The Real Awakener



The Light of Lights

Words of Sri Aurobindo – 39

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The Totality of Vedantic Knowledge

"The totality of Vedantic knowledge consists of several processes; first, Vedanta, the direct perception of the fundamental reality out of which all emerges & to which all returns; secondly, Sankhya, the analysis, by the discriminating perception, of the fundamental principles of being & knowledge in which the Reality manifests itself as world, as subject, & as object; thirdly, Yoga, the psychological basis of experience, experiment, practical analysis, synthesis which verifies the discriminative analysis; fourthly, Vaisheshika, the physical analysis of the form or matter in which the manifesting world-energy is expressed & established to our outgoing perceptions; fifthly, Nyaya, the analysis of the processes of discrimination whether by the intellect or by higher functions; sixthly, Karma of Veda, the application of the knowledge acquired in formulas of life-action by which the individual & the community can ensure the highest phenomenal expression of the fundamental Reality of which their special nature is capable, – by which, let us say, man can express Brahman in his superior & more plastic kind as the bee or the ant expresses Brahman in its inferior & more rigid &limited nature; – these six rank among other processes, – for life of Veda is supple, flexible and wide, – some of which are the foundation of Purana & Itihasa. The fundamental perception, separating, narrowed itself and became the Uttara Mimansa of Badarayana; the discriminative analysis, separating, narrowed itself and became Sankhya of Kapila; the psychological experimentation, separating, narrowed itself & became Yoga of Patanjali; the physical analysis, separating, narrowed itself and became Vaisheshika of Kanada; the analysis of discriminative processes, separating, narrowed itself and became Nyaya of Gautama; the application in formulas of life-action, separating, narrowed itself extremely & became the Purva Mimansa of Jaimini; yet each of the six arrogated to itself the functions & the sufficiency of the other five. Other parts of knowledge & process, ejected by the ever-narrowing tendency of logical exclusiveness, established themselves in other philosophies and branches of practice & knowledge and have come down to us, changed, often disfigured, in Shastra, in Purana, in legend & history, in different schools of Yoga." (570-71)

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Selections from the Isha Upanishad (CWSA 17)

1. Our Secret Nature and the Way to Its Fulfilment

"*Universal Ananda & possession is our secret nature, to move towards it till it is reached, God's inexorable impulse in His creation. All solutions that deny or conflict with our nature, can only be palliatives, evasions or individual remedies.*

It remains, therefore, to accept the two factors of the problem in their entirety and work out a solution on the basis of a reconciliation. This is the aim of the Seer. By the enjoyment of the whole of universal being in God, the legitimacy of the secret demand in us is recognised, by the renunciation of the attempt to enjoy through egoistic desire and in physical possession, the stumbling-block in the way of fulfilment is distinguished and removed. Mind and heart desire the universe; Self alone can possess it and already possesses it. Therefore the whole secret is to shift our centre from mind and heart to the all-blissful Self, from Jagat to Ish, from our temporary place in Nature besieged by the movement, to our eternal seat in the Godhead possessing, overtopping and controlling the movement. We can take the universe and all it contains into our self and possess it, – nay, we need not take, for it is already there; we have only to reveal it to ourselves; but we cannot take it into our hands or permanently keep any slightest part of it in our personal possession. It is too vast for our grasp and too slippery. We can possess the joy of the whole world physically, mentally & emotionally only by possessing it in the Spirit and through the Spirit; the desire to possess its form instead of its joy, or to claim it for the heart, mind & body in us and not for God in heart, mind and body, indriyartham and not atmartham, is the capital error of our egoism. The remedy therefore is to get rid of this desire of false possession and ascend into the truth of real possession. Were we to put this in modern language we should say: Man is evolutionary, not evolved; his present state of mentality in heart guided by reason is a transition, not his final nature;

in mentality he is tied to desire, in body to limitation and in both to suffering, but when he evolves from the mental into the spiritual being, he will be free from grief because, living in infinite Spirit, he will have done with desire and limitation. In the true Vedantic view of things we must express it otherwise.

Man is Anandamaya Purusha not yet or always manifested, but in course of manifestation. At present he is manomaya, tied to mind and living by desire; he is besieged therefore by pain and limitation, from which, so long as he remains on the mental level, he can only escape entirely by Sannyasa. But if he has the will, he can even in this life and body manifest his true anandamaya self and become in Nature all-possessing & in life all-blissful.

