hindrance and their evil." (413)

2. Inescapable Law of Evolution even in Religious Spirit

"In a word, the religious tendency, the religious spirit in man does not escape from the law of evolution that governs the other parts of his complex psychological nature. Even though its very reason of existence is the inner sense of a soul and spirit within and around us and the search for spiritual truth and experience, that must be in their very nature a suprarational truth and experience, it begins like the rest with an infrarational instinct, an infrarational formulation, falls under the influence of the reasoning mind and only at its [sentence not completed]" (414)

3. What is Justice

"Justice, one says; but what is Justice? Plato's question

applies to this as to every other sacred icon set up by men for their worship.

Justice for each man is what his own type of mind accepts as right and proper and equitable as between men and men. Or, it might be added, between the community and its constituents, the State and its citizens." (418)

V. Thoughts and Aphorisms*

1. Jnana*

"1. There are two allied powers in man; knowledge & wisdom. Knowledge is so much of the truth seen in a distorted medium as the mind arrives at by groping, wisdom what the eye of divine vision sees in the spirit.

2. Inspiration is a slender river of brightness leaping from a vast & eternal knowledge, it exceeds reason more perfectly than reason exceeds the knowledge of the senses.

3. When I speak, the reason says, "This will I say"; but God takes the word out of my mouth and the lips say something else at which reason trembles.

4. I am not a Jnani, for I have no knowledge except what God gives me for His work. How am I to know whether what I see be reason or folly? Nay, it is neither; for the thing seen is simply true & neither folly nor reason.

5. **If mankind could but see though in a glimpse of fleeting experience what infinite enjoyments, what perfect forces, what luminous reaches of spontaneous knowledge, what wide calms of our being lie waiting for us in the tracts which our animal evolution has not yet conquered, they would leave all & never rest till they had gained these treasures. But the way is narrow, the doors are hard to force, and fear, distrust & scepticism are there, sentinels of Nature, to forbid the turning away of our feet from her ordinary pastures.**

6. Late, I learned that when reason died, then Wisdom was born; before that liberation, I had only knowledge.

7. What men call knowledge, is the reasoned acceptance of false appearances. Wisdom looks behind the veil and sees.

8. Reason divides, fixes details & contrasts them; Wisdom unifies, marries contrasts in a single harmony." (423-424)

"10. What the soul sees and has experienced, that it knows; the rest is appearance, prejudice and opinion." (424)

"13. They proved to me by convincing reasons that God did not exist, and I believed them. Afterwards I saw God, for He came and embraced me. And now which am I to believe, the reasonings of others or my own experience?

14. They told me, "These things are hallucinations." I inquired what was a hallucination and found that it meant a subjective or a psychical experience which corresponds to no objective or no physical reality. Then I sat and wondered at the miracles of the human reason.

15. Hallucination is the term of Science for those irregular glimpses we still have of truths shut out from us by our preoccupation with matter; coincidence for the curious touches of artistry in the work of that supreme & universal Intelligence which in its conscious being as on a canvas has planned & executed the world.

16. That which men term a hallucination is the reflection in the mind & senses of that which is beyond our ordinary mental & sensory perceptions. Superstition arises from the mind's wrong understanding of these reflections. There is no other hallucination." (424-425)

"18. Someone was laying it down that God must be this or that or He would not be God. But it seemed to me that I can only know what God is and I do not see how I can tell

Him what He ought to be. For what is the standard by which we can judge Him? These judgments are the follies of our egoism.

19. Chance is not in this universe; the idea of illusion is itself an illusion. There was never illusion yet in the human mind that was not the concealing [?shape] and disfigurement of a truth.

20. When I had the dividing reason, I shrank from many things; after I had lost it in sight, I hunted through the world for the ugly and the repellent, but I could no longer find them.

21. God had opened my eyes; for I saw the nobility of the vulgar, the attractiveness of the repellent, the perfection of the maimed and the beauty of the hideous." (425)

"25. When I pine at misfortune and call it evil, or am jealous and disappointed, then I know that there is awake in me again the eternal fool." (426)

"27. Sir Philip Sidney said of the criminal led out to be hanged, "There, but for the grace of God, goes Sir Philip Sidney." Wiser, had he said, "There, by the grace of God, goes Sir Philip Sidney."

28. God is a great & cruel Torturer because He loves. You do not understand this, because you have not seen & played with Krishna.

29. One called Napoleon a tyrant and imperial cut-throat; but I saw God armed striding through Europe.

30. I have forgotten what vice is and what virtue; I can only see God, His play in the world and His will in humanity.

31. I saw a child wallowing in the dirt and the same child cleaned by his mother and resplendent, but each time I

trembled before his utter purity.

32. What I wished or thought to be the right thing, does not come about; therefore it is clear that there is no All Wise one who guides the world but only blind Chance or a brute Causality.

33. The Atheist is God playing at hide & seek with Himself; but is the Theist any other? Well, perhaps; for he has seen the shadow of God and clutched at it." (426-427)

"35. O Misfortune, blessed be thou; for through thee I have seen the face of my Lover." (427)

"37. Men are in love with sin; when they see one who is too high for vice or virtue, they curse him & cry, "O thou breaker of bonds, thou wicked and immoral one!" Therefore Srikrishna does not live as yet in Brindavun.

38. **Some say Krishna never lived, he is a myth. They mean on earth; for if Brindavun existed nowhere, the Bhagwat could not have been written.**

39. Strange! the Germans have disproved the existence of Christ; yet his crucifixion remains still a greater historic fact than the death of Caesar.

40. Sometimes one is led to think that only those things really matter which have never happened; for beside them most historic achievements seem almost pale and ineffective.

41. **There are four very great events in history, the siege of Troy, the life and crucifixion of Christ, the exile of Krishna in Brindavun and the colloquy with Arjuna on the field of Kurukshetra. The siege of Troy created Hellas, the exile in Brindavun created devotional religion, (for before there was only meditation and worship,)**

Christ from his cross humanised Europe, the colloquy at Kurukshetra will yet liberate humanity. Yet it is said that none of these four events ever happened.

42. They say that the Gospels are forgeries and Krishna a creation of the poets. Thank God then for the forgeries and bow down before the creators.

43. If God assigns to me my place in Hell, I do not know why I should aspire to Heaven. He knows best what is for my welfare." (427-428)

"45. Only those thoughts are true the opposite of which is also true in its own time and application; indisputable dogmas are the most dangerous kind of falsehoods.

46. Logic is the worst enemy of Truth, as self-righteousness is the worst enemy of virtue, – for the one cannot see its own errors nor the other its own imperfections.

47. When I was asleep in the Ignorance, I came to a place of meditation full of holy men and I found their company wearisome and the place a prison; when I awoke, God took me to a prison and turned it into a place of meditation and His trysting-ground.

48. When I read a wearisome book through and with pleasure, yet perceived all the perfection of its wearisomeness, then I knew that my mind was conquered.

49. I knew my mind to be conquered when it admired the beauty of the hideous, yet felt perfectly why other men shrank back or hated.

50. To feel & love the God of beauty and good in the ugly and the evil, and still yearn in utter love to heal it of its ugliness and its evil, this is real virtue and morality.

