The Real Awakener



The Light of lights

Words of Sri Aurobindo – 23

21st February, 2021

Volume 19 **Issue 2**

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"The past is both a drag and a force for progress. It is all that has created the present and a great part of the force that is creating the future. For the past is not dead; its forms are gone and had to go, otherwise the present would not have come into being: but its soul, its power, its essence lives veiled in the present and ever-accumulating, growing, deepening will live on in the future. Every human being holds in and behind him all the past of his own race, of humanity and of himself; these three things determine his starting-point and pursue him through his life's progress."

– Sri Aurobindo

(128-129)

Essays in Philosophy and Yoga (CWSA 13)

I. Essays from the Karmayogin (1909-1910)*

1. The Ideal of Karmayogin

a. The Task before the Karmayogin

"A NATION is building in India today before the eyes of the world so swiftly, so palpably that all can watch the process and those who have sympathy and intuition distinguish the forces at work, the materials in use, the lines of the divine architecture. This nation is not a new race raw from the workshop of Nature or created by modern circumstances. One of the oldest races and greatest civilisations on this earth, the most indomitable in vitality, the most fecund in greatness, the deepest in life, the most wonderful in potentiality, after taking into itself numerous sources of strength from foreign strains of blood and other types of human civilisation, is now seeking to lift itself for good into an organised national unity. Formerly a congeries of kindred nations with a single life and a single culture, always by the law of this essential oneness tending to unity, always by its excess of fecundity engendering fresh diversities and divisions, it has never yet been able to overcome permanently the almost insuperable obstacles to the organisation of a continent. The time has now come when those obstacles can be overcome." (3)

"There is a mighty law of life, a great principle of human evolution, a body of spiritual knowledge and experience of which India has always been destined to be guardian, exemplar and missionary. This is the *sanātana dharma*, the eternal religion.

Under the stress of alien impacts she has largely lost hold not of the structure of that *dharma*, but of its living reality. For the religion of India is nothing if it is not lived. It has to be applied not only to life, but to the whole of life; its spirit has to enter into and mould our society, our politics, our literature, our science, our individual character, affections and aspirations. To understand the heart of this *dharma*, to experience it as a truth, to feel the high emotions to which it rises and to express and execute it in life is what we understand by Karmayoga. We believe that it is to make the *yoga* the ideal of human life that India rises today; by the *yoga* she will get the strength to realise her freedom, unity and greatness, by the *yoga* she will keep the strength to preserve it. It is a spiritual revolution we foresee and the material is only its shadow and reflex.

"India is destined to work out her own independent life and civilisation, to stand in the forefront of the world and solve the political, social, economical and moral problems which Europe has failed to solve, yet the pursuit of whose solution and the feverish passage in that pursuit from experiment to experiment, from failure to failure she calls her progress. Our means must be as great as our ends and the strength to discover and use the means so as to attain the end can only be found by seeking the eternal source of strength in ourselves." (5)

b. The Aim of the Karmayogin

"We do not believe that by multiplying new sects limited within the narrower and inferior ideas of religion imported from the West or by creating organisations for the perpetuation of the mere dress and body of Hinduism we can recover our

spiritual health, energy and greatness. The world moves through an indispensable interregnum of free thought and materialism to a new synthesis of religious thought and experience, a new religious world-life free from intolerance, yet full of faith and fervour, accepting all forms of religion because it has an unshakable faith in the One. The religion which embraces Science and faith, Theism, Christianity, Mahomedanism and Buddhism and yet is none of these, is that to which the World-Spirit moves. In our own, which is the most sceptical and the most believing of all, the most sceptical because it has questioned and experimented the most, the most believing because it has the deepest experience and the most varied and positive spiritual knowledge, – that wider Hinduism which is not a dogma or combination of dogmas but a law of life, which is not a social framework but the spirit of a past and future social evolution, which rejects nothing but insists on testing and experiencing everything and when tested and experienced turning it to the soul's uses, in this Hinduism we find the basis of the future world-religion. This *sanātana* dharma has many scriptures, Veda, Vedanta, Gita, Upanishad, Darshana, Purana, Tantra, nor could it reject the Bible or the Koran; but its real, most authoritative scripture is in the heart in which the Eternal has His dwelling. It is in our inner spiritual experiences that we shall find the proof and source of the world's Scriptures, the law of knowledge, love and conduct, the basis and inspiration of Karmayoga.

Our aim will therefore be to help in building up India for the sake of humanity – this is the spirit of the Nationalism which we profess and follow. We say to humanity, "The time has come when you must take the great step and rise out of a

material existence into the higher, deeper and wider life towards which humanity moves. The problems which have troubled mankind can only be solved by conquering the kingdom within, not by harnessing the forces of Nature to the service of comfort and luxury, but by mastering the forces of the intellect and the spirit, by vindicating the freedom of man within as well as without and by conquering from within external Nature. For that work the resurgence of Asia is necessary, therefore Asia rises. For that work the freedom and greatness of India is essential, therefore she claims her destined freedom and greatness, and it is to the interest of all humanity, not excluding England, that she should wholly establish her claim."

…We say to the individual and especially to the young who are now arising to do India's work, the world's work, God's work, "You cannot cherish these ideals, still less can you fulfil them if you subject your minds to European ideas or look at life from the material standpoint. Materially you are nothing, spiritually you are everything. It is only the Indian who can believe everything, dare everything, sacrifice everything. First therefore become Indians. Recover the patrimony of your forefathers. Recover the Aryan thought, the Aryan discipline, the Aryan character, the Aryan life. Recover the Vedanta, the Gita, the Yoga. Recover them not only in intellect or sentiment but in your lives. Live them and you will be great and strong, mighty, invincible and fearless. Neither life nor death will have any terrors for you. Difficulty and impossibility will vanish from your vocabularies. For it is in the spirit that strength is eternal and you must win back the kingdom of yourselves, the inner Swaraj, before you can win back your outer empire. There the Mother dwells and She

waits for worship that She may give strength. Believe in Her, serve Her, lose your wills in Hers, your egoism in the greater ego of the country, your separate selfishness in the service of humanity. Recover the source of all strength in yourselves and all else will be added to you, social soundness, intellectual pre-eminence, political freedom, the mastery of human thought, the hegemony of the world." " (6-8)

2. Karmayoga*

"It is ordinarily supposed by "practical" minds that Vedanta as a guide to life and Yoga as a method of spiritual communion are dangerous things which lead men away from action to abstraction."(9)

"Yet the spiritual life finds its most potent expression in the man who lives the ordinary life of men in the strength of the Yoga and under the law of the Vedanta. It is by such a union of the inner life and the outer that mankind will eventually be lifted up and become mighty and divine. It is a delusion to suppose that Vedanta contains no inspiration to life, no rule of conduct, and is purely metaphysical and quietistic." (9)

"Yoga is communion with God for knowledge, for love or for work. The Yogin puts himself into direct relation with that which is omniscient and omnipotent within man and without him. He is in tune with the infinite, he becomes a channel for the strength of God to pour itself out upon the world whether through calm benevolence or active beneficence. When a man rises by putting from him the slough of self and lives for others and in the joys and sorrows of others; – when he works perfectly and with love and zeal, but

casts away the anxiety for results and is neither eager for victory nor afraid of defeat; – when he devotes all his works to God and lays every thought, word and deed as an offering on the divine altar; – when he gets rid of fear and hatred, repulsion and disgust and attachment, and works like the forces of Nature, unhasting, unresting, inevitably, perfectly; – when he rises above the thought that he is the body or the heart or the mind or the sum of these and finds his own and true self; – when he becomes aware of his immortality and the unreality of death; – when he experiences the advent of knowledge and feels himself passive and the divine force working unresisted through his mind, his speech, his senses and all his organs; – when having thus abandoned whatever he is, does or has to the Lord of all, the Lover and Helper of mankind, he dwells permanently in Him and becomes incapable of grief, disquiet or false excitement, – that is Yoga. Pranayam and Asans, concentration, worship, ceremonies, religious practice are not themselves Yoga but only a means towards Yoga. Nor is Yoga a difficult or dangerous path, it is safe and easy to all who take refuge with the Inner Guide and Teacher. All men are potentially capable of it, for there is no man who has not strength or faith or love developed or latent in his nature, and any one of these is a sufficient staff for the Yogin. All cannot, indeed, reach in a single life the highest in this path, but all can go forward; and in proportion as a man advances he gets peace, strength and joy. And even a little of this *dharma* delivers man or nation out of great fear.

स्वल्पमप्यस्य धर्मस्य त्रायते महतो भयात्।

It is an error, we repeat, to think that spirituality is a thing divorced from life. "Abandon all" says the Isha

Upanishad "*that thou mayst enjoy all*, neither covet any man's possession. But verily *do thy deeds in this world* and wish to live thy hundred years; no other way is given thee than this to escape the bondage of thy acts." It is an error to think that the heights of religion are above the struggles of this world. The recurrent cry of Sri Krishna to Arjuna insists on the struggle; "Fight and overthrow thy opponents!" "Remember me and fight!" "Give up all thy works to me with a heart full of spirituality, and free from craving, free from selfish claims, fight! let the fever of thy soul pass from thee." It is an error to imagine that even when the religious man does not give up his ordinary activities, he yet becomes too sattwic, too saintly, too loving or too passionless for the rough work of the world. Nothing can be more extreme and uncompromising than the reply of the Gita in the opposite sense, "Whosoever has his temperament purged from egoism, whosoever suffers not his soul to receive the impress of the deed, though he slay the whole world yet he slays not and is not bound." The Charioteer of Kurukshetra driving the car of Arjuna over that field of ruin is the image and description of Karmayoga; for the body is the chariot and the senses are the horses of the driving and it is through the bloodstained and miresunk ways of the world that Sri Krishna pilots the soul of man to Vaicuntha." (11-12)

3. Man – Slave or Free?*

"Yoga is based upon certain laws of human psychology, a certain knowledge about the power of the mind over the body and the inner spirit over the mind which are not generally realised and have hitherto been considered by those in the secret too momentous in their consequences for disclosure until men should be trained to use them aright."(13)

"The first great fundamental discovery of the Yogins was a means of analysing the experiences of the mind and the heart. By Yoga one can isolate mind, watch its workings as under a microscope, separate every minute function of the various parts of the *antaḥkaraṇa*, the inner organ, every mental and moral faculty, test its isolated workings as well as its relations to other functions and faculties and trace backwards the operations of mind to subtler and ever subtler sources until just as material analysis arrives at a primal entity from which all proceeds, so Yoga analysis arrives at a primal spiritual entity from which all proceeds. It is also able to locate and distinguish the psychical centre to which all psychical phenomena gather and so to fix the roots of personality. In this analysis its first discovery is that mind can entirely isolate itself from external objects and work in itself and of itself. This does not, it is true, carry us very far because it may be that it is merely using the material already stored up by its past experiences. But the next discovery is that the farther it removes itself from objects, the more powerfully, surely, rapidly can the mind work with a swifter clarity, with a victorious and sovereign detachment. This is an experience which tends to contradict the scientific theory, that mind can withdraw the senses into itself and bring them to bear on a mass of phenomena of which it is quite unaware when it is occupied with external phenomena. Science will naturally challenge these as hallucinations. The answer is that these phenomena are related to each other by regular, simple and intelligible laws and form a world of their own independent of thought acting on the material world. Here too Science has this possible answer that this supposed world is merely an imaginative reflex in the brain of the material world and

to any arguments drawn from the definiteness and unexpectedness of these subtle phenomena and their independence of our own will and imagination it can always oppose its theory of unconscious cerebration and, we suppose, unconscious imagination. The fourth discovery is that mind is not only independent of external matter, but its master; it can not only reject and control external stimuli, but can defy such apparently universal material laws as that of gravitation and ignore, put aside and make nought of what are called laws of nature and are really only the laws of material nature, inferior and subject to the psychical laws because matter is a product of mind and not mind a product of matter. This is the decisive discovery of Yoga, its final contradiction of materialism. It is followed by the crowning realisation that there is within us a source of immeasurable force, immeasurable intelligence, immeasurable joy far above the possibility of weakness, above the possibility of ignorance, above the possibility of grief which we can bring into touch with ourselves and, under arduous but not impossible conditions, habitually utilise or enjoy. This is what the Upanishads call the Brahman and the primal entity from which all things were born, in which they live and to which they return." (15-17)

4. Yoga and Human Evolution*

"THE WHOLE burden of our human progress has been an attempt to escape from the bondage to the body and the vital impulses." (18)

"From aeon to aeon, from *kalpa* to *kalpa* Narayan manifests himself in an ever-evolving humanity which grows in experience by a series of expansions and contractions

towards its destined self-realisation in God. That evolution is not denied by the Hindu theory of *yugas*. Each age in the Hindu system has its own line of moral and spiritual evolution and the decline of the *dharma* or established law of conduct from the Satya to the Kaliyuga is not in reality a deterioration but a detrition of the outward forms and props of spirituality in order to prepare a deeper spiritual intensity within the heart. In each Kaliyuga mankind gains something in essential spirituality. Whether we take the modern scientific or the ancient Hindu standpoint the progress of humanity is a fact. The wheel of Brahma rotates for ever but it does not turn in the same place; its rotations carry it forward." (18-19)

"The progress of mankind has been placed by many predominatingly in the development of the human intellect, and intellectual development is no doubt essential to self-conquest. The animal and the savage are bound by the body because the ideas of the animal or the ideas of the savage are mostly limited to those sensations and associations which are connected with the body. The development of intellect enables a man to find the deeper self within and partially replace what our philosophy calls the *dehātmaka-buddhi*, the sum of ideas and sensations which make us think of the body as ourself, by another set of ideas which reach beyond the body, and, existing for their own delight and substituting intellectual and moral satisfaction as the chief objects of life, master, if they cannot entirely silence, the clamour of the lower sensual desires." (19)

"But it is not only through the intellect that man rises. If the clarified intellect is not supported by purified emotions, the intellect tends to be dominated once more by the body and to put itself at its service and the lordship of the body

over the whole man becomes more dangerous than in the natural state because the innocence of the natural state is lost. The power of knowledge is placed at the disposal of the senses, *sattva* serves *tamas*, the god in us becomes the slave of the brute." (20)