Since then desire is the knot of our bondage and the seat of our sorrow, the seat must be abolished, the knot cut through or loosened. Chidyate hridaya-granthih, says the Upanishad, speaking of the state of liberation, "the knot of the heart is cut asunder." For the heartstrings are the cords that bind us through emotions of love and hate, attraction and repulsion, to the desire-created falsehoods of the world and hold back the soul from rising to its throne in the Vastness, the natural Righteousness of things, the Love, the Bliss. Desire binds to sorrow because it is the sentinel of egoism, the badge of the soul's subjection to its self-created environment and the veil of our absorption in the limited and fleeting. Egoism is the cause of sorrow, but desire is its seat. "I am I, thou art thou, mine is mine, thine is thine"; this false conception of things is the seed of all evil; but its hold would be transitory, if there were not this compelling emotion of desire which adds, "Thou art not I, therefore thee I must control or possess; mine is mine, therefore mine I must cling to and keep; thine is not mine, therefore thine too I must acquire or seize." If this reaching out to our not-selves is inevitable because our nature is a seeming particularity reaching out to its own real universality, if desire is the sign of the soul emerging out of matter and articulating, with whatever falsehood and stammering, its secret sense that

it is the Lord of the universe, yet must it deny& transform itself, if it is to effect its grandiose object. The mighty Asura, Hiranyakashipu or Ravana, Attila, Alexander, Napoleon or Jenghiz, reaching out to possess the whole world physically as the not-self, is the Godhead in man aiming at self-realisation, but a godhead blind and misdirected. The Seer seeks instead to possess in the Spirit and through the Spirit; afterwards what shall be physically possessed or not possessed, is the Lord's business. The first step therefore must always be to get rid definitely of this craving for objects as the not-self in the possession of not-selves. Má gridhah kasyaswid dhanam.

Egoism, seated in the sense of personal difference, is the first element of the heart's error that has to be eliminated. Kasyaswid in the Seer's phrase is absolute and all-embracing like yat kincha and tena; there can be no limitation, no casuistry, no question of legal right or social justice, no opposition of legitimate claims and illegitimate covetings. Nor does dhanam in the Vedic sense include only physical objects, but all possessions, courage, joy, health, fame, position, capacity, genius as well as land, gold, cattle and houses. If we wish to understand the spirit of the rule, we may recall the example of the great Sannyasin who ran after the frightened thief with the vessels dropped in his flight, crying, "Lord, pardon me & take them; I knew not Thou hadst need of them." It is not, indeed, the form of this action that has to be observed and imitated, – the form is a mere symbol, – but the spirit it symbolises; for it breathes of the sense that there is one Lord only in all these habitations and nothing belongs to this body or to that mind or to the mental ego in which their motions are summed and coordinated; but all only to the Lord, one in all bodies. Ishá vásyam idam sarvam. It is immaterial whether a particular object belongs physically to myself or another, is kept with me or stolen from me, surrendered by me or recovered by me; that shall be according to the Lord's play and pleasure. Whether He plays in me outwardly the part of a beggar or the part of a king, of the philanthropist or the conqueror, is

not the essential; the essential is that I should know Him in myself and others and live seated in His being and not in my mental ego. Then instead of coveting, enjoying with egoism & sorrowing over loss and disappointment, I shall desire nothing and possess everything in myself, in God and in others, freely, perfectly and universally.

Subjection, seated in the sense of non-possession, is the second element that has to be eliminated. The Lord, the Ish, does not desire, He possesses; desiring objects, we are anish, not lord, pursued by the false dream of non-possession; we see things withheld, things to be acquired, anaváptam aváptavyam. Regarding the object as not-myself, we struggle to possess it, against men, against circumstances, against forces of Nature in the midst of which our body is a straw in a whirlwind, our life an insect fluttering candle wards, our mind a bubble in an eddy. All the while, we are in our souls the Lord and possess everything; all this is our estate. Therefore we have to correct our false idea of not having and, shifting our centre from the anish to the Ish, replace temporary acquisition by eternal possession. Má gridhah dhanam. Liberated in Ananda, I cannot fail to possess all things in myself inalienably and eternally, without being bound to possession or loss as are those who seek & acquire only with personal possession & through the physical body.