51. To hate the sinner is the worst sin, for it is hating God; yet he who commits it, glories in his superior virtue.

52. When I hear of a righteous wrath, I wonder at man's capacity for self-deception." (428-429)

"54. The quarrels of religious sects are like the disputing of pots, which shall be alone allowed to hold the immortalising nectar. Let them dispute, but the thing for us is to get at the nectar in whatever pot and attain immortality." (429)

"56. **Be wide in me, O Varuna; be mighty in me, O Indra; O Sun, be very bright and luminous; O Moon, be full of charm and sweetness. Be fierce and terrible, O Rudra; be impetuous and swift, O Maruts; be strong and bold, O Aryama; be voluptuous and pleasurable, O Bhaga; be tender and kind and loving and passionate, O Mitra. Be bright and revealing, O Dawn; O Night, be solemn and pregnant. O Life, be full, ready & buoyant; O Death, lead my steps from mansion to mansion. Harmonise all these, O Brahmanaspati. Let me not be subject to these gods, O Kali.**

57. When, O eager disputant, thou hast prevailed in a debate, then art thou greatly to be pitied; for thou hast lost a chance of widening knowledge.

58. Because the tiger acts according to his nature and knows not anything else, therefore he is divine and there is no evil in him. If he questioned himself, then he would be a criminal." (429)

"60. One of the greatest comforts of religion is that you can get hold of God sometimes and give him a satisfactory beating. People mock at the folly of savages who beat their

gods when their prayers are not answered; but it is the mockers who are the fools and the savages.

61. There is no mortality. It is only the Immortal who can die; the mortal could neither be born nor perish. There is nothing finite. It is only the Infinite who can make for Himself limits; the finite can have no beginning nor end, for the very act of conceiving its beginning & end declares its infinity." (430)

"63. God is great, says the Mahomedan. Yes, He is so great that He can afford to be weak, whenever that too is necessary.

64. God often fails in His workings; it is the sign of His illimitable godhead.

65. **Because God is invincibly great, He can afford to be weak; because He is immutably pure, He can indulge with impunity in sin; He knows eternally all delight, therefore He tastes also the delight of pain; He is inalienably wise, therefore He has not debarred Himself from folly.**

66. Sin is that which was once in its place, persisting now it is out of place; there is no other sinfulness." (430)

"68. The sense of sin was necessary in order that man might become disgusted with his own imperfections. It was God's corrective for egoism. But man's egoism meets God's device by being very dully alive to its own sins and very keenly alive to the sins of others.

69. Sin & virtue are a game of resistance we play with God in His efforts to draw us towards perfection. The sense of virtue helps us to cherish our sins in secret.

70. Examine thyself without pity, then thou wilt be more charitable and pitiful to others.

71. A thought is an arrow shot at the truth; it can hit a point, but not cover the whole target. But the archer is too well satisfied with his success to ask anything farther.

72. The sign of dawning Knowledge is to feel that as yet I know little or nothing, & yet, if I could only know my knowledge, I already possess everything.

73. When Wisdom comes, her first lesson is, "There is no such thing as knowledge; there are only apercus of the Infinite Deity."

74. Practical knowledge is a different thing; that is real and serviceable, but it is never complete. Therefore to systematise and codify it is necessary but fatal.

75. Systematise we must, but even in making & holding the system, we should always keep firm hold on this truth that all systems are in their nature transitory and incomplete.

76. Europe prides herself on her practical and scientific organisation and efficiency. I am waiting till her organisation is perfect; then a child shall destroy her." (430-431)

"78. When knowledge is fresh in us, then it is invincible; when it is old, it loses its virtue. This is because God moves always forward.

79. God is infinite Possibility. Therefore Truth is never at rest; therefore, also, Error is justified of her children." (432)

"82. If men took life less seriously, they could very soon make it more perfect. God never takes His works seriously; therefore one looks out on this wonderful Universe." (432)

"84. The supernatural is that the nature of which we have not attained or do not yet know, or the means of which we have not yet conquered. The common taste for miracles is the sign that man's ascent is not yet finished." (432)

85. It is rationality and prudence to distrust the supernatural; but to believe in it, is also a sort of wisdom." (432)

"87. Open thy eyes and see what the world really is and what God; have done with vain and pleasant imaginations.

88. This world was built by Death that he might live. Wilt thou abolish death? Then life too will perish. Thou canst not abolish death, but thou mayst transform it into a greater living.

89. This world was built by Cruelty that she might love. Wilt thou abolish cruelty? Then love too will perish. Thou canst not abolish cruelty, but thou mayst transfigure it into its opposite, into a fierce Love & Delightfulness.

90. This world was built by Ignorance & Error that they might know. Wilt thou abolish ignorance and error? Then knowledge too will perish. Thou canst not abolish ignorance & error, but thou mayst transmute them into the utter & effulgent exceeding of reason.

91. If Life alone were & not death, there could be no immortality; if love were alone & not cruelty, joy would be only a tepid & ephemeral rapture; if reason were alone & not ignorance, our highest attainment would not exceed a limited rationality & worldly wisdom.

92. Death transformed becomes Life that is Immortality; Cruelty transfigured becomes Love that is intolerable ecstasy;

Ignorance transmuted becomes Light that leaps beyond wisdom and knowledge.

93. Pain is the touch of our Mother teaching us how to bear and grow in rapture. She has three stages of her schooling, endurance first, next equality of soul, last ecstasy.

94. All renunciation is for a greater joy yet ungrasped. Some renounce for the joy of duty done, some for the joy of peace, some for the joy of God and some for the joy of self-torture, but renounce rather as a passage to the freedom and untroubled rapture beyond.

95. Only by perfect renunciation of desire or by perfect satisfaction of desire can the utter embrace of God be experienced; for in both ways the essential precondition is effected, – desire perishes.

96. Experience in thy soul the truth of the Scripture; afterwards, if thou wilt, reason & state thy experience intellectually & even then distrust thy statement; but distrust never thy experience.

97. When thou affirmest thy soul-experience & deniest the different soul-experience of another, know that God is making a fool of thee. Dost thou not hear His self-delighted laughter behind thy soul's curtains?

98. Revelation is the direct sight, the direct hearing or the inspired memory of Truth, drishti, sruti, smriti; it is the highest experience and always accessible to renewed experience. Not because God spoke it, but because the soul saw it, is the word of the Scriptures our supreme authority.

99. The word of Scripture is infallible; it is in the interpretation the heart and reason put upon the Scripture

that error has her portion.

100. Shun all lowness, narrowness & shallowness in religious thought & experience. Be wider than the widest horizons, be loftier than the highest Kanchenjunga, be profounder than the deepest oceans.

101. In God's sight there is no near or distant, no present, past or future. These things are only a convenient perspective for His world-picture.

102. **To the senses it is always true that the sun moves round the earth; this is false to the reason. To the reason it is always true that the earth moves round the sun; this is false to the supreme vision. Neither earth moves nor sun; there is only a change in the relation of sun-consciousness & earth-consciousness.**" (432-434)

"110. To see the composition of the sun or the lines of Mars is doubtless a great achievement; but when thou hast the instrument that can show thee a man's soul as thou seest a picture, then thou wilt smile at the wonders of physical Science as the playthings of babies.

111. Knowledge is a child with its achievements; for when it has found out something, it runs about the streets whooping and shouting; Wisdom conceals hers for a long time in a thoughtful and mighty silence.

112. Science talks and behaves as if it had conquered all knowledge: Wisdom, as she walks, hears her solitary tread echoing on the margin of immeasurable Oceans.

113. Hatred is the sign of a secret attraction that is eager to flee from itself and furious to deny its own existence. That too is God's play in His creature.

114. Selfishness is the only sin, meanness the only vice, hatred the only criminality. All else can easily be turned into good, but these are obstinate resisters of deity." (435-436)

"116. The beginning and end of things is a conventional term of our experience; in their true existence these terms have no reality, there is no end and no beginning.

117. "Neither is it that I was not before nor thou nor these kings nor that all we shall not be hereafter." Not only Brahman, but beings & things in Brahman are eternal; their creation and destruction is a play of hide and seek with our outward consciousness.