"The development of the emotions is therefore the first condition of a sound human evolution. Unless the feelings tend away from the body and the love of others takes increasingly the place of the brute love of self, there can be no progress upward. The organisation of human society tends to develop the altruistic element in man which makes for life and battles with and conquers *aśanāyā mṛtyuḥ*. It is therefore not the struggle for life, or at least not the struggle for our own life, but the struggle for the life of others which is the most important term in evolution, – for our children, for our family, for our class, for our community, for our race and nation, for humanity. An ever-enlarging self takes the place of the old narrow self which is confined to our individual mind and body, and it is this moral growth which society helps and organises." (20-21)

"So far there is little essential difference between our own ideas of human progress and those of the West except in this vital point that the West believes this evolution to be a development of matter and the satisfaction of the reason, the reflective and observing intellect, to be the highest term of our progress. Here it is that our religion parts company with Science. It declares the evolution to be a conquest of matter by the recovery of the deeper emotional and intellectual self which was involved in the body and overclouded by the desires of the *prāṇa*." (21)

"The highest term of evolution is the spirit in which knowledge, love and action, the threefold *dharma* of humanity, find their fulfilment and end. This is the *ātman* in the *ānandakoṣa*, and it is by communion and identity of this individual self with the universal self which is God that man will become entirely pure, entirely strong, entirely wise and entirely blissful, and the evolution will be fulfilled. The conquest of the body and the vital self by the purification of the emotions and the clarification of the intellect was the principal work of the past. The purification has been done by morality and religion, the clarification by science and philosophy, art, literature and social and political life being the chief media in which these uplifting forces have worked. The conquest of the emotions and the intellect by the spirit is the work of the future. Yoga is the means by which that conquest becomes possible." (21)

5. Yoga and Hypnotism*

a. Action of Force on Man

"When the mind is entirely passive, then the force of Nature which works in the whole of animate and inanimate creation, has free play; for it is in reality this force which works in man as well as in the sun and star."(23)

"But the immediate question is whether this force can act in man independently of man's individual will and initiative. Must it always act through his volition or has it a power of independent operation? The first real proof which Science has had of the power of action independent of volition is in the phenomena of hypnotism. Unfortunately the nature of hypnotism has not been properly understood." (23)

b. Nature of the Force

"What is this force that enables or compels a weak man to become so rigid that strong arms cannot bend him? that reverses the operations of the senses and abrogates pain? that changes the fixed character of a man in the shortest of periods? that is able to develop power where there was no power, moral strength where there was weakness, health where there was disease? that in its higher manifestations can exceed the barriers of space and time and produce that far-sight, far-hearing and far-thinking which shows mind to be an untrammelled agent or medium pervading the world and not limited to the body which it informs or seems to inform? The European scientist experimenting with hypnotism is handling forces which he cannot understand, stumbling on truths of which he cannot give a true account. His feet are faltering on the threshold of Yoga. It is held by some thinkers, and not unreasonably if we consider these phenomena, that mind is all and contains all. It is not the body which determines the operations of the mind, it is the mind which determines the laws of the body. It is the ordinary law of the body that if it is struck, pierced or roughly pressed it feels pain. This law is created by the mind which associates pain with these contacts, and if the mind changes its *dharma* and is able to associate with these contacts not pain but insensibility or pleasure, then they will bring about those results of insensibility or pleasure and no other. The pain and pleasure are not the result of the contact, neither is their seat in the body; they are the result of association and their seat is in the mind. Vinegar is sour, sugar sweet, but to the hypnotised mind vinegar can be sweet, sugar sour. The sourness or sweetness is not in the vinegar or sugar, but in the mind. The heart also is the subject of the mind. My

emotions are like my physical feelings, the result of association, and my character is the result of accumulated past experiences with their resultant associations and reactions crystallising into habits of mind and heart summed up in the word, character. These things like all the rest that are made of the stuff of associations are not permanent or binding but fluid and mutable, *anityāḥ sarvasaṁskārāḥ*. If my friend blames me, I am grieved; that is an association and not binding. The grief is not the result of the blame but of an association in the mind. I can change the association so far that blame will cause me no grief, praise no elation. I can entirely stop the reactions of joy and grief by the same force that created them. They are habits of the mind, nothing more. In the same way though with more difficulty I can stop the reactions of physical pain and pleasure so that nothing will hurt my body. If I am a coward today, I can be a hero tomorrow. The cowardice was merely the habit of associating certain things with pain and grief and of shrinking from the pain and grief; this shrinking and the physical sensations in the vital or nervous man which accompany it are called fear, and they can be dismissed by the action of the mind which created them. All these are propositions which European Science is even now unwilling to admit, yet it is being proved more and more by the phenomena of hypnotism that these effects can be temporarily at least produced by one man upon another; and it has even been proved that disease can be permanently cured or character permanently changed by the action of one mind upon another." (24-25)

c. Difference between Yoga and Hypnotism

"The difference between Yoga and hypnotism is that what

hypnotism does for a man through the agency of another and in the sleeping state, Yoga does for him by his own agency and in the waking state." (25)

"The hypnotic sleep does not make the mind a tabula rasa but it renders it passive to everything but the touch of the operator. Yoga similarly teaches passivity of the mind so that the will may act unhampered by the *saṁskāras* or old associations. It is these *saṁskāras*, the habits formed by experience in the body, heart or mind, that form the laws of our psychology. The associations of the mind are the stuff of which our life is made. They are more persistent in the body than in the mind and therefore harder to alter. They are more persistent in the race than in the individual; the conquest of the body and mind by the individual is comparatively easy and can be done in the space of a single life, but the same conquest by the race involves the development of ages. It is conceivable, however, that the practice of Yoga by a great number of men and persistence in the practice by their descendants might bring about profound changes in human psychology and, by stamping these changes into body and brain through heredity, evolve a superior race which would endure and by the law of the survival of the fittest eliminate the weaker kinds of humanity." (26)

"Yoga is therefore no dream, no illusion of mystics. It is known that we can alter the associations of mind and body temporarily and that the mind can alter the conditions of the body partially. Yoga asserts that these things can be done permanently and completely. For the body conquest of disease, pain and material obstructions, for the mind liberation from bondage to past experience and the heavier limitations

of space and time, for the heart victory over sin and grief and fear, for the spirit unclouded bliss, strength and illumination, this is the gospel of Yoga, is the goal to which Hinduism points humanity." (28)

6. The Greatness of the Individual*

"IN ALL movements, in every great mass of human action it is the Spirit of the Time, that which Europe calls the Zeitgeist and India Kala, who expresses himself. The very names are deeply significant. Kali, the Mother of all and destroyer of all, is the Shakti that works in secret in the heart of humanity manifesting herself in the perpetual surge of men, institutions and movements, Mahakala the Spirit within whose energy goes abroad in her and moulds the progress of the world and the destiny of the nations. His is the impetus which fulfils itself in Time, and once there is movement, impetus from the Spirit within, Time and the Mother take charge of it, prepare, ripen and fulfil." (29)

"The great and memorable vision of Kurukshetra when Sri Krishna manifesting his world-form declared himself as destroying Time, is significant of this deep perception of humanity." (29)

"It is not as the slow process of Time that Sri Krishna manifests himself; it is as the Zeitgeist consummating in a moment the work carefully prepared for decades that He appears to Arjuna. All have been moving inevitably towards the catastrophe of Kurukshetra. Men did not know it: those who would have done everything possible to avert the calamity, helped its coming by their action or inaction; those who had a glimpse of it strove in vain to stop the wheels of

Fate; Sri Krishna himself as the *niṣkāma karmayogin* who does his duty without regard to results, went on that hopeless embassy to Hastinapura; but the Zeitgeist overbore all. It was only afterwards that men saw how like rivers speeding towards the sea, like moths winging towards the lighted flame all that splendid, powerful and arrogant Indian world with its clans of Kings and its weapons and its chariots and its gigantic armies were rushing towards the open mouths of the destroyer to be lost in His mighty jaws, to be mangled between His gnashing teeth. In the *līlā* of the Eternal there are movements that are terrible as well as movements that are sweet and beautiful. The dance of Brindaban is not complete without the death-dance of Kurukshetra; for each is a part of that great harmonic movement of the world which progresses from discord to accord, from hatred and strife to love and brotherhood, from evil to the fulfilment of the evolution by the transformation of suffering and sin into beauty, bliss and good, *śivam*, *śāntam*, *śuddham*, *ānandam*." (30-31)

"Those who are commissioned to bring about mighty changes are full of the force of the Zeitgeist. Kali has entered into them and Kali when she enters into a man cares nothing for rationality and possibility. She is the force of Nature that whirls the stars in their orbits, lightly as a child might swing a ball, and to that force there is nothing impossible. She is *aghaṭana-ghaṭana-paṭīyasī*, very skilful in bringing about the impossible. She is the *devātmśaktiḥ svaguṇair nigūḍhā*, the Power of the Divine Spirit hidden in the modes of its own workings, and she needs nothing but time to carry out the purpose with which she is commissioned. She moves in Time and the very movement fulfils itself, creates its means, accomplishes its ends. It is not an accident that she works in one man more than in

another. He is chosen because he is a likely vessel, and having chosen him she neither rejects him till the purpose is fulfilled nor allows him to reject her." (31-32)

"So it is always. The men who prided themselves that great events were their work, because they seemed to have an initial hand in them, go down into the trench of Time and others march forward over their shattered reputations. Those who are swept forward by Kali within them and make no terms with Fate, they alone survive. The greatness of individuals is the greatness of the eternal Energy within." (32)

7. The Process of Evolution*

"The End of a stage of evolution is usually marked by a powerful recrudescence of all that has to go out of the evolution. It is a principle of Nature that in order to get rid of any powerful tendency or deep-seated association in humanity, whether in the mass or in the individual, it has first to be exhausted by *bhoga* or enjoyment, afterwards to be dominated and weakened by *nigraha* or control and, finally, when it is weak, to be got rid of by *saṁyama*, rejection or self-dissociation." (33)

"The process of human evolution has been seen by the eye of inspired observation to be that of working out the tiger and the ape. The forces of cruelty, lust, mischievous destruction, pain-giving, folly, brutality, ignorance were once rampant in humanity, they had full enjoyment; then by the growth of religion and philosophy they began in periods of satiety such as the beginning of the Christian era in Europe to be partly replaced, partly put under control. As is the law of such things, they have always reverted again with greater or

less virulence and sought with more or less success to reestablish themselves. Finally in the nineteenth century it seemed for a time as if some of these forces had, for a time at least, exhausted themselves and the hour for *saṁyama* and gradual dismissal from the evolution had really arrived. Such hopes always recur and in the end they are likely to bring about their own fulfilment, but before that happens another recoil is inevitable. We see plenty of signs of it in the reeling back into the beast which is in progress in Europe and America behind the fair outside of Science, progress, civilisation and humanitarianism, and we are likely to see more signs of it in the era that is coming upon us. A similar law holds in politics and society. The political evolution of the human race follows certain lines of which the most recent formula has been given in the watchwords of the French Revolution, freedom, equality and brotherhood. But the forces of the old world, the forces of despotism, the forces of traditional privilege and selfish exploitation, the forces of unfraternal strife and passionate self-regarding competition are always struggling to reseat themselves on the thrones of the earth. A determined movement of reaction is evident in many parts of the world and nowhere perhaps more than in England which was once one of the self-styled champions of progress and liberty. The attempt to go back to the old spirit is one of those necessary returns without which it cannot be so utterly exhausted as to be blotted out from the evolution. It rises only to be defeated and crushed again. On the other hand the force of the democratic tendency is not a force which is spent but one which has not yet arrived, not a force which has had the greater part of its enjoyment but one which is still vigorous, unsatisfied and eager for fulfilment. Every attempt to coerce it in the

past reacted eventually on the coercing force and brought back the democratic spirit fierce, hungry and unsatisfied, joining to its fair motto of "Liberty, Equality and Fraternity" the terrible addition "or Death". It is not likely that the immediate future of the democratic tendency will satisfy the utmost dreams of the lover of liberty who seeks an anarchist freedom, or of the lover of equality who tries to establish a socialistic dead level, or of the lover of fraternity who dreams of a world-embracing communism. But some harmonisation of this great ideal is undoubtedly the immediate future of the human race. On the old forces of despotism, inequality and unbridled competition, after they have been once more overthrown, a process of gradual *saṁyama* will be performed by which what has remained of them will be regarded as the disappearing vestiges of a dead reality and without any further violent coercion be transformed slowly and steadily out of existence." (35-37)

8. Fate and Free-Will*

"A QUESTION which has hitherto divided human thought and received no final solution, is the freedom of the human being in his relation to the Power intelligent or unintelligent that rules the world. We strive for freedom in our human relations, to freedom we move as our goal, and every fresh step in our human progress is a further approximation to our ideal. But are we free in ourselves? We seem to be free, to do that which we choose and not that which is chosen for us; but it is possible that the freedom may be illusory and our apparent freedom may be a real and iron bondage. We may be bound by predestination, the will of a Supreme Intelligent Power, or blind inexorable Nature, or

the necessity of our own previous development." (47)

"If we go back to the true Hindu teaching independent of Buddhistic influence, we shall find that it gives us a reconciliation of the dispute by a view of man's psychology in which both Fate and Free-will are recognised. The difference between Buddhism and Hinduism is that to the former the human soul is nothing, to the latter it is everything. The whole universe exists in the spirit, by the spirit, for the spirit; all we do, think and feel is for the spirit. Nature depends upon the Atman, all its movement, play, action is for the Atman." (47-48)

"There is no Fate except insistent causality which is only another name for Law, and Law itself is only an instrument in the hands of Nature for the satisfaction of the spirit. Law is nothing but a mode or rule of action; it is called in our philosophy not Law but Dharma, holding together, it is that by which the action of the universe, the action of its parts, the action of the individual is held together." (48)

"The whole of causality may be defined as previous action leading to subsequent action, Karma and Karmaphal. The Hindu theory is that thought and feeling, as well as actual speech or deeds, are part of Karma and create effects, and we do not accept the European sentiment that outward expression of thought and feeling in speech or deed is more important than the thought or feeling itself. This outward expression is only part of the thing expressed and its results are only part of the Karmaphal." (48)

"If, however, there is no escape from the Law, if Nature is supreme and inexorable, there can be no salvation; freedom becomes a chimaera, bondage eternal. There can be no escape,

unless there is something within us which is free and lord, superior to Nature. This entity the Hindu teaching finds in the spirit ever free and blissful which is one in essence and in reality with the Supreme Soul of the Universe. The spirit does not act, it is Nature that contains the action. If the spirit acted, it would be bound by its action. The thing that acts is Prakriti, Nature, which determines the Swabhava of things and is the source and condition of Law or dharma. The soul or Purusha holds up the swabhava, watches and enjoys the action and its fruit, sanctions the law or dharma. It is the king, Lord or Ishwara without whose consent nothing can be done by Prakriti. But the king is above the law and free.