The concentration of our vision on the form of things & in the outward motion of desire is the third element of error that has to be eliminated. We desire and suffer because we mistake form and name for essential existence; we fix on the perishable parts of things, a rose, a piece of gold, an acre of land, a horse, a picture, fame, lordship, reputation. All this is jagatyám jagat, myself an object in Nature reaching out to objects in Nature. But the principle of form and name in Nature is motion, separation, flux; therefore my desire & enjoyment in Nature must necessarily be limited, mutable &transient. It is only by shifting the motion of desire to whatever is eternal in the form and name that I can escape from this limitation and this

mutability. But the eternal in the form & name of all objects is the eternal in myself &need not be desired outside myself, or in each thing separately, since it has only to be found in myself to be possessed in all beings & objects. Once more, the universal spiritual possession proves to be all and to include or render immaterial the particular physical possession. Má gridhah kasyaswid dhanam. The treasure you have to seek is in yourself; its possession includes all other possessions. Not only the kingdom of heaven, but all the riches of the earth are within you.

At the same time we must not from this great & vital truth stride forward by a false rigidity of logic into the error of asceticism. Because universal spiritual possession renders immaterial and dispensable the material possession, we must not presume that material possession is worthless & evil. On the contrary by rendering it dispensable and immaterial, it renders it also good and worth having. For so long as the material possession is to our desires & knowledge indispensable for enjoyment, it becomes a bondage & renders life to us a curse & action in the world an evil; but once spiritual possession becomes the root of the matter to us, we become free in the material enjoyment of the object. It no longer binds us, since we no longer either strain after it or suffer by its absence or loss. By that abandoned we enjoy. Even our pursuit of objects becomes a play, the racing or wrestling of boys in a meadow in which there is no evil thought, no harm intended, no possibility of sorrow experienced. Material possession & enjoyment also is intended by God in the human being; for material enjoyment & possession He created this world and made matter its formal basis; but eventually He intends the enjoyment of the object as a symbol of the spirit in the spirit, freely. God in us is the poet, is the musician who throws out some few forms of the infinite world within him into symbols of word or sound, so that the material enjoyment of the sound ceases to be material & becomes a form of spiritual enjoyment and an extension of spirit into matter. I am free

at any moment to begin it, at any moment to suspend it; & even when I throw away the temporary outward form of the enjoyment, I keep always the inward eternal form of it in my spirit. So a man who has once seen the Matterhorn rising into the Swiss heavens, keeps always that for which he was sent by the spirit within him to the toils & perils of Alpine climbing; he keeps in his soul the image of the white and naked peak, hard, firm and detached, a supreme image of matter which seeks to persist by solidity, yet is transient in the end like the rose and the insect, which rises towards but never attains that vaulted azure form above of the unsubstantial, unseen but eternal ether in which & by which it lives. He has done that for which the world of form was created. He has seen & enjoyed God in the symbol of the material object. He has embraced & possessed in his soul through the material organ one becoming of the only & eternal Being." (477-82)

2. The Whole Problem of Existence and Its Resolution

"On a basis of eternal stability the world exists, to the expression of the stable Eternal it feels itself to be proceeding. Imperfection is its apparent starting point & medium, and the essential term of imperfection is mobility; perfection is its aspiration & goal and the essential term of perfection is acquired status. Through imperfection therefore Nature moves, in perfection it rests. But the perfections which are attainable in the movements of Nature are only perfections of the part and therefore their stability is temporary, illusory and precedent to a fresh motion. Only in an infinite perfection can there be an eternal stability. This perfection is a concealed completeness in us which we have to manifest; we are already an infinite perfection in our being, we have to manifest that hidden thing in our becoming. It is towards this infinite perfection that all things in Nature are, consciously or unconsciously, by her inborn tendency and movement irresistibly impelled. The whole problem of existence therefore resolves itself into some harmony or at least some settlement

between these two terms. Whatever ignores either term, be it victorious Science or be it supreme Buddhistic Nihilism, has not understood the terms of the problem and cannot find its solution.