118. The love of solitude is a sign of the disposition towards knowledge; but knowledge itself is only achieved when we have a settled perception of solitude in the crowd, in the battle and in the mart.

119. If when thou art doing great actions and moving giant results, thou canst perceive that thou art doing nothing, then know that God has removed His seal from thy eyelids.

120. If when thou sittest alone, still & voiceless on the mountaintop, thou canst perceive the revolutions thou art conducting, then hast thou the divine vision and art freed from appearances.

121. The love of inaction is folly and the scorn of inaction is folly; there is no inaction. The stone lying inert upon the sands which is kicked away in an idle moment, has been producing its effect upon the hemispheres.

122. If thou wouldst not be the fool of Opinion, first see wherein thy thought is true, then study wherein its opposite and contradiction is true; last, discover the cause of these

differences and the key of God's harmony.

123. An opinion is neither true nor false, but only serviceable for life or unserviceable; for it is a creation of Time and with time it loses its effect and value. Rise thou above opinion and seek wisdom everlasting.

124. Use opinion for life, but let her not bind thy soul in her fetters.

125. **Every law, however embracing or tyrannous, meets somewhere a contrary law by which its operation can be checked, modified, annulled or eluded.**

126. The most binding Law of Nature is only a fixed process which the Lord of Nature has framed and uses constantly; the Spirit made it and the Spirit can exceed it, but we must first open the doors of our prison-house and learn to live less in Nature than in the Spirit.

127. Law is a process or a formula; but the soul is the user of processes and exceeds formulas.

128. Live according to Nature, runs the maxim of the West; but according to what nature, the nature of the body or the nature which exceeds the body? This first we ought to determine.

129. O son of Immortality, live not thou according to Nature, but according to God; and compel her also to live according to the deity within thee.

130. Fate is God's foreknowledge outside Space & Time of all that in Space & Time shall yet happen; what He has foreseen, Power & Necessity work out by the conflict of forces.

131. Because God has willed and foreseen everything, thou shouldst not therefore sit inactive and wait upon His providence, for thy action is one of His chief effective forces. Up then and be doing, not with egoism, but as the circumstance, instrument and apparent cause of the event that He has predetermined.

132. When I knew nothing, then I abhorred the criminal, sinful and impure, being myself full of crime, sin and impurity; but when I was cleansed and my eyes unsealed, then I bowed down in my spirit before the thief and the murderer and adored the feet of the harlot; for I saw that these souls had accepted the terrible burden of evil and drained for all of us the greater portion of the churned poison of the world-ocean.

133. The Titans are stronger than the gods because they have agreed with God to front and bear the burden of His wrath and enmity; the gods were able to accept only the pleasant burden of His love and kindlier rapture.

134. When thou art able to see how necessary is suffering to final delight, failure to utter effectiveness and retardation to the last rapidity, then thou mayst begin to understand something, however faintly and dimly, of God's workings.

135. All disease is a means towards some new joy of health, all evil & pain a tuning of Nature for some more intense bliss & good, all death an opening on widest immortality. Why and how this should be so, is God's secret which only the soul purified of egoism can penetrate.

136. Why is thy mind or thy body in pain? Because thy soul behind the veil wishes for the pain or takes delight in it; but if thou wilt – and perseverest in thy will – thou canst

impose the spirit's law of unmixed delight on thy lower members.

137. There is no iron or ineffugable law that a given contact shall create pain or pleasure; it is the way the soul meets the rush or pressure of Brahman upon the members from outside them that determines either reaction.

138. The force of soul in thee meeting the same force from outside cannot harmonise the measures of the contact in values of mind-experience & body-experience, therefore thou hast pain, grief or uneasiness. If thou canst learn to adjust the replies of the force in thyself to the questions of world-force, thou shalt find pain becoming pleasurable or turning into pure delightfulness. Right relation is the condition of blissfulness, ritam the key of ananda." (436-439)

"142. Be to the world as the lion in fearlessness and lordship, as the camel in patience and service, as the cow in quiet, forbearing & maternal beneficence. Raven on all the joys of God as a lion over its prey, but bring also all humanity into that infinite field of luxurious ecstasy to wallow there and to pasture.

143. **If Art's service is but to imitate Nature, then burn all the picture galleries and let us have instead photographic studios. It is because Art reveals what Nature hides, that a small picture is worth more than all the jewels of the millionaires and the treasures of the princes.**

144. If you only imitate visible Nature, you will perpetrate either a corpse, a dead sketch or a monstrosity; Truth lives in that which goes behind & beyond the visible & sensible.

145. O Poet, O Artist, if thou but holdest up the mirror to Nature, thinkest thou Nature will rejoice in thy work? Rather she will turn away her face. For what dost thou hold up to her there? Herself? No, but a lifeless outline & reflection, a shadowy mimicry. It is the secret soul of Nature thou hast to seize, thou hast to hunt eternally after the truth in the external symbol, and that no mirror will hold for thee, nor for her whom thou seekest.

146. I find in Shakespeare a far greater & more consistent universalist than the Greeks. All his creations are universal types from Lancelot Gobbo & his dog up to Lear & Hamlet." (440)

"148. Shakespeare, who invented the figure of holding up the mirror to Nature, was the one poet who never condescended to a copy, a photograph or a shadow. The reader who sees in Falstaff, Macbeth, Lear or Hamlet imitations of Nature, has either no inner eye of the soul or has been hypnotised by a formula." (441)

"150. There are two for whom there is hope, the man who has felt God's touch & been drawn to it and the sceptical seeker & self-convinced atheist; but for the formularists of all the religions & the parrots of free thought, they are dead souls who follow a death that they call living.

151. A man came to a scientist and wished to be instructed; this instructor showed him the revelations of the microscope & telescope, but the man laughed and said, "These are obviously hallucinations inflicted on the eye by the glass which you use as a medium; I will not believe till you show these wonders to my naked seeing." Then the scientist proved to him by many collateral facts & experiments the reliability

of his knowledge but the man laughed again & said, "What you term proofs, I term coincidences, the number of coincidences does not constitute proof; as for your experiments, they are obviously effected under abnormal conditions & constitute a sort of insanity of Nature." When confronted with the results of mathematics, he was angry & cried out, "This is obviously imposture, gibberish & superstition; will you try to make me believe that these absurd cabalistic figures have any real force & meaning?" Then the scientist drove him out as a hopeless imbecile; for he did not recognise his own system of denials and his own method of negative reasoning. If we wish to refuse an impartial & open-minded enquiry, we can always find the most respectable polysyllables to cover our refusal or impose tests & conditions which stultify the enquiry.

152. When our minds are involved in matter, they think matter the only reality; when we draw back into immaterial consciousness, then we see matter a mask and feel existence in consciousness alone as having the touch of reality. Which then of these two is the truth? Nay, God knoweth; but he who has had both experiences, can easily tell which condition is the more fertile in knowledge, the mightier & more blissful.

153. I believe immaterial consciousness to be truer than material consciousness? Because I know in the first what in the second is hidden from me & also can command what the mind knows in matter.

154. **Hell & Heaven exist only in the soul's consciousness. Ay, but so does the earth and its lands & seas & fields & deserts & mountains & rivers. All world is nothing but arrangement of the Soul's seeing.**

155. There is only one soul & one existence; therefore we all see one objectivity only; but there are many knots of mind & ego in the one soul-existence, therefore we all see the one Object in different lights & shadows." (441-442)

"157. Thus said Ramakrishna and thus said Vivekananda. Yes, but let me know also the truths which the Avatar cast not forth into speech and the prophet has omitted from his teachings. There will always be more in God than the thought of man has ever conceived or the tongue of man has ever uttered.