It is this power of sanction that forms the element of free will in our lives. The spirit consents not that itself shall be bound, but that its enjoyment should be bound by time, space and causality and by the swabhava and the dharma. It consents to virtue or sin, good fortune or evil fortune, health or disease, joy or suffering, or it refuses them. What it is attached to, that Nature multiplies for it; what it is weary of, has *vairāgya* for, that Nature withdraws from it. Only, because the enjoyment is in space and time, therefore, even after the withdrawal of consent, the habitual action continues for a time just as the locomotive continues to move after the steam is shut off, but in a little while it slows down and finally comes to a standstill. And because the enjoyment is in causality, the removal of the habit of action is effected not spontaneously and freely, but by an established process or one of many established processes. This is the great truth now dawning on the world, that Will is the thing which moves the world and that Fate is merely a process by which Will fulfils itself.

But in order to feel its mastery of Nature, the human soul must put itself into communion with the infinite and universal Spirit. Its will must be one with the universal Will." (49-50)

9. The Three Purushas*

"THE GREATEST of all the philosophical problems which human thought has struggled to solve, is the exact nature and relation to us of the conscious Intelligence in the phenomenal existence around." (51)

"The Upanishads do not deny the reality of the world, but they identify it with Brahman who transcends it. He is the One without a second; He is the All. If all is Brahman, then there can be nothing but Brahman, and therefore the existence of the All, *sarvam idam*, does not contradict the unity of Brahman, does not establish the reality of *bheda*, difference. It is one Intelligence looking at itself from a hundred view-points, each point conscious of and enjoying the existence of the others. The shoreless stream of idea and thought, imagination and experience, name and form, sensation and vibration sweeps onward for ever, without beginning, without end, rising into view, sinking out of sight; through it the one Intelligence with its million self-expressions pours itself abroad, an ocean with innumerable waves. One particular self-expression may disappear into its source and continent, but that does not and cannot abolish the phenomenal universe. The One is for ever, and the Many are for ever because the One is for ever. So long as there is a sea, there will be waves.

In the oceanic stir and change of universal Nature the soul or Purusha is the standing-point, stable, unmoving,

unchanging, eternal, – *nityaḥ sarvagataḥ sthāṇur acalo'yaṁ sanātanaḥ*. In the whole, the Purusha or soul is one, – there is One Spirit which supports the stir of the Universe, not many. In the individual the One Purusha has three stages of personality; He is One, but triple, *trivṛt*. The Upanishads speak of two birds on one tree, of which one eats the fruit of the tree, the other, seated on a higher branch, does not eat but watches its fellow; one is *īśa* or lord of itself, the other is *anīśa*, not lord of itself, and it is when the eater looks up and perceives the greatness of the watcher and fills himself with it that grief, death, subjection, – in one word *māyā*, ignorance and illusion, ceases to touch him. There are two unborn who are male and one unborn who is female; she is the tree with its sweet and bitter fruit, the two are the birds. One of the unborn enjoys her sweetness, the other has put it away from him. These are the two Purushas, the *akṣara*, or immutable spirit, and the *kṣara*, or apparently mutable, and the tree or woman is Prakriti, universal Energy which the Europeans call Nature. The *kṣara puruṣa* is the soul in Nature and enjoying Nature, the *akṣara puruṣa* is the soul above Nature and watching her. But there is One who is not seated on the tree but occupies and possesses it, who is not only lord of Himself, but lord of all that is: He is higher than the *kṣara*, higher than the *akṣara*, He is Purushottama, the Soul one with God, with the All.

"The personality of the Supreme Soul is universal, not individual. Whatever is in all creatures, character, idea, imagination, experience, sensation, motion, is contained by Him as an object of spiritual enjoyment without limiting or determining Him. He is all things at once. Such a universality is necessary to support and supply individual existence, but it cannot be the determining limit of individual existence.

Something has to be reserved, something put forward, and this partial manifestation is the individual." (53)

"The Jiva or individual is *kṣara puruṣa*, and between him and the Supreme stands the *akṣara puruṣa*, the bird on the summit of the tree, joyous in his own bliss, undisturbed by the play of Nature, impartially watching it, receiving its images on his calm immovable existence without being for a moment bound or affected, eternally self-gathered, eternally free. This *akṣara puruṣa* is our real self, our divine unity with God, our inalienable freedom from that which is transient and changing. If it did not exist, there would be no escape from the bondage of life and death, joy and grief, sin and virtue; we should be prisoners in a cage without a door, beating our wings against the bars in vain for an exit; life and death, joy and grief, sin and virtue would be eternal, ineffugable realities, not temporary rules determining the great game of life, and we should be unwilling actors, not free playmates of God able to suspend and renew the game when we will. It is by realising our oneness with the *akṣara puruṣa* that we get freedom from ignorance, freedom from the cords of desire, freedom from the imperative law of works. On the other hand if the *akṣara puruṣa* were all, as the Sankhya philosophy contends, there would be no basis for different experience, no varying personality, every individual existence would be precisely like every other individual existence, the development and experience of one soul in Nature an exact replica of the development and experience of another soul. It is the *kṣara puruṣa* who is all creatures, and the variety of experience, character and development is effected by a particular part of the universal swabhava or nature of conscious existence in phenomena being attached to a particular individual or Jiva." (53-54)

"Development is determined by the *kṣara puruṣa*, but not conducted by him. It is Prakriti, the Universal Energy, that conducts development under the law of cause and effect, and is the true agent. The soul is not the agent, but the lord who enjoys the results of the action of his agent, Prakriti or Nature; only by his attachment to Prakriti he forgets himself and identifies himself with her so as to have the illusion of agency and, by thus forgetting himself, ceases to be lord of himself, becomes subject to Causality, imprisoned in Time and Space, bound by the work which he sanctions. He himself, being a part of God, is made in His image, of one nature with Him. Therefore what God is, he also is, only with limitation, subject to Time, Space and Causality, because he has, of his own will, accepted that bondage." (54-55)

"The first step in self-liberation is to get rid of the illusion of agency, to realise that Nature acts, not the soul. The second is to remove the siege of phenomenal associations by surrendering lordship to God, leaving Him alone to uphold and sanction by the abdication of one's own independent use of these powers, offering up the privilege of the enjoyer to Him. All that is then left is the attitude of the *akṣara puruṣa*, the free, blissful self-existence, watching the action of Prakriti, but outside it. The *kṣara* withdraws into the *akṣara*. When the *sākṣī* or witness withdraws into God Himself, that is the utter liberation." (55-56)

10. The Strength of Stillness*

"There are two great forces in the universe, silence and speech. Silence prepares, speech creates. Silence acts, speech gives the impulse to action. Silence compels, speech persuades.

The immense and inscrutable processes of the world all perfect themselves within, in a deep and august silence, covered by a noisy and misleading surface of sound – the stir of innumerable waves above, the fathomless resistless mass of the ocean's waters below. Men see the waves, they hear the rumour and the thousand voices and by these they judge the course of the future and the heart of God's intention; but in nine cases out of ten they misjudge. Therefore it is said that in History it is always the unexpected that happens. But it would not be the unexpected if men could turn their eyes from superficies and look into substance, if they accustomed themselves to put aside appearances and penetrate beyond them to the secret and disguised reality, if they ceased listening to the noise of life and listened rather to its silence." (57)

"When we strive to act, the forces of Nature do their will with us; when we grow still, we become their master. But there are two kinds of stillness – the helpless stillness of inertia, which heralds dissolution, and the stillness of assured sovereignty which commands the harmony of life. It is the sovereign stillness which is the calm of the Yogin. The more complete the calm, the mightier the yogic power, the greater the force in action.

In this calm, right knowledge comes. The thoughts of men are a tangle of truth and falsehood, *satyam* and *anṛtam*. True perception is marred and clouded by false perception, true judgment lamed by false judgment, true imagination distorted by false imagination, true memory deceived by false memory. The activity of the mind must cease, the chitta be purified, a silence fall upon the restlessness of Prakriti, then in that calm, in that voiceless stillness illumination comes upon

the mind, error begins to fall away and, so long as desire does not stir again, clarity establishes itself in the higher stratum of the consciousness compelling peace and joy in the lower. Right knowledge becomes the infallible source of right action. *Yogaḥ karmasu kauśalam.*

The knowledge of the Yogin is not the knowledge of the average desire-driven mind. Neither is it the knowledge of the scientific or of the worldly-wise reason which anchors itself on surface facts and leans upon experience and probability. The Yogin knows God's way of working and is aware that the improbable often happens, that facts mislead. He rises above reason to that direct and illuminated knowledge which we call *vijnānam.* The desire-driven mind is emmeshed in the intricate tangle of good and evil, of the pleasant and the unpleasant, of happiness and misfortune. It strives to have the good always, the pleasant always, the happiness always. It is elated by fortunate happenings, disturbed and unnerved by their opposite. But the illuminated eye of the seer perceives that all leads to good; for God is all and God is *sarvamaṅgalam.* He knows that the apparent evil is often the shortest way to the good, the unpleasant indispensable to prepare the pleasant, misfortune the condition of obtaining a more perfect happiness. His intellect is delivered from enslavement to the dualities.

Therefore the action of the Yogin will not be as the action of the ordinary man." (57-58)

"To be capable of silence, stillness, illuminated passivity is to be fit for immortality – *amṛtatvāya kalpate.* It is to be *dhīra*, the ideal of our ancient civilisation, which does not mean to be tamasic, inert and a block. The inaction of the tamasic

man is a stumbling-block to the energies around him, the inaction of the Yogin creates, preserves and destroys; his action is dynamic with the direct, stupendous driving-power of great natural forces. It is a stillness within often covered by a ripple of talk and activity without, – the ocean with its lively surface of waves. But even as men do not see the reality of God's workings from the superficial noise of the world and its passing events, for they are hidden beneath that cover, so also shall they fail to understand the action of the Yogin, for he is different within from what he is outside. The strength of noise and activity is, doubtless, great, – did not the walls of Jericho fall by the force of noise? But infinite is the strength of the stillness and the silence, in which great forces prepare for action." (59)

11. The Principle of Evil*

a. What is the Problem?

"THE PROBLEM of evil is one that has taxed human thought and evolved various and conflicting solutions. To the rationalist who does not believe in anything not material, the problem does not exist. Everything is in nature as the result of evolution. Nature is blind and unintelligent and has therefore no conception of good or evil; the conception belongs to the human mind and is the result of the social sense and the ideas of pleasure and pain developed in human beings by a perfectly intelligible natural process. It is to men who believe in Intelligence as governing and developing the world that the problem exists. Why did evil come into existence and what is its purpose?" (60)

"To our mind there is no escaping from the belief that, if God exists, He is All. All proceeds from Him; from what other source can it proceed? All exists in Him; in what other being or continent can it exist? Therefore evil must proceed from Him, evil must exist in Him. Since He is All-Wise, for all knowledge is His, it must exist for some wise and perfect purpose. Since He is All-Love, it must exist for good and not for anything which contradicts the good. Only, His is an infinite wisdom, ours a finite, His perfect, ours undeveloped. His is an infinite and all-wise love, ours a finite and unwise love, a love imperfectly informed by knowledge, full of *māyā*, attachment to passing happiness and pleasure. God's love looks beyond, ours fixes its eyes on the moment." (61)

b. True Perception Dawns Only on Dhira

"Experience must always be the basis of true knowledge, but it must be experience illuminated by true perception, not experience dominated by surface impressions. The experience of the mind which has compassed calm and is able to preserve its tranquillity under the most strenuous assaults of pain, misfortune and evil, is alone worth having. The mind which is not *dhīra*, which feels grief and thinks under the influence of affection and passion, even if it be noble affection and passion, cannot arrive at the *samyag jñānam*, the complete and perfect truth. Emotion is for the heart, it should not besiege the intellect; for the proper business of the intellect is to observe and understand, not to be obscured by the slightest prejudice, the least trace of feeling. One who is *dhīra* will look narrowly at every incident and, if he cannot see at once, wait for enlightenment as to its ultimate purpose and issue; so waiting, so calmly considering, the meaning of life dawns on the mind,

an infinite purpose reveals itself in things small and great, in occurrences good and bad: omniscient Providence reveals itself in the fall of the sparrow and the death of the ant as well as in the earthquake that destroys great cities and the floods that make thousands destitute and homeless. Rudra and Shiva reveal themselves as one. The Yogin sees God in all things, not only in all beings but in all events. He is the flood, He is the earthquake, He is Death that leads to a higher life, He is Pain that prepares us for a higher bliss. This is a thing that cannot be argued; it has to be seen. *Paripaśyanti dhīraḥ*. And sight is only possible to the calm heart and the unperturbed understanding." (61-62)

"As with the individual, so with the race and the world, evil tends to good, it comes into existence in order that men may reject the lesser good and rise to the higher." (62)

c. The Problem of Pain – Real or a Shadow?

"The problem of pain remains. Was it necessary that the process should be accompanied with pain to the individual? At one time the capacity for pain, physical and mental, was infinitely less than it is now, so little that it might be pronounced to be nil. It is a remarkable fact that disease, pain and grief have grown keener with the growing fineness of the human organisation. Obviously this can only be a temporary development necessary to prepare a higher race which shall rise above pain to a higher capacity for pleasure and happiness. The lower organisation resisted the *saṁskāra* of pain and grief by the coarseness of its composition, it rejected pain in the sense of not knowing it. The higher organisation of the future will not be below it, but rise above it. It was the knowledge of good and evil that brought grief and sin into the world;

when that knowledge is surmounted, man will rise above grief and sin. Before he ate the forbidden fruit, he had the innocence of the animal; when he shall cease to eat it, he will have the innocence of the God. Is it not so that in nature pain is a possibility which has to be exhausted and man has been selected as the instrument to bring it into existence, in a limited space, for a limited time, and work it out of the cosmos? In the light of this idea the Christian doctrine of the Son of Man on the cross acquires a new significance and man himself becomes the Christ of the universe.