Man dwelling in Nature is compelled towards action and demands rest, lives in imperfection and progresses towards his ungrasped perfection; for action & motion are convertible terms. Action is the motion of man, motion is the action of Nature. All mobility, all change, all play of cause & effect, whether in the mind or the body, whether in animate or inanimate Nature, is therefore karma, action or work, – work is the essential characteristic of Jagati, universal Nature, infinite Force in its universal play. But where then in Nature shall man find rest? Lassitude is not the rest he seeks, sleep is not the rest he seeks; all lassitude, all inertia is still movement but movement of disintegration; sleep is a mass of dreams, sometimes half lit by fugitive and incoherent perceptions, sometimes shut up in a dark shell of bodily unconsciousness. Neither in his bodily nor in his subjective being is a man ever at rest while he lives in this body; what he calls rest is only a change of occupation or a shifting of the action from the waking to the subliminal sleep-consciousness which is always at work behind the waking self. Neither is death the rest he seeks; for death, like sleep, is only a shifting of the habitation, a transference of activity to another field. It is no more rest than the passing of a labourer reaping in a field of corn to work in a field of barley. His temporary & partial realisations of that he seeks are also not man's rest, for from these halting places he moves forwards towards a new activity and a continued journey. Like everything else in Nature man's motion, known to him or unknown, moves towards rest in a perfection which shall be eternal and really stable, not partial and apparently stable. To seek this higher perfection he is eternally moved and if he ever tries at all to rest in the material and temporary, he is soon driven forward again by the inexorable law of his nature to the old imperative endeavour. The frequent attempt

of man to escape from his own soul by plunging his head into the running waters of Matter, is one of the recurrent jests, one of the constantly laughable mysteries of the universe. He cannot keep his head down in that alien medium; after some moments he must come up gasping for the necessary breath of his natural existence.

Since we cannot find a real & ultimate peace in material world, that great flux & whirl of movement, we are driven to look within for a principle of eternal stability. To look within is to look behind the veil of our material life. The very movement supposes that material existence is not everything, that our waking consciousness is not the whole field of our consciousness, but only one outward movement of our being & there is something more in us that is curtained and can be unveiled. This attempt necessitates in practice our acceptance of all subjective experiences as realities, not hallucinations, – as much realities as our experience, which is after all itself subjective, of life & death, of hunger & thirst, of wind & sun & rain. All experience, called by us subjective or called by us objective, corresponds in this view to some reality whether of this world or of another or of something beyond world, to some fact which it represents or misrepresents, and the truth of which has, in either case, to be discovered. Now in this inward looking, as we proceed from experience to yet deeper experience, we do come across a principle of eternal stability, a principle of eternal peace within ourselves which we perceive also to be omnipresent and pervasive of all time & space & to exceed & go beyond all time & all space, a principle we can not only perceive, feel & possess but in which we can live. Hallucination or no hallucination, this is a thing which can be seen, can be grasped, can be sensed by the mind, can be entered into, can be lived. Fact of material existence or no, it is an indubitable fact of spiritual experience and seems for a time to be the only wholly blissful fact, the one thing of which we can say Anandam Brahma, Delight is the eternal Reality, Bliss is Brahman. It is as described

in the Upanishad, shukram akáyam avranam asnáviram shuddham apápaviddham, luminous, bodiless, invulnerable, without sinews of force & action, pure, unpenetrated by evil, – whether evil of sin or evil of suffering. The soul in this state has for the world, at first & inalienably, either a peaceful or a joyous indifference, – not a repugnance, but an equal-souled acceptance or an equal-souled rejection of all things in the world which it regards not as binding fact but as vision of form and name in itself. What has happened when the soul enters into this stable peace & quiet bliss? It has risen out of action into that principle of Brahman manifest in us which is essentially the principle of transcendent self-stability, Sthanu, anejad, fixed and unmoving, in which & by which this world of apparent motion exists. Passing into that inexpressible peace & stillness, we are liberated from the world; we have entered out of the whirling universe of Nature into Brahman's eternal calm.

The whole of our later Hindu philosophy is full of this mighty realisation of the still, self-luminous & inactive Brahman. In those preBuddhistic ascetics, naked of the world and utterly calm, whom the unresting Macedonian found in the Asiatic ultima Thule of his insatiable march, in the all-conquering soul of Buddha, in the victorious intellect of Shankara, in the aspiration and self-fulfilment of a million saints and hermits before and afterwards our race has aspired with an ultimate and limitless sacrifice, with a sovran self-giving, to the boundless Master of peace. Even the latest of the mighty Ones, the great Vivekananda, who was in outward seeming a storm of speech and thought & force and action, was yet reaching always to the rare, remote & icy-pure linga of Amarnath, the still & silent Mahadeva, as his inmost self & goal; in him too the millennial endeavour, the irresistible yearning endured. But is then this sacrifice really the ultimate sacrifice, this yearning the supreme human tendency, this goal the final & unsurpassable resting-place? If so, the gospel of the Isha Upanishad is either a vain message or a halting place