158. **What was Ramakrishna? God manifest in a human being; but behind there is God in His infinite impersonality and His universal Personality. And what was Vivekananda? A radiant glance from the eye of Shiva; but behind him is the divine gaze from which he came and Shiva himself and Brahma and Vishnu and OM all-exceeding.**

159. He who recognises not Krishna, the God in man, knows not God entirely; he who knows Krishna only, knows not even Krishna. Yet is the opposite truth also wholly true that if thou canst see all God in a little pale unsightly and scentless flower, then hast thou hold of His supreme reality.

160. Shun the barren snare of an empty metaphysics and the dry dust of an unfertile intellectuality. Only that knowledge is worth having which can be made use of for a living delight and put out into temperament, action, creation and being." (442-443)

"162. Evolution is not finished; reason is not the last word nor the reasoning animal the supreme figure of Nature. As man emerged out of the animal, so out of man the superman emerges.

163. The power to observe law rigidly is the basis of freedom; therefore in most disciplines the soul has to endure & fulfil the law in its lower members before it can rise to the perfect freedom of its divine being. Those disciplines which begin with freedom are only for the mighty ones who are naturally free or in former lives have founded their freedom.

164. Those who are deficient in the free, full and intelligent observation of a self-imposed law, must be placed in subjection to the will of others. This is one principal cause of the subjection of nations. After their disturbing egoism has been trampled under the feet of a master, they are given or, if they have force in them, attain a fresh chance of deserving liberty by liberty.

165. To observe the law we have imposed on ourselves rather than the law of others is what is meant by liberty in our unregenerate condition. Only in God & by the supremacy of the spirit can we enjoy a perfect freedom.

166. The double law of sin & virtue is imposed on us because we have not that ideal life & knowledge within which guides the soul spontaneously & infallibly to its self-fulfilment. The law of sin & virtue ceases for us when the sun of God shines upon the soul in truth & love with its unveiled splendour. Moses is replaced by Christ, the Shastra by the Veda.

167. God within is leading us always aright even when we are in the bonds of the ignorance; but then, though the goal is sure, it is attained by circlings & deviations." (443-444)

"172. Law cannot save the world, therefore Moses' ordinances are dead for humanity & the Shastra of the Brahmins is corrupt & dying. Law released into Freedom is

the liberator. Not the Pandit, but the Yogin; not monasticism, but the inner renunciation of desire and ignorance & egoism." (444-445)

"174. If we would understand God, we must renounce our egoistic & ignorant human standards or else ennoble and universalise them.

175. Because a good man dies or fails & the evil live & triumph, is God therefore evil? I do not see the logic of the consequence. I must first be convinced that death & failure are evil; I sometimes think that when they come, they are our supreme momentary good. But we are the fools of our hearts & nerves & argue that what they do not like or desire, must of course be an evil!

176. When I look back on my past life, I see that if I had not failed & suffered, I would have lost my life's supreme blessings; yet at the time of the suffering & failure, I was vexed with the sense of calamity. Because we cannot see anything but the one fact under our noses, therefore we indulge in all these snifflings and clamours. Be silent, ye foolish hearts! slay the ego, learn to see & feel vastly & universally.

177. The perfect cosmic vision & cosmic sentiment is the cure of all error & suffering; but most men succeed only in enlarging the range of their ego.

178. Men say & think "For my country!" "For humanity!" "For the world!" but they really mean "For myself seen in my country!" "For myself seen in humanity!" "For myself imaged to my fancy as the world!" That may be an enlargement, but it is not liberation. To be at large & to be in a large prison are not one condition of freedom.

179. Live for God in thy neighbour, God in thyself, God in thy country & the country of thy foeman, God in humanity, God in tree & stone & animal, God in the world & outside the world, then art thou on the straight path to liberation." (445-446)

"186. The contributions of evil to the good of the world & the harm sometimes done by the virtuous are distressing to the soul enamoured of good. Nevertheless be not distressed nor confounded, but study rather & calmly understand God's ways with humanity." (447)

"189. Live within; be not shaken by outward happenings.

190. Fling not thy alms abroad everywhere in an ostentation of charity; understand & love where thou helpest. Let thy soul grow within thee.

191. Help the poor while the poor are with thee; but study also & strive that there may be no poor for thy assistance." (447)

"193. The existence of poverty is the proof of an unjust & ill-organised society, and our public charities are but the first tardy awakening in the conscience of a robber." (447)

"196. Poverty is no more a necessity of organised social life than disease of the natural body; false habits of life & an ignorance of our true organisation are in both cases the peccant causes of an avoidable disorder.

197. Do not dream that when thou hast got rid of material poverty, men will even so be happy or satisfied or society freed from ills, troubles & problems. This is only the first & lowest necessity. While the soul within remains defectively organised, there will always be outward unrest, disorder & revolution.

198. Disease will always return to the body if the soul is flawed; for the sins of the mind are the secret cause of the sins of the body. So too poverty & trouble will always return on man in society, so long as the mind of the race is subjected to egoism." (448)

2. Karma*

"206. That thou shouldst have pity on creatures, is well, but not well, if thou art a slave to thy pity. Be a slave to nothing except to God, not even to His most luminous angels.

207. Beatitude is God's aim for humanity; get this supreme good for thyself first that thou mayst distribute it entirely to thy fellow-beings.

208. He who acquires for himself alone, acquires ill though he may call it heaven and virtue." (453)

"210. Power is noble, when it overtops anger; destruction is grandiose, but it loses caste when it proceeds from vengeance. Leave these things, for they belong to a lower humanity.

211. Poets make much of death and external afflictions; but the only tragedies are the soul's failures and the only epic man's triumphant ascent towards godhead.

212. The tragedies of the heart & the body are the weeping of children over their little griefs & their broken toys. Smile within thyself, but comfort the children; join also, if thou canst, in their play.

213. "There is always something abnormal and eccentric about men of genius." And why not? For genius itself is an abnormal birth and out of man's ordinary centre.

214. Genius is Nature's first attempt to liberate the imprisoned god out of her human mould; the mould has to suffer in the process. It is astonishing that the cracks are so few and unimportant.

215. Nature sometimes gets into a fury with her own resistance, then she damages the brain in order to free the inspiration; for in this effort the equilibrium of the average material brain is her chief opponent. Pass over the madness of such and profit by their inspiration.

216. Who can bear Kali rushing into the system in her fierce force and burning godhead? Only the man whom Krishna already possesses.

217. Hate not the oppressor, for, if he is strong, thy hate increases his force of resistance; if he is weak, thy hate was needless.

218. Hatred is a sword of power, but its edge is always double. It is like the Kritya of the ancient magicians which, if baulked of its prey, returned in fury to devour its sender." (453-454)

"221. The saint and the angel are not the only divinities; admire also the Titan and the giant.

222. The old writings call the Titans the elder gods. So they still are; nor is any god entirely divine unless there is hidden in him also a Titan.

223. If I cannot be Rama, then I would be Ravana; for he is the dark side of Vishnu.

224. Sacrifice, sacrifice, sacrifice always, but for the sake of God and humanity, not for the sake of sacrifice.

225. Selfishness kills the soul; destroy it. But take care

that your altruism does not kill the souls of others.

226. Very usually, altruism is only the sublimest form of selfishness.

227. He who will not slay when God bids him, works in the world an incalculable havoc.

228. Respect human life as long as you can; but respect more the life of humanity." (454-455)

"230. **Courage and love are the only indispensable virtues; even if all the others are eclipsed or fall asleep, these two will save the soul alive.**

231. Meanness & selfishness are the only sins that I find it difficult to pardon; yet they alone are almost universal. Therefore these also must not be hated in others, but in ourselves annihilated.