Another question occurs. Is pain real or a shadow? The Vedantist believes that the soul is a part of God or one with God Himself, and cannot feel pain or grief, but only *ānanda*, bliss. The *jīva* or soul takes the *rasa*, the delight of the dualities, and it changes to bliss in his nature; but this is veiled by the ignorance and separates the *jīva* in his *svarūpa* from the mind and the heart. Pain is a negative *vikāra* or corruption of true experience in the mind, pleasure a positive *vikāra*. The truth is *ānanda*. But this is a knowledge for which mankind is not ready. Only the Yogin realises it and becomes *sama*, like-minded to pain and pleasure, good or evil, happiness or misfortune. He takes the *rasa* of both and they give him strength and bliss; for the veil between his mind and his soul is removed and the apparent man in him has become one with the *svarūpa* or real man. If mankind as a whole came too early by that knowledge, the evolution of the perfect good would be delayed. The utter sweetness of *dayā* and *prema*, pity and love, might never be extracted from the *līlā*." (62-63)

12. The Stress of the Hidden Spirit

"THE WORLD is a great game of hide and seek in which

the real hides behind the apparent, spirit behind matter. The apparent masquerades as real, the real is seen dimly as if it were an unsubstantial shadow. The grandeur of the visible universe and its laws enslaves men's imaginations." (64)

"The Spirit manifest as Intelligence is the basis of the world. Spirit as existence, Sat, is one; as Intelligence it multiplies itself without ceasing to be one. We see that tree and say "Here is a material thing"; but if we ask how the tree came into existence, we have to say, it grew or evolved out of the seed. But growth or evolution is only a term describing the sequence in a process. It does not explain the origin or account for the process itself. Why should the seed produce a tree and not some other form of existence?" (65)

"The seed evolves a tree because tree is the idea involved in the seed; it is a process of manifestation in form, not a creation. If there were no insistent idea, we should have a world of chances and freaks, not a world of law – there would be no such idea as the nature of things, if there were not an originating and ordering intelligence manifesting a particular idea in forms. And the form varies, is born, perishes; the idea is eternal. The form is the manifestation or appearance, the idea is the truth. The form is phenomenon, the idea is reality.

Therefore in all things the Hindu thinker sees the stress of the hidden spirit. We see it as Prajna, the universal Intelligence, conscious in things unconscious, active in things inert. The energy of Prajna is what the Europeans call Nature. The tree does not and cannot shape itself, the stress of the hidden Intelligence shapes it. He is in the seed of man and in that little particle of matter carries habit, character, types of emotion into the unborn child. Therefore heredity is true;

but if Prajna were not concealed in the seed, heredity would be false, inexplicable, impossible. We see the same stress in the mind, heart, body of man. Because the hidden spirit urges himself on the body, stamps himself on it, expresses himself in it, the body expresses the individuality of the man, the developing and conscious idea or varying type which is myself; therefore no two faces, no two expressions, no two thumb impressions even are entirely alike; every part of the body in some way or other expresses the man. The stress of the spirit shows itself in the mind and heart; therefore men, families, nations have individuality, run into particular habits of thought and feeling, therefore also they are both alike and dissimilar. Therefore men act and react, not only physically but spiritually, intellectually, morally on each other, because there is one self in all creatures expressing itself in various idea and forms variously suitable to the idea. The stress of the hidden Spirit expresses itself again in events and the majestic course of the world. This is the Zeitgeist, this is the purpose that runs through the process of the centuries, the changes of the suns, this is that which makes evolution possible and provides it with a way, means and a goal. "This is He who from years sempiternal hath ordered perfectly all things."

This is the teaching of the Vedanta as we have it in its oldest form in the Upanishads. Adwaita, Vishishtadwaita, Dwaita are merely various ways of looking at the relations of the One to the Many, and none of them has the right to monopolise the name Vedanta." (65-66)

"The Spirit is infinite, illimitable, eternal, and infinite, illimitable, eternal is its stress towards manifestation filling endless space with innumerable existences." (67)

II. The Yoga and Its Objects (Circa 1912)*

1. The Yoga and Its Objects*

a. What do We Understand by Yoga

"THE YOGA we practise is not for ourselves alone, but for the Divine; its aim is to work out the will of the Divine in the world, to effect a spiritual transformation and to bring down a divine nature and a divine life into the mental, vital and physical nature and life of humanity. Its object is not personal Mukti, although Mukti is a necessary condition of the yoga, but the liberation and transformation of the human being." (71)

"God always keeps for himself a chosen country in which the higher knowledge is through all chances and dangers, by the few or the many, continually preserved, and for the present, in this Chaturyuga at least, that country is India. Whenever he chooses to take the full pleasure of ignorance, of the dualities, of strife and wrath and tears and weakness and selfishness, the tamasic and rajasic pleasures, of the play of the Kali in short, he dims the knowledge in India and puts her down into weakness and degradation so that she may retire into herself and not interfere with this movement of his Lila. When he wants to rise up from the mud and Narayana in man to become once again mighty and wise and blissful, then he once more pours out the knowledge on India and raises her up so that she may give the knowledge with its necessary consequences of might, wisdom and bliss to the whole world. When there is the contracted movement of knowledge, the yogins in India withdraw from the world and practise yoga for their own

liberation and delight or for the liberation of a few disciples; but when the movement of knowledge again expands and the soul of India expands with it, they come forth once more and work in the world and for the world. Yogins like Janaka, Ajatashatru and Kartavirya once more sit on the thrones of the world and govern the nations.

God's Lila in man moves always in a circle, from Satyayuga to Kali and through Kali to the Satya, from the Age of Gold to the Age of Iron and back again through the Iron to the Gold. In modern language the Satyayuga is a period of the world in which a harmony, stable and sufficient, is created and man realises for a time, under certain conditions and limitations, the perfection of his being. The harmony exists in its nature, by the force of a settled purity; but afterwards it begins to break down and man upholds it, in the Treta, by force of will, individual and collective; it breaks down further and he attempts to uphold it in the Dwapara by intellectual regulation and common consent and rule; then in the Kali it finally collapses and is destroyed. But the Kali is not merely evil; in it the necessary conditions are progressively built up for a new Satya, another harmony, a more advanced perfection. In the period of the Kali which has passed, still endures in its effects, but is now at an end, there has been a general destruction of the ancient knowledge and culture." (71-72)

"It is only India that can discover the harmony, because it is only by a change – not a mere readjustment – of man's present nature that it can be developed, and such a change is not possible except by yoga. The nature of man and of things is at present a discord, a harmony that has got out of tune. The whole heart and action and mind of man must be changed, but from within, not from without, not by political and social

institutions, not even by creeds and philosophies, but by realisation of God in ourselves and the world and a remoulding of life by that realisation. This can only be effected by Purnayoga, a yoga not devoted to a particular purpose, even though that purpose be Mukti or Ananda, but to the fulfilment of the divine humanity in ourselves and others. For this purpose the practices of Hatha and Raja Yoga are not sufficient and even the Trimarga will not serve; we must go higher and resort to the Adhyatmayoga. The principle of Adhyatmayoga is, in knowledge, the realisation of all things that we see or do not see but are aware of, – men, things, ourselves, events, gods, titans, angels, – as one divine Brahman, and in action and attitude, an absolute self-surrender to the Paratpara Purusha, the transcendent, infinite and universal Personality who is at once personal and impersonal, finite and infinite, self-limiting and illimitable, one and many, and informs with his being not only the Gods above, but man and the worm and the clod below. The surrender must be complete. Nothing must be reserved, no desire, no demand, no opinion, no idea that this must be, that cannot be, that this should be and that should not be; – all must be given. The heart must be purified of all desire, the intellect of all self-will, every duality must be renounced, the whole world seen and unseen must be recognised as one supreme expression of concealed Wisdom, Power and Bliss, and the entire being given up, as an engine is passive in the hands of the driver, for the divine Love, Might and perfect Intelligence to do its work and fulfil its divine Lila. *Ahaṅkāra* must be blotted out in order that we may have, as God intends us ultimately to have, the perfect bliss, the perfect calm and knowledge and the perfect activity of the divine existence. If this attitude of perfect self-

surrender can be even imperfectly established, all necessity of Yogic *kṛiyā* inevitably ceases. For then God himself in us becomes the sadhaka and the siddha and his divine power works in us, not by our artificial processes, but by a working of Nature which is perfectly informed, all-searching and infallibly efficient." (73-74)

"The first process of the yoga is to make the *saṅkalpa* of *ātmasamarpaṇa*. Put yourself with all your heart and all your strength into God's hands. Make no conditions, ask for nothing, not even for *siddhi* in the yoga, for nothing at all except that in you and through you his will may be directly performed. To those who demand from him, God gives what they demand, but to those who give themselves and demand nothing, he gives everything that they might otherwise have asked or needed and in addition he gives himself and the spontaneous boons of his love.

The next process is to stand aside and watch the working of the divine power in yourself. This working is often attended with disturbance and trouble in the system, therefore faith is necessary, though perfect faith is not always possible at once; for whatever impurity is in you, harboured openly or secretly lurking, is likely to rise at first and be repeated so long as it is not exhaustively swept out, and doubt in this age is an almost universal impurity. But even when doubt assails, stand by and wait for it to pass, availing yourself if possible of the *satsaṅga* of those who are already advanced on the path, but when that is absent, still holding fast to the principle of the yoga, self-surrender. When distressed within or assailed from without, remember the words of the Gita,

मच्चित्तः सर्वदुर्गाणि मत्प्रसादात् तरिष्यसि।

"By giving thyself up in heart and mind to Me, thou shalt cross over all difficulties and perils by My grace," and again,

सर्वधर्मान् परित्यज्य मामेकं शरणं व्रज।
अहं त्वा सर्वपापेभ्यो मोक्षयिष्यामि मा शुचः॥

"Abandon all *dharmas* (all law, rule, means and codes of every kind whether formed by previous habit and belief or imposed from outside) and take refuge in Me alone; I will deliver thee from all sin and evil, – do not grieve." "I will deliver", – you have not to be troubled or struggle yourself as if the responsibility were yours or the result depended on your efforts, a mightier than you is busy with the matter. Neither disease nor calamity nor the rising of sin and impurity in you should cause any alarm. Hold fast only to him. "I will deliver thee from all sin and evil." But the release does not come by a sudden miracle, it comes by a process of purification and these things are a part of the process. They are like the dust that rises in clouds when a room long uncleaned is at last swept out. Though the dust seem to choke you, yet persevere, *mā śucaḥ*.

In order to stand aside, you must know yourself as the Purusha who merely watches, consents to God's work, holds up the Adhar and enjoys the fruits that God gives. The work itself is done by God as Shakti, by Kali, and is offered up by her as a Yajna to Sri Krishna; you are the Yajamana who sees the sacrifice done, whose presence is necessary to every movement of the sacrifice and who tastes its results." (74-75)

"The third process of the yoga is to perceive all things as God. First, as a rule, in the process of knowledge one comes to see pervading all space and time one divine impersonal Existence, Sad Atman, without movement,

distinction or feature, *śāntam alakṣaṇam*, in which all names and forms seem to stand with a very doubtful or a very minor reality. In this realisation the One may seem to be the only reality and everything else Maya, a purposeless and inexplicable illusion. But afterwards, if you do not stop short and limit yourself by the impersonal realisation, you will come to see the same Atman not only containing and supporting all created things, but informing and filling them, and eventually you will be able to understand that even the names and forms are Brahman." (76)

"It is he who has made this world out of his being and is immanent in and sustains it as the infinite-finite Ishwara, *ananta* and *sānta*, Shiva and Narayana, Sri Krishna the Lilamaya who draws all of us to him by his love, compels all of us by his masteries and plays his eternal play of joy and strength and beauty in the manifold world.

The world is only a play of his being, knowledge and delight, *sat*, *cit* and *ānanda*. Matter itself, you will one day realise, is not material, it is not substance but form of consciousness, *guṇa*, the result of quality of being perceived by sense-knowledge. Solidity itself is only a combination of the *guṇas*, *saṁhati* and *dhṛti*, cohesion and permanence, a state of conscious being, nothing else. Matter, life, mind and what is beyond mind, it is all Sri Krishna the Ananta-guna Brahman playing in the world as the Sachchidananda. When we have this realisation, when we dwell in it securely and permanently, all possibilities of grief and sin, fear, delusion, internal strife and pain are driven puissantly from our being. We realise in our experience the truth of the Upanishads,

आनन्दं ब्रह्मणो विद्वान् न विभेति कुतश्चन।

"He who possesses the delight of the Brahman has no fear from anything in the world," and that other in the Isha Upanishad,

यस्मिन् सर्वाणि भूतानि आत्मैवाभूद् विजानतः।
तत्र को मोहः कः शोक एकत्वमनुपश्यतः॥

"When all created things become one with a man's self by his getting the knowledge (*vijñāna*), thereafter what bewilderment can he have or what grief, when in all things he sees their oneness?" The whole world then appears to us in a changed aspect, as an ocean of beauty, good, light, bliss, exultant movement on a basis of eternal strength and peace. We see all things as *śubha*, *śiva*, *maṅgala*, *ānandamaya."* (76-77)

"ईशा वास्यमिदं सर्वं यत् किञ्च जगत्यां जगत्।

"All this world and every object in this world of Prakriti has been created as a habitation for the Lord."