for inferior souls. But the Seer will not have it so. Thou shalt act, he says; for thus has God made thee & not otherwise; other is the fruit of Vidya alone & not the supreme gain, the param sreyah. Nor is he in this insistence departing from the highest teaching of Vedanta. For this sacrifice is not really the ultimate sacrifice; the ultimate sacrifice is the renunciation even of mumukshutva, the giving up to God even of the desire for stillness & peace and of the attachment to inaction and the acceptance in its place, no longer with desire, attachment and passion, but with a free soul, of the Lila as well as the Silence, the great eternal play of the Ishwara no less than his vast eternal peace, the complex and progressively self-fulfilling movement of the Jagati no less than the single & ever-fulfilled immutability of the Ish, the joy of the ejad as well as the calm of the anejad Brahman. That, say the sages, is the final perception of the Vedantin and the supreme consummation of his knowledge when he discovers that there is none bound, none freed, none desiring freedom, but only Brahman variously manifesting, only God in the infinite rest & play of His own Being & becomings, – God & Brahman whom none can bind & who, therefore, even when figured to Himself as man in this apparent cage of a mind and body is still in Himself free – infinitely and for ever. The yearning towards stillness and peace is not then man's supreme tendency; not peace is his goal but divine Ananda of which peace is only the flooring and the threshold. If our ordinary world-existence is that of the Kshara Brahman, which seems to move & change, to be born & grow and perish ,& our ordinary soul-state that of the Kshara Purusha who seems to lose himself in the world and to move and change with it, to be born and grow and pass with the mind and body, if the higher existence beyond the mutability of the world is that of the Akshara Brahman, calm, still, unmoving, indifferent, at peace and the soul-state through which we move subjectively to freedom is that of the Akshara Purusha who sits above all this flux & reflux of world-energy at its work, careless of it & untouched by it, udásínavad ásínah, yet is not that the last goal nor the

unsurpassable resting-place. Beyond & containing the Kshara and the Akshara Brahman we perceive the supreme existence of the Param Brahma which, transcendent, realises in Itself the harmony of [the] stillness & the movement; beyond and containing the Kshara & the Akshara Purusha we arrive at & inhabit the supreme soul-state of the Purushottama, the Para Purusha, Ishwara & Bhagavan, who, transcendent, is the possessor, user and sovran reality of the movement and the eternal self of the stillness. In Him we find our rest and in Him simultaneously we find our active self-fulfilment; for He alone is our complete and utter being. Buddha and Shankara and our immense ascetic impulse of three thousand years are not the last word of our race nor of humanity; they are the expression of a salutary and violent necessity seizing on man & driving him to abandon utterly the world in its false appearances, by renunciation of all that here we perceive only as motion of Nature, sarvam idam yat kincha jagatyám jagat, they are a divine inspiration and a compelling impulse which will have us by any means and at any cost open our eyes to the truth that not in besotted attachment to the name and form of things, not in the blind, unillumined or falsely illumined movements of the Jagati, not in that ignorant state of the soul in which it seems to the mind to be anish & not Ish and acts as anish, not Ish, subject and not Lord of the Jagati, is the ultimate fulfilment God intends for us, but there is a stillness beyond the movement which we have to reach, a self-luminousness of the soul in its true peace, freedom & wideness to which we have to aspire. Anyad áhur Avidyayá. But when we have obeyed the impulse, it should, normally, lead us beyond itself; for when we have conquered & transcended the movement, we have yet to surpass and transcend the stillness. Beyond the Kshara & Akshara we rise into the comprehensive infinity of the uttama; lifted above Buddha & Shankara stand Janaka & Krishna, the supreme Yogin & the entire Avatar; they in full action are in entire possession of peace and, conquerors of desire & ego or eternally superior to them, keep their hold on the real and divine bliss of God's triple self-manifestation;

they know and exercise the simultaneous & harmonious enjoyment of His transcendent being, His universal Self and His individual play of becoming.