232. Nobleness and generosity are the soul's ethereal firmament; without them, one looks at an insect in a dungeon." (455-456)

"234. **Altruism, duty, family, country, humanity are the prisons of the soul when they are not its instruments.**

235. Our country is God the Mother; speak not evil of her unless thou canst do it with love and tenderness." (456)

"237. Break the moulds of the past, but keep safe its gains and its spirit, or else thou hast no future." (456)

"239. The world has had only half a dozen successful revolutions and most even of these were very like failures; yet it is by great & noble failures that humanity advances.

240. Atheism is a necessary protest against the wickedness of the Churches and the narrowness of creeds.

God uses it as a stone to smash these soiled card-houses.

241. How much hatred & stupidity men succeed in packing up decorously and labelling "Religion"!

242. God guides best when He tempts worst, loves entirely when He punishes cruelly, helps perfectly when violently He opposes.

243. If God did not take upon Himself the burden of tempting men, the world would very soon go to perdition." (456-457)

"245. If you leave it to God to purify, He will exhaust the evil in you subjectively; but if you insist on guiding yourself, you will fall into much outward sin and suffering.

246. Call not everything evil which men call evil, but only that reject which God has rejected; call not everything good which men call good, but accept only what God has accepted.

247. Men in the world have two lights, duty and principle; but he who has passed over to God, has done with both and replaced them by God's will. If men abuse thee for this, care not, O divine instrument, but go on thy way like the wind or the sun fostering and destroying.

248. Not to cull the praises of men has God made thee His own, but to do fearlessly His bidding." (457)

"251. If thou think defeat is the end of thee, then go not forth to fight, even though thou be the stronger. For Fate is not purchased by any man nor is Power bound over to her possessors. But defeat is not the end, it is only a gate or a beginning." (457-458)

"254. So long as a cause has on its side one soul that is intangible in faith, it cannot perish.

255. Reason gives me no basis for this faith, thou murmurest. Fool! if it did, faith would not be needed or demanded of thee.

256. Faith in the heart is the obscure & often distorted reflection of a hidden knowledge. The believer is often more plagued by doubt than the most inveterate sceptic. He persists because there is something subconscient in him which knows. That tolerates both his blind faith & twilit doubts and drives towards the revelation of that which it knows.

257. The world thinks that it moves by the light of reason but it is really impelled by its faiths and instincts.

258. Reason adapts itself to the faith or argues out a justification of the instincts, but it receives the impulse subconsciously; therefore men think that they act rationally.

259. The only business of reason is to arrange and criticise the perceptions. It has neither in itself any means of positive conclusion nor any command to action. When it pretends to originate or impel, it is masking other agencies.

260. Until Wisdom comes to thee, use the reason for its God-given purposes and faith and instinct for theirs. Why shouldst thou set thy members to war upon each other?" (458)

"264. **If thy aim be great and thy means small, still act; for by action alone these can increase to thee.**

265. **Care not for time and success. Act out thy part, whether it be to fail or to prosper.**

266. There are three forms in which the command may come, the will and faith in thy nature, thy ideal on which heart and brain are agreed and the voice of Himself or His angels." (459)

"270. All is not settled when a cause is humanly lost and hopeless; all is settled, only when the soul renounces its effort.

271. He who would win high spiritual degrees, must pass endless tests and examinations. But most are anxious only to bribe the examiner." (459-460)

"273. Thou thinkest the ascetic in his cave or on his mountaintop a stone and a do-nothing? What dost thou know? He may be filling the world with the mighty currents of his will & changing it by the pressure of his soul-state." (460)

"275. The Theosophists are wrong in their circumstances but right in the essential. If the French Revolution took place, it was because a soul on the Indian snows dreamed of God as freedom, brotherhood and equality.

276. All speech and action comes prepared out of the eternal Silence.

277. There is no disturbance in the depths of the Ocean, but above there is the joyous thunder of its shouting and its racing shoreward; so is it with the liberated soul in the midst of violent action. The soul does not act; it only breathes out from itself overwhelming action." (460)

"280. If thy heart is troubled within thee, if for long seasons thou makest no progress, if thy strength faint and repine, remember always the eternal word of our Lover and Master, "I will free thee from all sin and evil; do not grieve." " (461)

"291. When Asiatics massacre, it is an atrocity; when Europeans, it is a military exigency. Appreciate the distinction and ponder over this world's virtues.

292. Watch the too indignantly righteous. Before long you will find them committing or condoning the very offence which they have so fiercely censured." (462)

"299. Turn all things to honey; this is the law of divine living." (463)

"302. The mediaeval ascetics hated women and thought they were created by God for the temptation of monks. One may be allowed to think more nobly both of God and of woman." (463)

"306. **Three times God laughed at Shankara, first, when he returned to burn the corpse of his mother, again when he commented on the Isha Upanishad and the third time when he stormed about India preaching inaction.**

307. **Men labour only after success and if they are fortunate enough to fail, it is because the wisdom and force of Nature overbear their intellectual cleverness. God alone knows when & how to blunder wisely and fail effectively.**

308. Distrust the man who has never failed and suffered; follow not his fortunes, fight not under his banner.

309. **There are two who are unfit for greatness and freedom, the man who has never been a slave to another and the nation that has never been under the yoke of foreigners.**" (463-464)

"319. Governments, societies, kings, police, judges, institutions, churches, laws, customs, armies are temporary necessities imposed on us for a few groups of centuries because God has concealed His face from us. When it appears to us again in its truth & beauty, then in that light they will vanish." (465)

"321. The communistic principle of society is intrinsically as superior to the individualistic as is brotherhood to jealousy and mutual slaughter; but all the practical schemes of Socialism invented in Europe are a yoke, a tyranny and a prison.

322. If communism ever re-establishes itself successfully upon earth, it must be on a foundation of soul's brotherhood and the death of egoism. A forced association and a mechanical comradeship would end in a worldwide fiasco." (465)

"327. The individual cannot be perfect until he has surrendered all he now calls himself to the divine Being. So also, until mankind gives all it has to God, never shall there be a perfected society.

328. **There is nothing small in God's eyes; let there be nothing small in thine. He bestows as much labour of divine energy on the formation of a shell as on the building of an empire. For thyself it is greater to be a good shoemaker than a luxurious and incompetent king.**

329. **Imperfect capacity & effect in the work that is meant for thee is better than an artificial competency & a borrowed perfection.**

330. Not result is the purpose of action, but God's eternal delight in becoming, seeing and doing." (466)

"332. **A nation is not made by a common blood, a common tongue or a common religion; these are only important helps and powerful conveniences. But wherever communities of men not bound by family ties are united in one sentiment and aspiration to defend a common inheritance from their ancestors or assure a common future for their posterity, there a nation is already in existence.**

333. **Nationality is a stride of the progressive God passing beyond the stage of the family; therefore the attachment to clan and tribe must weaken or perish before a nation can be born.**

334. **Family, nationality, humanity are Vishnu's three strides from an isolated to a collective unity. The first has been fulfilled, we yet strive for the perfection of the second, towards the third we are reaching out our hands and the pioneer work is already attempted.**" (467)

"340. Democracy was the protest of the human soul against the allied despotisms of autocrat, priest and noble; Socialism is the protest of the human soul against the despotism of a plutocratic democracy; Anarchism is likely to be the protest of the human soul against the tyranny of a bureaucratic Socialism. A turbulent and eager march from illusion to illusion and from failure to failure is the image of European progress.