Nor is it enough to see him in all things and beings, *sarvabhūteṣu*; you must see him in all events, actions, thoughts, feelings, in yourself and others, throughout the world. For this realisation two things are necessary: first, that you should give up to him the fruit of all your actions, secondly, that you should give up to him the actions themselves. Giving up the fruits of action does not mean that you must have the *vairāgya* for the fruits, turn away from them or refuse to act with a given end before you. It means that you must act, not because you want this or that to happen or think it necessary that this or that should happen and your action needed to bring it about, but because it is *kartavyam*, demanded by the Master of your being and must be done with whatever result God is pleased to give. You must put aside what you want and wish to know what God wants; distrust what your heart, your

passions or your habitual opinions prefer to hold as right and necessary, and passing beyond them, like Arjuna in the Gita, seek only to know what God has set down as right and necessary. Be strong in the faith that whatever is right and necessary will inevitably happen as the result of your due fulfilment of the *kartavyaṁ karma*, even if it is not the result that you preferred or expected. The power that governs the world is at least as wise as you and it is not absolutely necessary that you should be consulted or indulged in its management; God is seeing to it.

But what is the *kartavyaṁ karma*? It is very difficult to say, – *gahanā karmaṇo gatiḥ*. Most people would translate *kartavyaṁ karma* by the English word and idea, *duty*; if asked to define it, they would say it is the right and moral action, what people understand by right and morality, what you yourself conscientiously think to be right or else what the good of society, the nation or mankind demands of you. But the man who remains bound by these personal or social ideas of duty, necessary as they are for the ignorant to restrain and tame their clamorous desires or their personal egoism, will be indeed what is called a good man, but he will never attain to the fulfilment of this yoga. He will only replace the desire for one kind of fruit by the desire for another kind; he will strive, even more passionately perhaps, for these higher results and be more bitterly grieved by not attaining them. There is no passion so terrible as the passion of the altruist, no egoism so hard to shake as the fixed egoism of virtue, precisely because it is justified in its own eyes and justified in the sight of men and cannot see the necessity for yielding to a higher law. Even if there is no grieving over the results, there will be the labour and strife of the rajasic *kartā*, struggling and

fighting, getting eager and getting exhausted, not *triguṇātīta*, always under bondage to the *guṇas*." (78-79)

b. Three Stages Helpful in Surrender of Action

"The best foundation for the surrender of action is the realisation that Prakriti is doing all our actions at God's command and God through our *svabhāva* determines the action. From that moment the action belongs to him, it is not yours nor the responsibility yours; there is indeed no responsibility, no bondage of Karma, for God has no responsibility, but is in every way master and free. Our actions become not only like the Shastric man's *svabhāvaniyata*, regulated by nature and therefore *dharma*, but the *svabhāva* itself is controlled like a machine by God. It is not easy for us, full as we are of the Sanskaras of ignorance, to arrive at this stage of knowledge, but there are three stages by which it can be rapidly done. The first is to live in the spirit of the *śloka*, –

त्वया हृषीकेश हृदि स्थितेन यथा नियःक्तोऽस्मि तथा करोमि।

"According as I am appointed by Thee, O Hrishikesha! seated in my heart, so I act." When this has entered into your daily life, it will be easier to accomplish the second stage and live in the knowledge of the Gita,

ईश्वरः सर्वभूतानां हृद्देशेऽर्जुन तिष्ठति।
भ्रामयन् सर्वभूताति यन्त्रारूढानि मायया॥

"God stands in the heart of all beings, whirling round all, as on a wheel, by the Maya of the three *guṇas*." You will then be able to perceive the action of the three *guṇas* in you and watch the machinery at its work, no longer saying, *tathā karomi*, I do, but *guṇā vartanta eva*, it is merely the *guṇas* that

work. One great difficulty in these stages, especially before you can distinguish the action of the *guṇas*, is the perception of the impurity of the *svabhāva*, the haunting idea of sin and virtue. You must always remember that, since you have put yourself in God's hands, he will work out the impurities and you have only to be careful, as you cannot be attached either to *pāpa* or *puṇya*, sin or virtue. For he has repeatedly given the *abhaya vacana*, the assurance of safety. "*Pratijānīhi*," he says in the Gita, "*na me bhaktaḥ praṇaśyati*, he who is devoted to Me cannot perish."

The third stage comes out of the second, by full realisation of God, or of itself by the grace of God. Not only will the Purusha stand apart and be *triguṇātīta*, beyond the three *guṇas*, but the Prakriti, though using the *guṇas*, will be free from their bondage. Sattwa, as we know it, will disappear into pure *prakāśa* and *jyotiḥ,* and the nature will live in a pure, free and infinite self-existing illumination. Tamas, as we know it, will disappear into pure *śama* or *śānti*, and the nature will take its firm stand on an infinite and ineffable rest and peace. Rajas, as we know it, will disappear into pure *tapas*, and the nature will flow in a free and infinite ocean of divine force. On that foundation of calm and in that heaven of light, action will occur as the spontaneous objective expression of God's knowledge, which is one with God's will. This is the condition of infinity, *ānantya*, in which this struggle of bound and limited sattwa, rajas and tamas is replaced by a mighty harmony of free *prakāśa*, *tapas* and *śama*. And even before you reach that condition, on the way to it, you will find that some mighty force not your own, not situated in your body though possessing and occupying it, is thinking for you, feeling for you, acting for you, your very

body as well as your mind and heart being moved by that force and not by yourself." (80-82)

"Laying down all actions upon Me, with thy whole conscious being in *adhyātmayoga*, become free from desire and the sense of belongings; fight, let the fever of thy soul pass from thee." For this great and complete liberation it is necessary that you should be *niḥspṛha*, *nirdvandva* and *nirahaṅkāra*, without the longing and reaching after things, free from the *saṁskāra* of the dualities and free from egoism; for these three things are the chief enemies of self-surrender. If you are *nirdvandva*, you can be *niḥspṛha*, but hardly otherwise, for every *dvandva* creates in the mind by the very nature of the mind some form of *rāgadveṣa*, like and dislike, attraction and repulsion, whether they are the lowest dualities that appeal to the mind through the body, hunger and thirst, heat and cold, physical pleasure and pain, or the middle sorts that appeal to it through the feelings and desires, success and failure, victory and defeat, fortune and misfortune, pleasure and displeasure, joy and grief, hate and love, or the highest which appeal to the mind through the discriminating *buddhi*, virtue and sin, reason and unreason, error and truth. These things can only be put under our feet by complete knowledge, the knowledge that sees God in all things and thus comes to understand the relations of things to each other in his great cosmic purpose, by complete Bhakti which accepts all things with joy, – thus abolishing the *dvandvas*, – because they come from the Beloved or by perfect action offering up all works as a sacrifice to God with an entire indifference to these dualities of success, failure, honour, disgrace, etc., which usually pursue all Karma. Such knowledge, such Bhakti, such Karma come inevitably as the eventual result of the *saṅkalpa* of self-surrender and the practice of it.

But it is *ahaṅkāra* that by making the relation and effect of things on ourselves or on things connected with us the standard of life, makes the *dvandvas* a chain for our bondage. *Ahaṅkāra* in its action on our life and sadhana will be seen to be of three kinds, rajasic, tamasic and sattwic." (82-83)

"Each of the *guṇas* working on the *ahaṅkāra* has its particular danger for the sadhak who has made the *saṅkalpa* of self-surrender, but has not yet attained to the full accomplishment of the surrender. The danger of the *rajoguṇa* is when the sadhak is assailed by the pride that thinks, "I am a great sadhak, I have advanced so far, I am a great instrument in God's hands," and similar ideas, or when he attaches himself to the work as God's work which must be carried out, putting himself into it and troubling himself about it as if he had more interest in God's work than God himself and could manage it better. Many, while they are acting all the while in the spirit of rajasic *ahaṅkāra*, persuade themselves that God is working through them and they have no part in the action. This is because they are satisfied with the mere intellectual assent to the idea without waiting for the whole system and life to be full of it. A continual remembrance of God in others and renunciation of individual eagerness (*spṛhā*) are needed and a careful watching of our inner activities until God by the full light of self-knowledge, *jñānadīpena bhāsvatā*, dispels all further chance of self-delusion.

The danger of *tamoguṇa* is twofold, first, when the Purusha thinks, identifying himself with the tamas in him, "I am weak, sinful, miserable, ignorant, good-for-nothing, inferior to this man and inferior to that man, *adhama*, what will God do through me?" – as if God were limited by the temporary capacities or incapacities of his instruments and it were not

true that he can make the dumb to talk and the lame to cross the hills, *mūkaṁ karoti vācālaṁ paṅguṁ laṅghayate girim*, – and again when the sadhak tastes the relief, the tremendous relief of a negative *śānti* and, feeling himself delivered from all troubles and in possession of peace, turns away from life and action and becomes attached to the peace and ease of inaction. Remember always that you too are Brahman and the divine Shakti is working in you; reach out always to the realisation of God's omnipotence and his delight in the Lila. He bids Arjuna work *lokasaṅgrahārthāya*, for keeping the world together, for he does not wish the world to sink back into Prakriti, but insists on your acting as he acts,

उत्सीदेयुरिसे लोका न कुर्यां कर्म चेदहम्।

"These worlds would be overpowered by tamas and sink into Prakriti if I did not do actions." To be attached to inaction is to give up our action not to God but to our tamasic *ahaṅkāra*.

The danger of the *sattvaguṇa* is when the sadhak becomes attached to any one-sided conclusion of his reason, to some particular *kriyā* or movement of the sadhana, to the joy of any particular *siddhi* of the yoga, perhaps the sense of purity or the possession of some particular power or the Ananda of the contact with God or the sense of freedom and hungers after it, becomes attached to that only and would have nothing else. Remember that the yoga is not for yourself; for these things, though they are part of the *siddhi*, are not the object of the *siddhi*, for you have decided at the beginning to make no claim upon God but take what he gives you freely and, as for the Ananda, the selfless soul will even forego the joy of God's presence, when that is God's will. You must be free even from the highest sattwic *ahaṅkāra*, even from the subtle ignorance

of *mumukṣutva*, the desire of liberation, and take all joy and delight without attachment. You will then be the *siddha* or perfect man of the Gita.

These then are the processes of the yoga, (1) the *saṅkalpa* of *ātmasamarpaṇa*, (2) the standing apart from the Adhar by self-knowledge, (3) the vision of God everywhere and in all things and in all happenings, the surrender of the fruits of action and action itself to God, and the freedom thereby from ignorance, from *ahaṅkāra*, from the *dvandvas*, from desire, so that you are *śuddha*, *mukta*, *siddha*, full of Ananda, pure, free, perfect and blissful in your being. But the processes will be worked out, once the *saṅkalpa* is made, by God's Shakti, by a mighty process of Nature. All that is indispensable on your part is the *anumati* and *smṛti*. *Anumati* is consent, you must give a temporary consent to the movements of the yoga, to all that happens inside or outside you as part of the circumstances of the sadhana, not exulting at the good, not fretting at the evil, not struggling in your heart to keep the one or get rid of the other, but always keeping in mind and giving a permanent assent to that which has to be finally effected. The temporary consent is passive submission to the methods and not positive acceptance of the results. The permanent consent is an anticipatory acceptance of the results, a sort of effortless and desireless exercise of will. It is the constant exercise of this desireless will, an intent aspiration and constant remembrance of the path and its goal which are the *dhṛti* and *utsāha* needed, the necessary steadfastness and zeal of the sadhak; *vyākulatā* or excited, passionate eagerness is more intense, but less widely powerful, and it is disturbing and exhausting, giving intense pleasure and pain in the pursuit but not so vast a bliss in the acquisition. The followers of this

path must be like the men of the early yugas, *dhīrāḥ* , the great word of praise in the Upanishads. In the remembrance, the *smṛti* or *smaraṇa*, you must be *apramatta*, free from negligence. It is by the loss of the *smṛti* owing to the rush and onset of the *guṇas* that the yogin becomes *bhraṣṭa*, falls from his firm seat, wanders from his path. But you need not be distressed when the *pramāda* comes and the state of fall or clouded condition seems to persist, for there is no fear for you of a permanent fall since God himself has taken entire charge of you and if you stumble, it is because it is best for you to stumble, as a child by frequent stumbling and falling learns to walk. The necessity of *apramattatā* disappears when you can replace the memory of the yoga and its objects by the continual remembrance of God in all things and happenings, the *nitya anusmaraṇa* of the Gita. For those who can make the full surrender from the beginning there is no question; their path is utterly swift and easy.