This then is the fundamental position assumed by the Seer, not denying the realisations of the quietistic sages but exceeding the goal of quietism, not preaching attachment to the world, but fulfilling desirelessly & happily, as eternal inhabitant & possessor, God in the world, it asks us to live in God's peace while embracing God's action. Kurvanneveha karmáni; thou shalt verily do actions in the world and not abstain from them; thou shalt not renounce thy human activity among these many kinds of races of thy fellow beings, for God's will in thee is towards action, kurvanneva, not inaction. Evam twayi nányathásti. Therefore, jijívishet shatam samáh, doing all human actions one should accept the full term of human life, not seek to flee untimely from the sambhuti, the birth & becoming in this world or in the human body, not, like the Nihilist, mistake freedom for a silent nothingness, not blindly & impatiently cut short by physical or spiritual means one's full term of life or full measure of human activity. For those who do these things are, inasmuch as they maim the fullness of God's intended self-fulfilment in man, átmahano janáh, self-slaying births, – not less, but in a way even more so, bhúya iva, than the more numerous herd of beings who by an ignorant attachment to bodily life and outward objects maim that self-fulfilment on its other necessary side. To renounce the condition of self-fulfilment is no less a blind darkness, andham tamas, than to be bewildered by the condition and by attaching oneself to the path, sacrifice the goal. All exclusive knowledge is a form & manner of ignorance; all narrow seeking is a mutilation of our secret and ultimate vastness and infinity." (484-490)

3. The Truth Behind the Laws of Nature

"Law of Nature is to Science the tyranny of a self-existent habit in mechanical World-Force which Intelligence, the

indulged & brilliant youngest child of material Energy, can use indeed, can convert in its forms or divert in its processes, but from which it has no door of escape. Law of Nature in Vedanta is the normality of a regular or habitual process in self-intelligent World-Force; in other words, – for Chit-Shakti, self-intelligent World-Force can mean nothing else than this, – in the cosmic Will-Power of universal self-existent Being, – of God, of Brahman. The process of Force, then, however fixed, however imperative, is neither mystically self-existent nor mechanically self-determined. On the contrary it depends upon certain relations, exists in certain conditions, amounts to certain fixed motions of the cosmic Will-Power which have been selected from the beginning in the universal Wisdom and, once selected, are manifested, evolved, established and maintained in The workings of cosmic Energy until the fixed moment arrives for their variation or for their temporary or final dissolution. Laws of Nature are, in the pregnant phrase of the Rig-Veda, adabdhá vrat á dhruvá yá devá akrinvata; they are the rules fixed and unovercome of active world-being which the gods have made and which they maintain eternally against the powers of dissolution. For the world in the old Vedic conception is a rhythm of action and movement in God's conscious being; or rather it is a combination and concord of rhythms; it is chhandas, it is metre, it is a choral symphony of Jagati & Gayatri, Brihati & Pankti, Tristubh & Anustubh; it is Vak, a formation of His Word, a formal harmony of His self-expressive consciousness, a harmony discovered and selected out of God's infinite possibilities and exposed therefore to the perpetual attack of those infinite possibilities. Therefore even the most well-established laws of Nature, the most general, persistent, apparently eternal and unvariable processes of world-Force, being formations of Jagati, being rhythms and harmonies of God's active Energy, truths of recurrent motion and not truths of eternal status, are none of them indestructible like the sempiternal Being out of which they emerge, but alterable and dissoluble and, since alterable and dissoluble, therefore ever attacked by powers of

disorder and world-dissolution, ever maintained by the divine Powers consciously obedient to eternal Will & expressive of It through whom Ishwara has manifested Himself in material, moral and spiritual Nature." (506-07)

4. The Vedantic Conception of Causality

"The Vedantic conception of Causality is equally determined by this initial and fundamental idea of the relation between mechanical process of Nature and the living Will of God. Cause, to the Vedantin, is nimitta, determining means, special determining factor; it is the particular manipulation, impact or application of motive force which brings out of a preexistent arrangement or condition of things new or modified condition and arrangement, the difference effected constituting result. Oxygen & hydrogen as separately manifest gases, the atmosphere, the ether, – or to put it in the old concrete symbolical language of Indian philosophy, the combined presence of Agni, Vayu and Akasha, form in their arranged shapes & relations the preexistent condition; contact & mixture of the two forces with the new vibrations set up by the new relation, sparsha and shabda, are the nimitta, the determining means; the new apparent condition of things, the rupa, shape of water, is the result. Agni latent in the ether & atmosphere is the preexistent condition; friction of the two aranis and the resultant vibrations, sparsha & shabda, are the nimitta; the sacrificial fire is the result. A seed planted in favourable ground is the preexistent condition, sun &rain, agni & jala, are the nimitta; the appearance of an oak tree is the result. In each case what has really happened is that in a certain arrangement of the current workings and a certain relation of the worked out shapes of Force – in this case of the active Life-Energy in the material world – a new arrangement was always potential and latent, water involved in hydrogen, fire involved in the tinder-wood, the oak tree involved in the seed and a particular process, that is to say a particular working (karma or apas) of the same Force, the same Life-