341. Democracy in Europe is the rule of the Cabinet minister, the corrupt deputy or the self-seeking capitalist masqued by the occasional sovereignty of a wavering populace; Socialism in Europe is likely to be the rule of the official and policeman masqued by the theoretic sovereignty of an abstract State. It is chimerical to enquire which is the better system; it would be difficult to decide which is the worse.

342. The gain of democracy is the security of the individual's life, liberty and goods from the caprices of the tyrant one or the selfish few; its evil is the decline of greatness in humanity.

343. This erring race of human beings dreams always of

perfecting their environment by the machinery of government and society; but it is only by the perfection of the soul within that the outer environment can be perfected. What thou art within, that outside thee thou shalt enjoy; no machinery can rescue thee from the law of thy being." (468)

"346. The many strive after competence or riches, the few embrace poverty as a bride; but, for thyself, strive after and embrace God only. Let Him choose for thee a king's palace or the bowl of the beggar." (469)

"354. **Self-denial is a mighty instrument for purification; it is not an end in itself nor a final law of living. Not to mortify thyself but to satisfy God in the world must be thy object.**

355. It is easy to distinguish the evil worked by sin & vice, but the trained eye sees also the evil done by self-righteous or self-regarding virtue." (470)

"362. Limit not sacrifice to the giving up of earthly goods or the denial of some desires & yearnings, but let every thought and every work & every enjoyment be an offering to God within thee. Let thy steps walk in thy Lord, let thy sleep and waking be a sacrifice to Krishna.

363. This is not according to my Shastra or my Science, say the men of rule, formalists. Fool! is God then only a book that there should be nothing true & good except what is written?" (471)

"366. Act according to the Shastra rather than thy self-will & desire; so shalt thou grow stronger to control the ravener in thee; but act according to God rather than the Shastra; so shalt thou reach to His highest which is far above rule & limit." (472)

"369. What is the use of only knowing? I say to thee, Act and be, for therefore God sent thee into this human body.

370. What is the use of only being? I say to thee, Become, for therefore wast thou established as a man in this world of matter." (472)

"375. There is a means to attain physical immortality and death is by our choice, not by Nature's compulsion. But who would care to wear one coat for a hundred years or be confined in one narrow & changeless lodging unto a long eternity?

376. Fear and anxiety are perverse forms of will. What thou fearest & ponderest over, striking that note repeatedly in thy mind, thou helpest to bring about; for, if thy will above the surface of waking repels it, it is yet what thy mind underneath is all along willing, & the subconscious mind is mightier, wider, better equipped to fulfil than thy waking force & intellect. But the spirit is stronger than both together; from fear and hope take refuge in the grandiose calm and careless mastery of the spirit." (473)

"378. Mankind has used two powerful weapons to destroy its own powers and enjoyment, wrong indulgence and wrong abstinence." (473)

"380. It is well not to be too loosely playful in one's games or too grimly serious in one's life and works. We seek in both a playful freedom and a serious order.

381. **For nearly forty years I believed them when they said I was weakly in constitution, suffered constantly from the smaller & the greater ailments & mistook this curse for a burden that Nature had laid upon me. When I renounced the aid of medicines, then they began to depart from me**

like disappointed parasites. Then only I understood what a mighty force was the natural health within me & how much mightier yet the Will & Faith exceeding mind which God meant to be the divine support of our life in this body.

382. Machinery is necessary to modern humanity because of our incurable barbarism. If we must incase ourselves in a bewildering multitude of comforts and trappings, we must needs do without Art and its methods; for to dispense with simplicity & freedom is to dispense with beauty. The luxury of our ancestors was rich & even gorgeous, but never encumbered.

383. I cannot give to the barbarous comfort & encumbered ostentation of European life the name of civilisation. Men who are not free in their souls & nobly rhythmical in their appointments, are not civilised." (474)

"385. Disease is needlessly prolonged & ends in death oftener than is inevitable, because the mind of the patient supports & dwells upon the disease of his body.

386. **Medical Science has been more a curse to mankind than a blessing. It has broken the force of epidemics and unveiled a marvellous surgery; but, also, it has weakened the natural health of man and multiplied individual diseases; it has implanted fear and dependence in the mind and body; it has taught our health to repose not on natural soundness but a rickety & distasteful crutch compact from the mineral and vegetable kingdoms.**

387. The doctor aims a drug at a disease; sometimes it hits, sometimes misses. The misses are left out of account, the hits treasured up, reckoned and systematised into a science.

388. **We laugh at the savage for his faith in the medicine man; but how are the civilised less superstitious who have faith in the doctors? The savage finds that when a certain incantation is repeated, he often recovers from a certain disease; he believes. The civilised patient finds that when he doses himself according to a certain prescription, he often recovers from a certain disease; he believes. Where is the difference?**

389. The north-country Indian herdsman, attacked by fever, sits in the chill stream of a river for an hour or more & rises up free & healthy. If the educated man did the same, he would perish, not because the same remedy in its nature kills one & cures another, but because our bodies have been fatally indoctrinated by the mind into false habits.

390. **It is not the medicine that cures so much as the patient's faith in the doctor and the medicine. Both are a clumsy substitute for the natural faith in one's own self-power which they have themselves destroyed.**

391. The healthiest ages of mankind were those in which there were the fewest material remedies.

392. The most robust and healthy race left on earth were the African savages; but how long can they so remain after their physical consciousness has been contaminated by the mental aberrations of the civilised?" (474-475)

"396. The spirit within us is the only all-efficient doctor and submission of the body to it the one true panacea.

397. God within is infinite and self-fulfilling Will. Unappalled by the fear of death, canst thou leave to Him, not as an experiment, with a calm & entire faith thy ailments?

Thou shalt find in the end that He exceeds the skill of a million doctors.

398. Health protected by twenty thousand precautions is the gospel of the doctor; but it is not God's evangel for the body, nor Nature's.

399. Man was once naturally healthy and could revert to that primal condition if he were suffered; but Medical Science pursues our body with an innumerable pack of drugs and assails the imagination with ravening hordes of microbes.

400. I would rather die and have done with it than spend life in defending myself against a phantasmal siege of microbes. If that is to be barbarous [and] unenlightened, I embrace gladly my Cimmerian darkness.

401. Surgeons save & cure by cutting and maiming. Why not rather seek to discover Nature's direct all-powerful remedies?

402. It should take long for self-cure to replace medicine, because of the fear, self-distrust and unnatural physical reliance on drugs which Medical Science has taught to our minds & bodies & made our second nature.

403. **Medicine is necessary for our bodies in disease only because our bodies have learned the art of not getting well without medicines. Even so, one sees often that the moment Nature chooses for recovery is that in which the life is abandoned as hopeless by the doctors.**

404. Distrust of the curative power within us was our physical fall from Paradise. Medical Science and a bad heredity are the two angels of God who stand at the gates to forbid our return and re-entry.

405. **Medical Science to the human body is like a great Power which enfeebles a smaller State by its protection or like a benevolent robber who knocks his victim flat and riddles him with wounds in order that he may devote his life to healing & serving the shattered body.**

406. Drugs often cure the body when they do not merely trouble or poison it, but only if their physical attack on the disease is supported by the force of the spirit; if that force can be made to work freely, drugs are at once superfluous." (476-477)

3. Bhakti*

"407. I am not a Bhakta, for I have not renounced the world for God. How can I renounce what He took from me by force and gave back to me against my will? These things are too hard for me.

408. I am not a Bhakta, I am not a Jnani, I am not a worker for the Lord. What am I then? A tool in the hands of my Master, a flute blown upon by the divine Herd-Boy, a leaf driven by the breath of the Lord.