It is said in the "Sanatsujatiya" that four things are necessary for *siddhi* – *śāstra*, *utsāha*, *guru* and *kāla* – the teaching of the path, zeal in following it, the Guru and time. Your path is that which I am pointing out, the *uts āha* needed is this *anumati* and this *nitya smaraṇa*, the Guru is God himself and for the rest only time is needed. That God himself is the Guru, you will find when knowledge comes to you; you will see how every little circumstance within you and without you has been subtly planned and brought about by infinite wisdom to carry out the natural process of the yoga, how the internal and external movements are arranged and brought together to work on each other, so as to work out the imperfection and work in the perfection. An almighty love and wisdom are at work for your uplifting. Therefore never be troubled by the

time that is being taken, even if it seems very long, but when imperfections and obstructions arise, be *apramatta*, *dhīra*, have the *utsāha*, and leave God to do the rest. Time is necessary. It is a tremendous work that is being done in you, the alteration of your whole human nature into a divine nature, the crowding of centuries of evolution into a few years. You ought not to grudge the time. There are other paths that offer more immediate results or at any rate, by offering you some definite *kriyā* you canwork at yourself, give your *ahaṅkāra* the satisfaction of feeling that you are doing something, so many more *prāṇāyāmas* today, so much longer a time for the *āsana*, so many more repetitions of the *japa*, so much done, so much definite progress marked. But once you have chosen this path, you must cleave to it. Those are human methods, not the way that the infinite Shakti works, which moves silently, sometimes imperceptibly to its goal, advances here, seems to pause there, then mightily and triumphantly reveals the grandiose thing that it has done. Artificial paths are like canals hewn by the intelligence of man; you travel easily, safely, surely, but from one given place to another. This path is the broad and trackless ocean by which you can travel widely to all parts of the world and are admitted to the freedom of the infinite. All that you need are the ship, the steering-wheel, the compass, the motive-power and a skilful captain. Your ship is the Brahmavidya, faith is your steering-wheel, self-surrender your compass, the motive-power is she who makes, directs and destroys the worlds at God's command and God himself is your captain. But he has his own way of working and his own time for everything. Watch his way and wait for his time. Understand also the importance of accepting the Shastra and submitting to the Guru and do not do like the Europeans who insist on

the freedom of the individual intellect to follow its own fancies and preferences which it calls reasonings, even before it is trained to discern or fit to reason. It is much the fashion nowadays to indulge in metaphysical discussions and philosophical subtleties about Maya and Adwaita and put them in the forefront, making them take the place of spiritual experience. Do not follow that fashion or confuse yourself and waste time on the way by questionings which will be amply and luminously answered when the divine knowledge of the *vijñāna* awakes in you. Metaphysical knowledge has its place, but as a handmaid to spiritual experience, showing it the way sometimes but much more dependent on it and living upon its bounty. By itself it is mere *pāṇḍitya*, a dry and barren thing and more often a stumbling-block than a help. Having accepted this path, follow its Shastra without unnecessary doubt and questioning, keeping the mind plastic to the light of the higher knowledge, gripping firmly what is experienced, waiting for light where things are dark to you, taking without pride what help you can from the living guides who have already trod the path, always patient, never hastening to narrow conclusions, but waiting for a more complete experience and a fuller light, relying on the Jagadguru who helps you from within." (84-88)

"God is one but he is not bounded by his unity. We see him here as one who is always manifesting as many, not because he cannot help it, but because he so wills, and outside manifestation he is *anirdeśyam*, indefinable, and cannot be described as either one or many. That is what the Upanishads and other sacred books consistently teach; he is *ekamevādvitīyam*, One and there is no other, but also and consequently he is "this man, yonder woman, that blue-winged

bird, this scarlet-eyed." He is *śānta*, he is *ananta*; the Jiva is he. "I am the *aśvattha* tree," says Sri Krishna in the Gita, "I am death, I am Agni Vaishwanara, I am the heat that digests food, I am Vyasa, I am Vasudeva, I am Arjuna." All that is the play of his *caitanya* in his infinite being, his manifestations, and therefore all are real. Maya means nothing more than the freedom of Brahman from the circumstances through which he expresses himself. He is in no way limited by that which we see or think about him. That is the Maya from which we must escape, the Maya of ignorance which takes things as separately existent and not God, not *caitanya*, the illimitable for the really limited, the free for the bound. Do you remember the story of Sri Krishna and the Gopis, how Narada found him differently occupied in each house to which he went, present to each Gopi in a different body, yet always the same Sri Krishna? Apart from the devotional meaning of the story, which you know, it is a good image of his World-Lila. He is *sarva*, everyone, each Purusha with his apparently different Prakriti and action is he, and yet at the same time he is the Purushottama who is with Radha, the Para Prakriti, and can withdraw all these into himself when he wills and put them out again when he wills. From one point of view they are one with him, from another one yet different, from yet another always different because they always exist, latent in him or expressed at his pleasure. There is no profit in disputing about these standpoints. Wait until you see God and know yourself and him and then debate and discussion will be unnecessary.

The goal marked out for us is not to speculate about these things, but to experience them. The call upon us is to grow into the image of God, to dwell in him and with him and be a channel of his joy and might and an instrument of his works. Purified from all that is *aśubha*, transfigured in soul

by his touch, we have to act in the world as dynamos of that divine electricity and send it thrilling and radiating through mankind, so that wherever one of us stands, hundreds around may become full of his light and force, full of God and full of Ananda. Churches, Orders, theologies, philosophies have failed to save mankind because they have busied themselves with intellectual creeds, dogmas, rites and institutions, with *ācāraśuddhi* and *darśana*, as if these could save mankind, and have neglected the one thing needful, the power and purification of the soul. We must go back to the one thing needful, take up again Christ's gospel of the purity and perfection of mankind, Mahomed's gospel of perfect submission, self-surrender and servitude to God, Chaitanya's gospel of the perfect love and joy of God in man, Ramakrishna's gospel of the unity of all religions and the divinity of God in man, and, gathering all these streams into one mighty river, one purifying and redeeming Ganges, pour it over the death-in-life of a materialistic humanity as Bhagirath led down the Ganges and flooded with it the ashes of his fathers, so that they may be a resurrection of the soul in mankind and the Satyayuga for a while return to the world. Nor is this the whole object of the Lila or the Yoga; the reason for which the Avatars descend is to raise up man again and again, developing in him a higher and ever higher humanity, a greater and yet greater development of divine being, bringing more and more of heaven again and again upon the earth until our toil is done, our work accomplished and Sachchidananda fulfilled in all even here, even in this material universe. Small is his work, even if he succeeds, who labours for his own salvation or the salvation of a few; infinitely great is his, even if he fail or succeed only partially or for a season, who lives only to bring about peace of soul, joy, purity and

perfection among all mankind." (89-91)

2. Appendix: Explanations of Some Words and Phrases*

> " "Matter itself, you will one day realise, is not material, it is not substance but form of consciousness, *guṇa*, the result of quality of being perceived by sense-knowledge." (p. 77)

There is no need to put "the" before "quality" – in English that would alter the sense. Matter is not regarded in this passage as a quality of being perceived by sense; I don't think that would have any meaning. It is regarded as a result of a certain power and action of consciousness which presents forms of itself to sense perception and it is this quality of sense-perceivedness, so to speak, that gives them the appearance of Matter, i.e. of a certain kind of substantiality inherent in themselves – but in fact they are not self-existent substantial objects but forms of consciousness. The point is that there is no such thing as the self-existent Matter posited by nineteenth-century Science." (92)

" "the nature"

Nature here means the parts of Prakriti in the human being: as it is the condition of the Prakriti that changes with shifting of the gunas and it is this condition of the Prakriti that will become illumined by the transformation of *sattva* into *jyotiḥ*." (93)

"*lokasaṅgrahārthāya*

No. It is in a more general sense the maintenance of the world order which may be a developing, not necessarily a stationary one, an order spiritual, moral etc. and not merely a social order." (93)

III. Writings from the Arya: 1914-1921*

1. The "Arya's" Fourth Year*

a. The Fundamental Tenet of the Philosophy Of "Arya"

"The "Arya" except for one unfinished series has been an approach to the highest reconciling truth from the point of view of the Indian mentality and Indian spiritual experience, and Western knowledge has been viewed from that standpoint. Here the main idea which has governed our writing, was imposed on us by the very conditions of the problem. All philosophy is concerned with the relations between two things, the fundamental truth of existence and the forms in which existence presents itself to our experience. The deepest experience shows that the fundamental truth is truth of the Spirit; the other is the truth of life, truth of form and shaping force and living idea and action. Here the West and East have followed divergent lines. The West has laid most emphasis on truth of life and for a time come to stake its whole existence upon truth of life alone, to deny the existence of spirit or to relegate it to the domain of the unknown and unknowable; from that exaggeration it is now beginning to return. The East has laid most emphasis on truth of the Spirit and for a time came, at least in India, to stake its whole existence upon that truth alone, to neglect the possibilities of life or to limit it to a narrow development or a fixed status; the East too is beginning to return from this exaggeration. The West is reawaking to the truth of the Spirit and the spiritual possibilities of life, the East is reawaking to the truth of Life and tends towards a new application to it of its spiritual

knowledge. Our view is that the antinomy created between them is an unreal one. Spirit being the fundamental truth of existence, life can be only its manifestation; Spirit must be not only the origin of life but its basis, its pervading reality and its highest and total result. But the forms of life as they appear to us are at once its disguises and its instruments of self-manifestation. Man has to grow in knowledge till they cease to be disguises and grow in spiritual power and quality till they become in him its perfect instruments. To grow into the fullness of the divine is the true law of human life and to shape his earthly existence into its image is the meaning of his evolution. This is the fundamental tenet of the philosophy of the "Arya"." (107)

2. On Ideals and Progress*

*a. On Ideals**

(i) What do We Understand by Ideals

"IDEALS are truths that have not yet effected themselves for man, the realities of a higher plane of existence which have yet to fulfil themselves on this lower plane of life and matter, our present field of operation. To the pragmatical intellect which takes its stand upon the ever-changing present, ideals are not truths, not realities, they are at most potentialities of future truth and only become real when they are visible in the external fact as work of force accomplished. But to the mind which is able to draw back from the flux of force in the material universe, to the consciousness which is not imprisoned in its own workings or carried along in their flood but is able to envelop, hold and comprehend them, to the soul that is

not merely the subject and instrument of the world-force but can reflect something of that Master-Consciousness which controls and uses it, the ideal present to its inner vision is a greater reality than the changing fact obvious to its outer senses. The Idea is not a reflection of the external fact which it so much exceeds; rather the fact is only a partial reflection of the Idea which has created it.

Certainly, ideals are not the ultimate Reality, for that is too high and vast for any ideal to envisage; they are aspects of it thrown out in the world-consciousness as a basis for the workings of the world-power. But they are primary, the actual workings secondary. They are nearer to the Reality and therefore always more real, forcible and complete than the facts which are their partial reflection."(111)

"God pre-exists before the world can come into being, but to our experience in which the senses act first and only then the finer workings of consciousness, the world seems to come first and God to emerge out of it, so much so that it costs us an effort to rise out of the mechanical, pluralistic and pantheistic conceptions of Him to a truer and higher idea of the Divine Reality. That which to us is the ultimate, is in truth the primary reality. So too the Idea which seems to us to rise out of the fact, really precedes it and out of it the fact has arisen. Our vulgar contrast of the ideal and the real is therefore a sensuous error, for that which we call real is only a phenomenon of force working out something that stands behind the phenomenon and that is pre-existent and greater than it. The Real, the Idea, the phenomenon, this is the true order of the creative Divinity." (111-112)

(ii) The Union of Idealist and Pragmatist Valuable for Humanity

"Therefore wherever and whenever the mere practical man abounds and excludes or discourages by his domination the idealist, there is the least work and the least valuable work done in that age or country for humanity; at most some preliminary spade-work, some labour of conservation and hardly perceptible motion, some repression of creative energies preparing for a great future outburst. On the other hand, when the idealist is liberated, when the visionary abounds, the executive worker also is uplifted, finds at once an orientation and tenfold energy and accomplishes things which he would otherwise have rejected as a dream and chimera, which to his ordinary capacity would be impossible and which often leave the world wondering how work so great could have been done by men who were in themselves so little. The union of the great idealist with the great executive personality who receives and obeys the idea is always the sign of a coming realisation which will be more or less deep and extensive in proportion as they are united or as the executive man seizes more or less profoundly and completely the idea he serves and is able to make permanent in force what the other has impressed upon the consciousness of his age." (114)

"It cannot be doubted which of these two opposites and complementaries is the most essential to success. Not only is the upheaval and fertilising of the general consciousness by the thinker and the idealist essential to the practical realisation of great changes, but in the realisation itself the idealist who will not compromise is an indispensable element. Show me a movement without a force of uncompromising idealism

working somewhere in its sum of energies and you have shown me a movement which is doomed to failure and abortion or to petty and inconsiderable results. The age or the country which is entirely composed of reasonable, statesmanlike workers ever ready for concession and compromise is a country which will never be great until it has added to itself what is lacking to it and bathed itself in pure and divine fountains and an age which will accomplish nothing of supreme importance for the progress of humanity." (115)

"Man approaches nearer his perfection when he combines in himself the idealist and the pragmatist, the originative soul and the executive power. Great executive personalities have usually been men of a considerable idealism. Some indeed have served a purpose rather than an ideal; even in the idea that guided or moved them they have leaned to its executive rather than its inspiring and originative aspect; they have sought their driving force in the interest, passion and emotion attached to it rather than in the idea itself. Others have served consciously a great single thought or moral aim which they have laboured to execute in their lives. But the greatest men of action who were endowed by Nature with the most extraordinary force of accomplishment, have owed it to the combination in them of active power with an immense drift of originative thought devoted to practical realisation. They have been great executive thinkers, great practical dreamers. Such were Napoleon and Alexander. Napoleon with his violent prejudice against ideologues and dreamers was himself a colossal dreamer, an incurable if unconscious ideologist; his teeming brain was the cause of his gigantic force and accomplishment. The immense if shapeless ideas of Alexander threw themselves into the form of conquests, cities,

cultures; they broke down the barriers of Greek and Asiatic prejudice and narrow self-imprisonment and created an age of civilisation and soul-interchange." (116)

(iii) The Descent of Seer-Will

But these great personalities do not contain in themselves the combination which humanity most needs; not the man of action driven by ideas, the pragmatist stirred by a half-conscious exaltation from the idealistic, almost the mystic side of his nature, but the seer who is able to execute his vision is the higher term of human power and knowledge. The one takes his stand in the Prakriti, the executive Force, and is therefore rather driven than leads himself even when he most successfully leads others; the other takes his stand in the Purusha, the Knower who controls executive force, and he possesses the power that he uses. He draws nearer to the type of the divine Seer-Will that has created and governs the universe. But such a combination is rare and difficult; for in order to grasp the Ideal the human soul has to draw back so far from the limitations, pettinesses, denials of the world of phenomenal fact that the temperament and mentality become inapt for executive action upon the concrete phenomena of life and matter. The mastery of the fact is usually possible to the idealist mind only when its idealism is of no great depth or power and can therefore accommodate itself more easily to the actual life-environment.

Until this difficulty is overcome and the Seer-Will becomes more common in man and more the master of life, the ideal works at a disadvantage, by a silent pressure upon the reluctant world, by occasional attacks and sudden

upheavals; a little is accomplished in a long time or by a great and sudden effort, a little that is poor enough, coarse enough, material enough compared with the thing seen and attempted, but which still makes a farther advance possible though often after a period of quiescence and reaction. And times there are, ages of stupendous effort and initiative when the gods seem no longer satisfied with this tardy and fragmentary working, when the ideal breaks constantly through the dull walls of the material practical life, incalculable forces clash in its field, innumerable ideas meet and wrestle in the arena of the world and through the constant storm and flash, agitation of force and agitation of light the possibility of the victoriously fulfilled ideal, the hope of the Messiah, the expectation of the Avatar takes possession of the hearts and thoughts of men. Such an age seems now to be coming upon the world. But whether that hope and expectation and possibility are to come to anything depends upon whether men prepare their souls for the advent and rise in the effort of their faith, life and thought to the height and purity of a clearly-grasped ideal. The Messiah or Avatar is nothing but this, the divine Seer-Will descending upon the human consciousness to reveal to it the divine meaning behind our half-blind action and to give along with the vision the exalted will that is faithful and performs and the ideal force that executes according to the vision." (116-118)

*b. Yoga and Skill in Works**

(i) What is Meant by 'Yoga is Skill in Works'?