Energy, has been used to evoke the new shape of things out of latency, out of avyakta, and bring it into manifestation, into vyakta. The previous existence of the oak tree in the seed is not admitted by us because it is not there in realised form and to our erroneous notions realised form is alone reality. But realised form is only the material appearance of a truer reality which is not shaped in matter but only in consciousness: the oak tree is in the seed not in form but in being; for the form is only a circumstance of being and it is contained & latent in the being out of which it is born & which it expresses to formal vision. This latency and this process of manifestation in varying time and place by varying nimitta is, says Vedanta, the whole sense of phenomenal existence.

All cause and result are merely the evocation of a latent and potential shape or condition of things out of the previous condition or status in which it was latent, by some particular movement of a Conscious Force which is progressively passing from status to status and thus manifesting in form all that it holds in itself in being. Cause is only a means of manifestation and not itself a creative power. The real cause is only the Will of God working through its own fixed and chosen processes." (508-10)

5. Chance, Fate and law

"Chance is really the free action, not pursuable by us in its details, of a mighty cosmic Providence which is one with cosmic Force. It accepts the reality of Fate, but rejects as a void and baseless imagination the idea of an inexplicable mechanical Necessity; Fate is merely the inevitable working out in itself by a cosmic Will of its own fixed and predetermined self-perceptions. It accepts the idea of a principle of unerring self-guidance in Nature, but is unable to regard that principle as in any way a mysterious agency or an inexplicable birth; Nature guides itself unerringly only because Nature is the self-working of a Self-luminous conscious Existence formulating its Will in fixed processes of things and combined arrangement

of event actualised in its own eternal and illimitable being. Nature to Vedanta is only the mask of a divine cosmic Will, devátma-shaktih swagunair nigúdhá; Prakriti of Vedanta is no separate power, no self-existent mechanical entity, but the executive force of the divine Purusha at once self-revealed and self-concealed in the mechanism of its own workings. Purusha, conscious Soul, is the divine Poet and Maker; Nature, conscious Force, is His poetic faculty; but the material of His works is always Himself and their stage & scene are in His own conscious being.

Pre-ordered selection out of infinite possibility is the real nature of the power we call Fate. Chance is a secret Providence and Providence the constantly active Self-Knowledge of cosmic Existence and cosmic Will always fulfilling in actuality its foreseen selection of event and means, – foreseen in knowledge, – and preventing the pressure of infinite possibility from disturbing that pre-ordered arrangement. So a poet might work out in execution the original plot and characters as arranged in his mind and reject at every step the infinite possible variations which suggest themselves to him as he writes.

Law of Nature is the fixed system of conventional or habitual relations under which the Purusha has agreed with Himself to work out His pre-ordered selection and harmony. Causality is the willed arrangement of successive states & events and the choice of particular means in accordance with this fixed system of relations by which pre-ordered Fate of things is worked out in actual event.

Fate, Law and fixed Causality bind things in the movement of the Jagati; they do not bind the Purusha or conscious Soul but are the modes and instruments of His free self-working." (512-13)

6. Infinite Possibility behind Finite Actuality

"Among the many superficial fallacies of the practical man, there is none more superficial or fallacious than the assumption

that in face of what has been, it is idle to consider what might have been. The Might Have Been in the past is the material out of which much of the future is shaped. It would not be so if the material life were a self-existent thing, proceeding out of itself, sufficient to itself, ending with itself. But the material life is only a selection, a formation, a last result of an infinite conscious life behind which far exceeds the sum of all that actually exists in form and happens in event. Infinite Possibility is a living entity, a positive force; it is the material out of which God is constantly throwing up the positive and finite actuality. It is therefore all-important for a full and real knowledge of the world to know & see this infinite material as well as the actual finite result and ultimately determined shape of things. God Himself in His foreknowledge foresees the infinite possibilities that surround the event as well as the event itself. The forces that we spend vainly for an unrealised result, have always their ultimate end and satisfaction, and often form the most important determinants of a near or a distant future. The future carries in it all the failures of the past and keeps them for its use and for their success in other time, place and circumstance. Even our attempts to alter fixed process, when that process seems to be a fixed & unalterable law of Nature, are not lost & vain; they modify the active vibrations of the fixed current of things and may even lead to an entire alteration of the long-standing processes of things. The refusal of great minds to accept the idea of impossibility, with which they are not unoften reproached by the slaves of present actuality, is a just recognition of the omnipotence divinely present in us by right of the one supreme Inhabitant in these forms; nor does their immediate failure to externalise their dreams prove to the eye that sees that their faith was an error or a self-delusion. The attempt is often more important than the success, the victim more potent than the victor, not to the limited narrowly utilitarian human mind fixed on the immediate step, the momentary result, but to God's all-knowing Fate in its universal and millennial workings. From another standpoint, it is the infinite possibilities that surround the act