409. Devotion is not utterly fulfilled till it becomes action and knowledge. If thou pursuest after God and canst overtake Him, let Him not go till thou hast His reality. If thou hast hold of His reality, insist on having also His totality. The first will give thee divine knowledge, the second will give thee divine works and a free and perfect joy in the universe.

410. **Others boast of their love for God. My boast is that I did not love God; it was He who loved me and sought me out and forced me to belong to Him.**

411. After I knew that God was a woman, I learned something from far-off about love; but it was only when I became a woman and served my Master and Paramour that I knew love utterly.

412. **To commit adultery with God is the perfect experience for which the world was created.**

413. To fear God really is to remove oneself to a distance from Him, but to fear Him in play gives an edge to utter delightfulness.

414. The Jew invented the God-fearing man; India the God-knower and God-lover." (481-482)

"417. Thy soul has not tasted God's entire delight, if it has never had the joy of being His enemy, opposing His designs and engaging with Him in mortal combat.

418. **If you cannot make God love you, make Him fight you. If He will not give you the embrace of the lover, compel Him to give you the embrace of the wrestler.**

419. My soul is the captive of God, taken by Him in battle; it still remembers the war, though so far from it, with delight and alarm and wonder.

420. Most of all things on earth I hated pain till God hurt and tortured me; then it was revealed to me that pain is only a perverse and recalcitrant shape of excessive delight.

421. There are four stages in the pain God gives to us; when it is only pain; when it is pain that causes pleasure; when it is pain that is pleasure; and when it is purely a fiercer form of delight." (482)

"424. The next greatest rapture to the love of God, is

the love of God in men; there, too, one has the joy of multiplicity." (483)

"427. I did not know for some time whether I loved Krishna best or Kali; when I loved Kali, it was loving myself, but when I loved Krishna, I loved another, and still it was my Self with whom I was in love. Therefore I came to love Krishna better even than Kali." (483)

"430. **The philosophers who reject the world as Maya, are very wise and austere and holy; but I cannot help thinking sometimes that they are also just a little stupid and allow God to cheat them too easily.**

431. For my part, I think I have a right to insist on God giving Himself to me in the world as well as out of it. Why did He make it at all, if He wanted to escape that obligation?" (483)

"433. Beyond Personality the Mayavadin sees indefinable Existence; I followed him there and found my Krishna beyond in indefinable Personality.

434. **When I first met Krishna, I loved Him as a friend and playmate till He deceived me; then I was indignant and could not forgive Him. Afterwards I loved Him as a lover and He still deceived me; I was again and much more indignant, but this time I had to pardon.**

435. After offending, He forced me to pardon Him not by reparation, but by committing fresh offences.

436. So long as God tried to repair His offences against me, we went on periodically quarrelling; but when He found out His mistake, the quarrelling stopped, for I had to submit to Him entirely.

437. When I saw others than Krishna and myself in the world, I kept secret God's doings with me; but since I began to see Him and myself everywhere, I have become shameless and garrulous.

438. All that my Lover has, belongs to me. Why do you abuse me for showing off the ornaments He has given to me?

439. My Lover took His crown and royal necklace from His head and neck and clothed me with them; but the disciples of the saints and the prophets abused me and said, "He is hunting after siddhis."

440. I did my Lover's commands in the world & the will of my Captor; but they cried, "Who is this corruptor of youth, this disturber of morals?"

441. If I cared even for your praise, O ye saints, if I cherished my reputation, O ye prophets, my Lover would never have taken me into His bosom and given me the freedom of His secret chambers." (484-485)

"445. They say, O my God, that I am mad because I see no fault in Thee; but if I am indeed mad with Thy love, I do not wish to recover my sanity.

446. **"Errors, falsehoods, stumblings!" they cry. How bright and beautiful are Thy errors, O Lord! Thy falsehoods save Truth alive; by Thy stumblings the world is perfected.**" (485)

"449. If thou canst not love the vilest worm and the foulest of criminals, how canst thou believe that thou hast accepted God in thy spirit?

450. To love God, excluding the world, is to give Him an intense but imperfect adoration." (485-486)

"458. I was much plagued by Satan, until I found that it was God who was tempting me; then the anguish of him passed out of my soul for ever.

459. I hated the devil and was sick with his temptations and tortures; and I could not tell why the voice in his departing words was so sweet that when he returned often and offered himself to me, it was with sorrow I refused him. Then I discovered it was Krishna at His tricks and my hate was changed into laughter.

460. **They explained the evil in the world by saying that Satan had prevailed against God; but I think more proudly of my Beloved. I believe that nothing is done but by His will in heaven or hell, on earth or on the waters.**

461. **In our ignorance we are like children proud of our success in walking erect and unaided and too eager to be aware of the mother's steadying touch on the shoulder. When we wake, we look back and see that God was leading and upholding us always.**" (486-487)

"463. **God has so arranged life that the world is the soul's husband; Krishna its divine paramour. We owe a debt of service to the world and are bound to it by a law, a compelling opinion, and a common experience of pain and pleasure, but our heart's worship and our free and secret joy are for our Lover.**" (487)

"465. **God, the world Guru, is wiser than thy mind; trust Him and not that eternal self-seeker & arrogant sceptic.**" (488)

475. Discipleship to God the Teacher, sonship to God the Father, tenderness of God the Mother, clasp of the hand of the divine Friend, laughter and sport with our Comrade

and boy Playfellow, blissful servitude to God the Master, rapturous love of our divine Paramour, these are the seven beatitudes of life in the human body. Canst thou unite all these in a single supreme & rainbow-hued relation? Then hast thou no need of any heaven and thou exceedest the emancipation of the Adwaitin.

476. When will the world change into the model of heaven? When all mankind becomes boys & girls together with God revealed as Krishna & Kali, the happiest boy & strongest girl of the crowd, playing together in the gardens of Paradise. The Semitic Eden was well enough, but Adam & Eve were too grown up and its God himself too old & stern & solemn for the offer of the Serpent to be resisted.

477. **The Semites have afflicted mankind with the conception of a God who is a stern & dignified king & solemn judge & knows not mirth. But we who have seen Krishna, know Him for a boy fond of play and a child full of mischief & happy laughter.**

478. **A God who cannot smile, could not have created this humorous universe.**" (489-490)

"480. When I suffer from pain or grief or mischance, I say "So, my old Playfellow, thou hast taken again to bullying me," and I sit down to possess the pleasure of the pain, the joy of the grief, the good fortune of the mischance; then He sees He is found out and takes His ghosts & bugbears away from me.

481. **The seeker after divine knowledge finds in the description of Krishna stealing the robes of the Gopis one of the deepest parables of God's ways with the soul, the devotee a perfect rendering in divine act of his heart's**

mystic experiences, the prurient & the Puritan (two faces of one temperament) only a lustful story. Men bring what they have in themselves and see it reflected in the Scripture.

482. **My lover took away my robe of sin and I let it fall, rejoicing; then he plucked at my robe of virtue, but I was ashamed and alarmed and prevented him. It was not till he wrested it from me by force that I saw how my soul had been hidden from me.**

483. Sin is a trick & a disguise of Krishna to conceal Himself from the gaze of the virtuous. Behold, O Pharisee, God in the sinner, sin in thy self purifying thy heart; clasp thy brother.

484. Love of God, charity towards men is the first step towards perfect wisdom.

485. He who condemns failure & imperfection, is condemning God; he limits his own soul and cheats his own vision. Condemn not, but observe Nature, help & heal thy brothers and strengthen by sympathy their capacities & their courage.

486. **Love of man, love of woman, love of things, love of thy neighbour, love of thy country, love of animals, love of humanity are all the love of God reflected in these living images. So love & grow mighty to enjoy all, to help all and to love for ever.**

487. If there are things that absolutely refuse to be transformed or remedied into God's more perfect image, they may be destroyed with tenderness in the heart, but ruthlessness in the smiting. But make sure first that God has given thee thy sword and thy mission.