"YOGA, says the Gita, is skill in works, and by this phrase the ancient Scripture meant that the transformation of mind

and being to which it gave the name of Yoga brought with it a perfect inner state and faculty out of which the right principle of action and the right spiritual and divine result of works emerged naturally like a tree out of its seed. Certainly, it did not mean that the clever general or politician or lawyer or shoemaker deserves the name of a Yogin; it did not mean that any kind of skill in works was Yoga, but by Yoga it signified a spiritual condition of universal equality and God-union and by the skill of the Yogic worker it intended a perfect adaptation of the soul and its instruments to the rhythm of the divine and universal Spirit in a nature liberated from the shackles of egoism and the limitations of the sense-mind. Essentially, Yoga is a generic name for the processes and the result of processes by which we transcend or shred off our present modes of being and rise to a new, a higher, a wider mode of consciousness which is not that of the ordinary animal and intellectual man. Yoga is the exchange of an egoistic for a universal or cosmic consciousness lifted towards or informed by the supra-cosmic, transcendent Unnameable who is the source and support of all things." (119)

(ii) The Rise of Egoistic Error

"But the individualised being is or acts as if he were so bound and limited, because he treats the particular working of existence that he is and the particular moment of time and field of space in which it is actually operating and the particular conditions which reign in the working and in the moment and in the field as if they were self-existent realities and the binding truth of things." (121)

"And from this egoistic error arises an all-vitiating falsehood." (121)

"Therefore the salvation of the individual lies in his universalising himself; and this is the lesson which life tries always to teach him but the obstinate ego is always unwilling to learn; for the universal is not any group or extended ego, not the family, community, nation or even all mankind, but an infinite far surpassing all these littlenesses. Nor is the universalising of himself sufficient for liberation." (121)

(iii) What does Gita Imply by Equality of Soul and Mind

"The Gita tells us that equality of soul and mind is Yoga and that this equality is the foundation of the Brahman-state, that high infinite consciousness to which the Yogin aspires." (122)

"The equality spoken of is not indifference or impartiality or equability, but a fundamental oneness of attitude to all persons and all things and happenings because of the perception of all as the One. Such equality, it is erroneously thought, is incompatible with action. By no means; this is the error of the animal and the intellectual man who thinks that action is solely possible when dictated by his hopes, fears and passions or by the self-willed preferences of the emotion and the intellect justifying themselves by the illusions of the reason. That might be the fact if the individual were the real actor and not merely an instrument or secondary agent; but we know well enough, for Science and Philosophy assure us of the same truth, that the universal is the Force which acts through the simulacrum of our individuality." (122)

"Therefore that state of the being by which the Yogin differs from the ordinary man, is that by which he rises from the foundation of a perfect equality to the consciousness of

the one existence in all and embracing all and lives in that existence and not in the walls of his body or personal temperament or limited mind. Mind and life and body he sees as small enough things which happen and change and develop in his being. Nay, the whole universe is seen by him as happening within himself, not in his small ego or mind, but within this vast and infinite self with which he is now constantly identified. All action in the universe he sees as arising in this being, out of the divine Existence and under the stress of the divine Truth, Knowledge, Will and Power. He begins to participate consciously in its working and to see all things in the light of that divine truth and governance; and even when his own actions move on certain lines rather than others, he is not bound by them or shut to the truth of all the rest by his own passions and preferences, gropings and seekings and revolts." (123)

(iv) The Greatest Skill in the Works of Yoga

"But the greatest skill in works of Yoga is that which to the animal man seems its greatest ineptitude. For all this difficult attainment, the latter will say, may lead to anything you please, but we have to lose our personal life, abandon our personal objects, annul our personal will and pleasure and without these life cannot be worth living. Now the object of all skill in works must be evidently to secure the best welfare either of ourselves or of others or of all. The ordinary man calls it welfare to secure momentarily some transient object, to wade for it through a sea of grief and suffering and painful labour and to fall from it again still deeper into the same distressful element in search of a new transient object. The greatest cunning of Yoga is to have detected this cheat of the mind and its desires

and dualities and to have found the way to an abiding peace, a universal delight and an all-embracing satisfaction, which can not only be enjoyed for oneself but communicated to others. That too arises out of the change of our being; for the pure truth of existence carries also in it the unalloyed delight of existence, they are inseparable in the status of the infinite. To use the figures of the Vedic seers, by Yoga Varuna is born in us, a vast sky of spiritual living, the divine in his wide existence and infinite truth; into that wideness Mitra rises up, Lord of Light and Love who takes all our activities of thought and feeling and will, links them into a divine harmony, charioteers our movement and dictates our works; called by this wideness and this harmony Aryaman appears in us, the Divine in its illumined power, uplifted force of being and all-judging effective will; and by the three comes the indwelling Bhaga, the Divine in its pure bliss and all-seizing joy who dispels the evil dream of our jarring and divided existence and possesses all things in the light and glory of Aryaman's power, Mitra's love and light, Varuna's unity. This divine Birth shall be the son of our works; and than creating this what greater skill can there be or what more practical and sovereign cunning?" (125-126)

*c. Conservation and Progress**

(i) Human Intelligence

"MANKIND thinks naturally in extremes or else reconciles by a patchwork and compromise. Whether he makes a fetish of moderation or surrenders himself to the enthusiasm of the single idea, the human being misses always truth of vision and the right pitch of action because instead

of seeing, feeling and becoming in obedience to his nature like other animate existences he tries always to measure things by a standard he has set up in his intelligence. But it is the character of his intelligence that it finds it an easy task to distinguish and separate but is clumsy in combining. When it combines, it tends to artificialise and falsify. It feels at ease in pursuing a single idea to its logical consequences and in viewing things from a single standpoint; but to harmonise different ideas in action and to view the facts from different standpoints is contrary to its native impulse; therefore it does that badly, with an ill grace and without mastery. Oftenest it makes an incongruous patchwork rather than a harmony. The human mind is strong and swift in analysis; it synthesises with labour and imperfectly and does not feel at home in its syntheses. It divides, opposes and, placed between the oppositions it creates, becomes an eager partisan of one side or another; but to think wisely and impartially and with a certain totality is irksome and disgusting to the normal human being." (127)

(ii) Moderation – An Opposition between Conservation and Progress

"..human moderation is usually a wiseacre and a botcher; it sews a patch of new velvet on old fustian or of new fustian on old velvet and admires its deplorable handiwork. And its cautious advance means an accumulation of shams, fictions and dead conventions till the burden of falsehood becomes too great for life to bear and a violent revolution is necessary to deliver the soul of humanity out of the immobilising cerements of the past. Such is the type of our progress; it is the advance of an ignorant and purblind but always light-

attracted spirit, a being half-animal, half-god, stumbling forward through the bewildering jungle of its own errors.

This characteristic of human mentality shows itself in the opposition we create between conservation and progress. Nothing in the universe can really stand still because everything there is a mould of Time and the very essence of Time is change by a movement forward. It is true that the world's movement is not in a straight line; there are cycles, there are spirals; but still it circles, not round the same point always, but round an ever advancing centre, and therefore it never returns exactly upon its old path and never goes really backward. As for standing still, it is an impossibility, a delusion, a fiction. Only the spirit is stable; the soul and body of things are in eternal motion." (128)

(iii) Past, Present and Future – the Determining Powers in Motion

"The past is both a drag and a force for progress. It is all that has created the present and a great part of the force that is creating the future. For the past is not dead; its forms are gone and had to go, otherwise the present would not have come into being: but its soul, its power, its essence lives veiled in the present and ever-accumulating, growing, deepening will live on in the future. Every human being holds in and behind him all the past of his own race, of humanity and of himself; these three things determine his starting-point and pursue him through his life's progress." (128-129)

"The future is a sphinx with two minds, an energy which offers itself and denies, gives itself and resists, seeks to enthrone us and seeks to slay. But the conquest has to be

attempted, the wager has to be accepted. We have to face the future's offer of death as well as its offer of life, and it need not alarm us, for it is by constant death to our old names and forms that we shall live most vitally in greater and newer forms and names. Go on we must; for if we do not, Time itself will force us forward in spite of our fancied immobility. And this is the most pitiable and dangerous movement of all. For what can be more pitiable than to be borne helplessly forward clinging to the old that disintegrates in spite of our efforts and shrieking frantically to the dead ghosts and dissolving fragments of the past to save us alive? And what can be more dangerous than to impose immobility on that which is in its nature mobile? This means an increasing and horrible rottenness; it means an attempt to persist on as a putrid and stinking corpse instead of a living and self-renewing energetic creature. The greatest spirits are therefore those who have no fear of the future, who accept its challenge and its wager; they have that sublime trust in the God or Power that guides the world, that high audacity of the human soul to wrestle with the infinite and realise the impossible, that wise and warrior confidence in its ultimate destiny which mark the Avatars and prophets and great innovators and renovators." (129-130)

*d. The Conservative Mind and Eastern Progress**

(i) The Conservative Mind Towards the Cycles of Future Change

"THE ARRIVAL of a new radical idea in the minds of men is the sign of a great coming change in human life and society; it may be combated, the reaction of the old idea may triumph for a time, but the struggle never leaves either the

thoughts and sentiments or the habits and institutions of the society as they were when it commenced." (133)

"The past can arrive at the most at a partial survival or an euthanasia, provided it knows how to compromise liberally with the future.

The conservative mind is unwilling to recognise this law though it is observable throughout human history and we can easily cull examples with full hands from all ages and all climes; and it is protected in its refusal to see by the comparative rarity of rapid revolutions and great cataclysmal changes; it is blinded by the disguise which Nature so often throws over her processes of mutation." (133)

"Because our view of European history is chiefly political, we do not see the constant mutation of society and of thought in the same relief; but we can recognise two great cycles of change, one of the ancient races leading from the primitive ages to the cultured society of the Graeco-Roman world, the other from the semi-barbarism of feudal Christendom to the intellectual, materialistic and civilised society of modern times." (133-134)

(ii) The Evolution of Society in East

"In the East, on the contrary, the great revolutions have been spiritual and cultural; the political and social changes, although they have been real and striking, if less profound than in Europe, fall into the shade and are apt to be overlooked; besides, this unobtrusiveness is increased by their want of relief, the slow subtlety of their process and the instinctive persistence and reverence with which old names and formulas have been preserved while the thing itself was

profoundly modified until its original sense remained only as a pious fiction. Thus Japan kept its sacrosanct Mikado as a cover for the change to an aristocratic and feudal government and has again brought him forward in modern times to cover and facilitate without too serious a shock the transition from a mediaeval form of society into the full flood of modernism. In India the continued fiction of the ancient fourfold order of society based on spiritual idealism, social type, ethical discipline and economic function is still used to cover and justify the quite different, complex and chaotic order of caste which, while it still preserves some confused fragments of the old motives, is really founded upon birth, privilege, local custom and religious formalism. The evolution from one type of society to another so opposed to it in its psychological motives and real institutions without any apparent change of formula is one of the most curious phenomena in the social history of mankind and still awaits intelligent study." (134)

(iii) The Law of Nature's Subtleties and Disguises

"Nature has still more subtle and disguised movements in her dealings with men by which she leads them to change without their knowing that they have changed. It is because she has employed chiefly this method in the vast masses of the East that the conservative habit of mind is so much stronger there than in the West. It is able to nourish the illusion that it has not changed, that it is immovably faithful to the ideas of remote forefathers, to their religion, their traditions, their institutions, their social ideals, that it has preserved either a divine or an animal immobility both in thought and in the routine of life and has been free from the human law of mutation by which man and his social organisations must either

progress or degenerate but can in no case maintain themselves unchanged against the attack of Time. Buddhism has come and gone and the Hindu still professes to belong to the Vedic religion held and practised by his Aryan forefathers; he calls his creed the Aryan dharma, the eternal religion. It is only when we look close that we see the magnitude of the illusion. Buddha has gone out of India indeed, but Buddhism remains; it has stamped its giant impress on the spirit of the national religion, leaving the forms to be determined by the Tantricism with which itself had made alliance and some sort of fusion in its middle growth; what it destroyed no man has been able to restore, what it left no man has been able to destroy. As a matter of fact, the double cycle which India has described from the early Vedic times to India of Buddha and the philosophers and again from Buddha to the time of the European irruption was in its own way as vast in change religious, social, cultural, even political and administrative as the double cycle of Europe; but because it preserved old names for new things, old formulas for new methods and old coverings for new institutions and because the change was always marked in the internal but quiet and unobtrusive in the external, we have been able to create and preserve the fiction of the unchanging East." (135-136)

(iv) The Advantages and Perils of Conservative Principle

"This conservative principle has its advantages even as rapid progress has its vices and its perils. It helps towards the preservation of a fundamental continuity which makes for the longevity of civilisations and the persistence of what was valuable in humanity's past. So, in India, if religion has changed immensely its form and temperament, the religious spirit has

been really eternal, the principle of spiritual discipline is the same as in the earliest times, the fundamental spiritual truths have been preserved and even enriched in their contents and the very forms can all be traced back through their mutations to the seed of the Veda. On the other hand this habit of mind leads to the accumulation of a great mass of accretions which were once valuable but have lost their virtue and to the heaping up of dead forms and shibboleths which no longer correspond to any vital truth nor have any understood and helpful significance. All this putrid waste of the past is held to be too sacred to be touched by any profane hand and yet it chokes up the streams of the national life or corrupts its waters. And if no successful process of purification takes place, a state of general ill-health in the social body supervenes in which the principle of conservation becomes the cause of dissolution." (136-137)

(v) An Answer to the Riddle of Future of Humanity

"The present era of the world is a stage of immense transformations. Not one but many radical ideas are at work in the mind of humanity and agitate its life with a vehement seeking and effort at change; and although the centre of the agitation is in progressive Europe, yet the East is being rapidly drawn into this churning of the sea of thought and this breaking up of old ideas and old institutions. No nation or community can any longer remain psychologically cloistered and apart in the unity of the modern world. It may even be said that the future of humanity depends most upon the answer that will be given to the modern riddle of the Sphinx by the East and especially by India, the hoary guardian of the Asiatic idea and its profound spiritual secrets. For the most vital issue

of the age is whether the future progress of humanity is to be governed by the modern economic and materialistic mind of the West or by a nobler pragmatism guided, uplifted and enlightened by spiritual culture and knowledge." (137)

"Therefore the hope of the world lies in the re-arousing in the East of the old spiritual practicality and large and profound vision and power of organisation under the insistent contact of the West and in the flooding out of the light of Asia on the Occident, no longer in forms that are now static, effete, unadaptive, but in new forms stirred, dynamic and effective.

India, the heart of the Orient, has to change as the whole West and the whole East are changing, and it cannot avoid changing in the sense of the problems forced upon it by Europe. The new Orient must necessarily be the result either of some balance and fusion or of some ardent struggle between progressive and conservative ideals and tendencies. If therefore the conservative mind in this country opens itself sufficiently to the necessity of transformation, the resulting culture born of a resurgent India may well bring about a profound modification in the future civilisation of the world. But if it remains shut up in dead fictions, or tries to meet the new needs with the mind of the schoolman and the sophist dealing with words and ideas in the air rather than actual fact and truth and potentiality, or struggles merely to avoid all but a scanty minimum of change, then, since the new ideas cannot fail to realise themselves, the future India will be formed in the crude mould of the Westernised social and political reformer whose mind, barren of original thought and unenlightened by vital experience, can do nothing but

reproduce the forms and ideas of Europe and will turn us all into halting apes of the West. Or else, and that perhaps is the best thing that can happen, a new spiritual awakening must arise from the depths of this vast life that shall this time more successfully include in its scope the great problems of earthly life as well as those of the soul and its transmundane destinies, an awakening that shall ally itself closely with the renascent spiritual seeking of the West and with its yearning for the perfection of the human race. This third and as yet unknown quantity is indeed the force needed throughout the East. For at present we have only two extremes of a conservative immobility and incompetence imprisoned in the shell of past conventions and a progressive force hardly less blind and ineffectual because secondhand and merely imitative of nineteenth-century Europe, with a vague floating mass of uncertainty between. The result is a continual fiasco and inability to evolve anything large, powerful, sure and vital, a drifting in the stream of circumstance, a constant grasping at details and unessentials and failure to reach the heart of the great problems of life which the age is bringing to our doors. Something is needed which tries to be born; but as yet, in the phrase of the Veda, the Mother holds herself compressed in smallness, keeps the Birth concealed within her being and will not give it forth to the Father. When she becomes great in impulse and conception, then we shall see it born." (138-139)

*e. Our Ideal**

(i) Manifestation of Thought in Life – The Hours of Gods

"WE BELIEVE in the constant progression of humanity and we hold that that progression is the working out of a

Thought in Life which sometimes manifests itself on the surface and sometimes sinks below and works behind the mask of external forces and interests. When there is this lapse below the surface, humanity has its periods of apparent retrogression or tardy evolution, its long hours of darkness or twilight during which the secret Thought behind works out one of its phases by the pressure mainly of economic, political and personal interests ignorant of any deeper aim within. When the Thought returns to the surface, humanity has its periods of light and of rapid efflorescence, its dawns and splendid springtides; and according to the depth, vitality, truth and self-effective energy of the form of Thought that emerges is the importance of the stride forward that it makes during these Hours of the Gods in our terrestrial manifestation.

There is no greater error than to suppose, as the "practical" man is wont to do, that thought is only a fine flower and ornament of life and that political, economic and personal interests are the important and effective motors of human action. We recognise that this is a world of life and action and developing organism; but the life that seeks to guide itself only by vital and material forces is a slow, dark and blundering growth. It is an attempt to approximate man to the method of vegetable and animal existence. The earth is a world of Life and Matter, but man is not a vegetable nor an animal; he is a spiritual and a thinking being who is set here to shape and use the animal mould for higher purposes, by higher motives, with a more divine instrumentation." (140)

(ii) The Effect of Mutual Interpenetration of Asia and Europe

"The progress of humanity has therefore been a constant

revolution with its rhythm of alternative darkness and light, but both the day and the night have helped to foster that which is evolving. The periods have not been the same for all parts of the globe. In the historic ages of the present cycle of civilisation the movement has been almost entirely centred in the twin continents of Asia and Europe. And there it has been often seen that when Asia was moving through the light, Europe was passing through one of her epochs of obscurity and on the other hand the nights of Asia's repose or stagnation have corresponded with the days of Europe's mental vigour and vital activity.

But the fundamental difference has been that Asia has served predominantly (not exclusively) as a field for man's spiritual experience and progression, Europe has been rather a workshop for his mental and vital activities. As the cycle progressed, the Eastern continent has more and more converted itself into a storehouse of spiritual energy sometimes active and reaching forward to new development, sometimes conservative and quiescent. Three or four times in history a stream of this energy has poured out upon Europe, but each time Europe has rejected wholly or partially the spiritual substance of the afflatus and used it rather as an impulse to fresh intellectual and material activity and progress.

The first attempt was the filtering of Egyptian, Chaldean and Indian wisdom through the thought of the Greek philosophers from Pythagoras to Plato and the Neo-Platonists; the result was the brilliantly intellectual and unspiritual civilisation of Greece and Rome. But it prepared the way for the second attempt when Buddhism and Vaishnavism filtered through the Semitic temperament entered Europe in the form of Christianity. Christianity came

within an ace of spiritualising and even of asceticising the mind of Europe; it was baffled by its own theological deformation in the minds of the Greek fathers of the Church and by the sudden flooding of Europe with a German barbarism whose temperament in its merits no less than in its defects was the very antitype both of the Christian spirit and the Graeco-Roman intellect.

The Islamic invasion of Spain and the southern coast of the Mediterranean – curious as the sole noteworthy example of Asiatic culture using the European method of material and political irruption as opposed to a peaceful invasion by ideas – may be regarded as a third attempt. The result of its meeting with Graecised Christianity was the reawakening of the European mind in feudal and Catholic Europe and the obscure beginnings of modern thought and science.

The fourth and last attempt which is as yet only in its slow initial stage is the quiet entry of Eastern and chiefly of Indian thought into Europe first through the veil of German metaphysics, more latterly by its subtle influence in reawakening the Celtic, Scandinavian and Slavonic idealism, mysticism, religionism, and the direct and open penetration of Buddhism, Theosophy, Vedantism, Bahaism and other Oriental influences in both Europe and America.

On the other hand, there have been two reactions of Europe upon Asia; first, the invasion of Alexander with his aggressive Hellenism which for a time held Western Asia, created echoes and reactions in India and returned through Islamic culture upon mediaeval Europe; secondly, the modern onslaught of commercial, political, scientific Europe upon the moral, artistic and spiritual cultures of the East.

The new features of this mutual interpenetration are, first, that the two attacks have synchronised and, secondly, that they have encountered in each case the extreme exaggeration of their opposites. Intellectual and materialistic Europe found India, the Asia of Asia, the heart of the world's spiritual life, in the last throes of an enormous experiment, the thought of a whole nation concentrated for centuries upon the pure spiritual existence to the exclusion of all real progress in the practical and mental life of the race. The entering stream of Eastern thought found in Europe the beginning of an era which rejected religion, philosophy and psychology, – religion as an emotional delusion, philosophy, the pure essence of the mind, as a barren thought weaving, – and resolved to devote the whole intellectual faculty of man to a study of the laws of material Nature and of man's bodily, social, economic and political existence and to build thereon a superior civilisation.

That stupendous effort is over; it has not yet frankly declared its bankruptcy, but it is bankrupt. It is sinking in a cataclysm as gigantic and as unnatural as the attempt which gave it birth. On the other hand, the exaggerated spirituality of the Indian effort has also registered a bankruptcy; we have seen how high individuals can rise by it, but we have seen also how low a race can fall which in its eagerness to seek after God ignores His intention in humanity. Both the European and the Indian attempt were admirable, the Indian by its absolute spiritual sincerity, the European by its severe intellectual honesty and ardour for the truth; both have accomplished miracles; but in the end God and Nature have been too strong for the Titanism of the human spirit and for the Titanism of the human intellect." (141-143)

(iii) In Fusion and Harmony Lies the Salvation of Human Race

"The salvation of the human race lies in a more sane and integral development of the possibilities of mankind in the individual and in the community. The safety of Europe has to be sought in the recognition of the spiritual aim of human existence, otherwise she will be crushed by the weight of her own unillumined knowledge and soulless organisation. The safety of Asia lies in the recognition of the material mould and mental conditions in which that aim has to be worked out, otherwise she will sink deeper into the slough of despond of a mental and physical incompetence to deal with the facts of life and the shocks of a rapidly changing movement. It is not any exchange of forms that is required, but an interchange of regenerating impulses and a happy fusion and harmonising.

The synchronism and mutual interpenetration of the two great currents of human effort at such a crisis in the history of the race is full of hope for the future of humanity, but full also of possible dangers. The hope is the emergence of a new and better human life founded on a greater knowledge, a pursuit of the new faculties and possibilities opening out before us and a just view of the problem which the individual, the society, the race have to solve. Mankind has been drawn together by the developments of material science and for good or evil its external future is henceforth one; its different parts no longer develop separately and in independence of each other. There opens out at the same time the possibility that by the development and practice of the science and the life of the soul it may be made one in reality and by an internal unity." (143-144)

"The message of the East to the West is a true message, "Only by finding himself can man be saved," and "what shall it profit a man though he gain the whole world, if he lose his own soul?" The West has heard the message and is seeking out the law and truth of the soul and the evidences of an inner reality greater than the material. The danger is that with her passion for mechanism and her exaggerated intellectuality she may fog herself in an external and false psychism, such as we see arising in England and America, the homes of the mechanical genius, or in intellectual, unspiritual and therefore erroneous theories of the Absolute, such as have run their course in critical and metaphysical Germany.

The idea by which the illumination of Asia has been governed is the firm knowledge that truth of the Spirit is the sole real truth, the belief that the psychological life of man is an instrument for attaining to the truth of the Spirit and that its laws must be known and practised with that aim paramount, and the attempt to form the external life of man and the institutions of society into a suitable mould for the great endeavour.

This idea, too, is absolutely just and we accept it entirely. But in its application, and in India most, it has deviated into a divorce between the Spirit and its instruments and a disparagement and narrowing of the mental and external life of the race. For it is only on the widest and richest efflorescence of this instrumental life that the fullest and most absolute attainment of the spiritual can be securely based. This knowledge the ancients of the East possessed and practised; it has been dimmed in knowledge and lost in practice by their descendants.

The message the West brings to the East is a true message. Man also is God and it is through his developing manhood that he approaches the godhead; Life also is the Divine, its progressive expansion is the self-expression of the Brahman, and to deny Life is to diminish the Godhead within us. This is the truth that returns to the East from the West translated into the language of the higher truth the East already possesses; and it is an ancient knowledge. The East also is awaking to the message. The danger is that Asia may accept it in the European form, forget for a time her own law and nature and either copy blindly the West or make a disastrous amalgam of that which she has in its most inferior forms and the crudenesses which are invading her.

The problem of thought therefore is to find out the right idea and the right way of harmony; to restate the ancient and eternal spiritual truth of the Self so that it shall re-embrace, permeate, dominate, transfigure the mental and physical life; to develop the most profound and vital methods of psychological self-discipline and self-development so that the mental and psychical life of man may express the spiritual life through the utmost possible expansion of its own richness, power and complexity; and to seek for the means and motives by which his external life, his society and his institutions may remould themselves progressively in the truth of the spirit and develop towards the utmost possible harmony of individual freedom and social unity.

This is our ideal and our search. Throughout the world there are plenty of movements inspired by the same drift, but there is room for an effort of thought which shall frankly acknowledge the problem in its integral complexity and not

be restrained in the flexibility of its search by attachment to any cult, creed or extant system of philosophy.

The effort involves a quest for the Truth that underlies existence and the fundamental Law of its self-expression in the universe – the work of metaphysical philosophy and religious thought; the sounding and harmonising of the psychological methods of discipline by which man purifies and perfects himself – the work of psychology, not as it is understood in Europe, but the deeper practical psychology called in India Yoga; and the application of our ideas to the problems of man's social and collective life.…

What then shall be our ideal? Unity for the human race by an inner oneness and not only by an external association of interests; the resurgence of man out of the merely animal and economic life or the merely intellectual and aesthetic into the glories of the spiritual existence; the pouring of the power of the spirit into the physical mould and mental instrument so that man may develop his manhood into that true supermanhood which shall exceed our present state as much as this exceeds the animal state from which science tells us that we have issued. These three are one; for man's unity and man's self-transcendence can come only by living in the Spirit." (144-147)

RNI NO. RAJENG/2002/09480

Form IV (see rule 8)

Statement about the ownership and other particulars about the newspaper ***"The Real Awakener"*** *to be published in the first issue every year after the last day of February.*

1.	Place of publication:	The Resurgent India Trust, Mira Ambika Bhawan, Khetan Mohalla, Jhunuhunu - 333001, Rajasthan
2.	Periodicity of its publication:	Quarterly
3.	Printer's name:	Pankaj Bagaria
	Nationality:	Indian
	Address:	The Resurgent India Trust, Mira Ambika Bhawan, Khetan Mohalla, Jhunuhunu - 333001, Rajasthan
4.	Publisher's Name:	Pankaj Bagaria
	Nationality:	Indian
	Address:	The Resurgent India Trust, Mira Ambika Bhawan, Khetan Mohalla, Jhunuhunu - 333001, Rajasthan
5.	Editor's Name:	Anjana Dharnidharka
	Nationality:	Indian
	Address:	Khetan House, 7, Jodhamal Road, Haridwar (Uttaranchal)
6.	Names and addresses of individuals who own the newspaper and partners or shareholders holding more than one percent of the total capital:	

I, Pankaj Bagaria, hereby declare that the particulars given above are true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

February 2021
Price : Rs. 65/-

(sd) Pankaj Bagaria
Signature of Publisher