488. **I should love my neighbour not because he is neighbourhood, – for what is there in neighbourhood and distance? nor because the religions tell me he is my brother, – for where is the root of that brotherhood? but because he is myself. Neighbourhood and distance affect the body, the heart goes beyond them. Brotherhood is of blood or country or religion or humanity, but when self-interest clamours what becomes of this brotherhood? It is only by living in God & turning mind and heart & body into the image of his universal unity that that deep, disinterested and unassailable love becomes possible.**" (490-492)

"494. I used to hate and avoid pain and resent its infliction; but now I find that had I not so suffered, I would not now possess, trained and perfected, this infinitely & multitudinously sensible capacity of delight in my mind, heart and body. God justifies himself in the end even when He has masked Himself as a bully and a tyrant.

495. I swore that I would not suffer from the world's grief and the world's stupidity and cruelty & injustice and I made my heart as hard in endurance as the nether millstone and my mind as a polished surface of steel. I no longer suffered, but enjoyment had passed away from me. Then God broke my heart and ploughed up my mind. I rose through cruel & incessant anguish to a blissful painlessness and through sorrow and indignation & revolt to an infinite knowledge and a settled peace.

496. **When I found that pain was the reverse side & the training of delight, I sought to heap blows on myself & multiply suffering in all my members; for even God's tortures seemed to me slow & slight & inefficient. Then**

my Lover had to stay my hand & cry, "Cease; for my stripes are enough for thee." " (492-493)

"498. God is our wise & perfect Friend; because he knows when to smite as well as when to fondle, when to slay us no less than when to save & to succour." (493)

"500. **Suffering makes us capable of the full force of the Master of Delight; it makes us capable also to bear the utter play of the Master of Power. Pain is the key that opens the gates of strength; it is the high-road that leads to the city of beatitude.**

501. Yet, O soul of man, seek not after pain, for that is not His will, seek after His joy only; as for suffering, it will come to thee surely in His providence as often and as much as is needed for thee. Then bear it that thou mayst find out at last its heart of rapture.

502. Neither do thou inflict pain, O man, on thy fellow; God alone has the right to inflict pain; or those have it whom He has commissioned. But deem not fanatically, as did Torquemada, that thou art one of these." (493-494)

"509. **Ravana's mind thought it was hungering after universal sovereignty and victory over Rama; but the aim his soul kept its vision fixed upon all the time was to get back to its heaven as soon as possible & be again God's menial. Therefore, as the shortest way, it hurled itself against God in a furious clasp of enmity.**

510. The greatest of joys is to be, like Naraka, the slave of God; the worst of Hells, being abandoned of God, to be the world's master. That which seems nearest to the ignorant conception of God, is the farthest from him.

511. God's servant is something; God's slave is greater.

512. To be master of the world would indeed be supreme felicity, if one were universally loved; but for that one would have to be at the same time the slave of all humanity." (495)

"514. There are two works that are perfectly pleasing to God in his servant; to sweep in silent adoration His temple-floors and to fight in the world's battlefield for His divine consummation in humanity.

515. **He who has done even a little good to human beings, though he be the worst of sinners, is accepted by God in the ranks of His lovers and servants. He shall look upon the face of the Eternal.**" (495)

"517. Until thou canst learn to grapple with God as a wrestler with his comrade, thy soul's strength shall always be hid from thee." (496)

519. Kali is Krishna revealed as dreadful Power & wrathful Love. She slays with her furious blows the self in body, life & mind in order to liberate it as spirit eternal." (496)

523. A healthy mind hates pain; for the desire of pain that men sometimes develop in their minds is morbid and contrary to Nature. But the soul cares not for the mind & its sufferings any more than the iron-master for the pain of the ore in the furnace; it follows its own necessities and its own hunger." (496)

"525. Self-pity is always born of self-love; but pity for others is not always born of love for its object. It is sometimes a self-regarding shrinking from the sight of pain; sometimes

the rich man's contemptuous dole to the pauper. Develop rather God's divine compassion than human pity.

526. Not pity that bites the heart and weakens the inner members, but a divine masterful & untroubled compassion and helpfulness is the virtue that we should encourage.

527. To find that saving a man's body or mind from suffering is not always for the good of either soul, mind or body, is one of the bitterest of experiences for the humanly compassionate.

528. Human pity is born of ignorance & weakness; it is the slave of emotional impressions. Divine compassion understands, discerns & saves.

529. Indiscriminate compassion is the noblest gift of temperament, not to do even the least hurt to one living thing is the highest of all human virtues; but God practises neither. Is man therefore nobler and better than the All-loving?

530. Love and serve men, but beware lest thou desire their approbation. Obey rather God within thee.

531. Not to have heard the voice of God and His angels is the world's idea of sanity.

532. **See God everywhere and be not frightened by masks. Believe that all falsehood is truth in the making or truth in the breaking, all failure an effectuality concealed, all weakness strength hiding itself from its own vision, all pain a secret & violent ecstasy. If thou believest firmly & unweariedly, in the end thou wilt see & experience the All-true, Almighty & All-blissful.**

533. Human love fails by its own ecstasy, human strength

is exhausted by its own effort, human knowledge throws a shadow that conceals half the globe of truth from its own sunlight; but divine knowledge embraces opposite truths & reconciles them, divine strength grows by the prodigality of its self-expenditure, divine love can squander itself utterly, yet never waste or diminish.

534. The rejection of falsehood by the mind seeking after truth is one of the chief causes why mind cannot attain to the settled, rounded & perfect truth; not to escape falsehood is the effort of divine mind, but to seize the truth which lies masked behind even the most grotesque or far-wandering error." (497-498)

"538. Atheism is the shadow or dark side of the highest perception of God. Every formula we frame about God, though always true as a symbol, becomes false when we accept it as a sufficient formula. The Atheist & Agnostic come to remind us of our error.

539. God's negations are as useful to us as His affirmations. It is He who as the Atheist denies His own existence for the better perfecting of human knowledge. It is not enough to see God in Christ & Ramakrishna & hear His words, we must see Him and hear Him also in Huxley & Haeckel.

540. Canst thou see God in thy torturer & slayer even in thy moment of death or thy hours of torture? Canst thou see Him in that which thou art slaying, see & love even while thou slayest? Thou hast thy hand on the supreme knowledge. How shall he attain to Krishna who has never worshipped Kali?" (498-499)

4. Additional Aphorisms

"541. I know that the opposite of what I say is true, but for the present what I say is still truer.

542. I believe with you, my friends, that God, if He exists, is a demon and an ogre. But after all what are you going to do about it?

543. God is the supreme Jesuit Father. He is ever doing evil that good may come of it; ever misleads for a greater leading; ever oppresses our will that it may arrive at last at an infinite freedom.

544. Our Evil is to God not evil, but ignorance and imperfection, our good a lesser imperfection.

545. The religionist speaks a truth, though too violently, when he tells us that even our greatest and purest virtue is as vileness before the divine nature of God." (500)

RNI NO. RAJENG/2002/09480

Published and printed by Pankaj Bagaria on behalf of The Resurgent India Trust, Published at The Resurgent India Trust, Mira Ambika Bhawan, Khetan Mohalla, Jhunjhunu - 333001, Rajasthan.

Printed at : Sri Aurobindo Divine Life Press, Seth Ram Bilasrai Kothi, Khetan Mohalla, Jhunjhunu - 333001, (Raj.)

Editor : Anjana Dharnidharka

Price : Rs. 65/-