or the event which give to act and event their full meaning and value. It may be said that Arjuna's hesitation and refusal to fight at Kurukshetra was of no practical moment since eventually he did take up his bow and slay the Dhritarashtrians & the otiose incident might well have been omitted by God in His drama; but if it had not been possible for Arjuna to hesitate, to fling down the bow Gandiva or to have retired from the fight but for the command of the incarnate God beside him, then his subsequent action in fighting & slaying would have had an entirely different value, the battle of Kurukshetra would have meant something entirely different to humanity & its results on the future life of the nation & the world would have been, comparatively, almost a zero. We can see this truth even with regard to slighter incidents. The fatality which in Shakespeare's drama wills the death of Romeo & Juliet as the result of a trivial and easily avoidable accident, receives all its value from the possibilities surrounding the actual event, the possibilities of escape from fate, reconciliation & for these tragic lovers the life of an ordinary conjugal happiness. These unrealised possibilities & the secret inevitability – of Spirit, not of matter, – which prevents their realisation, which takes advantage of every trivial accident and makes use of it for the swift & terrible conclusion, make the soul of the tragedy. A mechanical fatality must always be a thing banal, dead, inert and meaningless. It is their perception of these things behind the veil, their transcendence of the material fact, their inspired presentation of human life that ranks the great poets among the sophoi, kavis, vates, and places poetry next to the Scriptures & the revelations of the Seer and the prophets as one subtle means God has given us of glimpsing His hidden truths.

The unrealised possibility is as much a part of Fate as the actual event. The infinite possibilities surrounding an event are not only the materials out of which the event is made and help to modify or determine the more distant future, but alone give its true & full value to every human or cosmic action." (513-15)

7. Existence of a Nation

"In real truth a nation is an existence in the universal Consciousness, an Idea-Force in the universal Will that is knowledge, not constituted by geographical boundaries, nor by a given sum or combination of human units, nor by a common language, religion, custom, laws, government, – for all these conditions may be satisfied without a nation existing or dispensed with or exceeded without the nation ceasing to exist, – but created by the idea & living in the idea. Born of the idea in the Brahman, it exists by the force of the idea and only so long as that force supports it & needs the form for its self-fulfilment; the force withdrawn, the form departs into the general Idea force which is constantly grouping men and animals, plants & worlds into figures of corporative Brahman-consciousness, and entering into it either there dissolves or waits for fresh emergence in other time, place & conditions." (549)

8. How to Recover the Perfect Truth of the Veda

"The perfect truth of the Veda, where it is now hidden, can only be recovered by the same means by which it was originally possessed. Revelation and experience are the doors of the Spirit. It cannot be attained either by logical reasoning or by scholastic investigation, – na pravachanena, na bahuná srutena . . . na tarkenaishá matir apaneyá. "Not by explanation of texts nor by much learning" . . . "not by logic is this realisation attainable." Logical reasoning and scholastic research can only be aids useful for confirming to the intellect what has already been acquired by revelation and spiritual experience. This limitation, this necessity are the inexorable results of the very nature of Veda.

It is ordinarily assumed by the rationalistic modern mind, itself accustomed to arrive at its intellectual results either by speculation or observation, the metaphysical method or the scientific, that the sublime general ideas of the Upanishads, which are apparently of a metaphysical nature, must have

been the result of active metaphysical speculation emerging out of an attempt to elevate and intellectualise the primitively imaginative and sensational religious concepts of the Veda. I hold this theory to be an error caused by the reading of our own modern mental processes into the very different mentality of the Vedic Rishis. The higher mental processes of the ancient world were not intellectual, but intuitive. Those inner operations, the most brilliant, the most effective, the most obscure, are our grandest and most powerful sources of knowledge, but to the logical reason, have a very obscure meaning and doubtful validity. Revelation, inspiration, intuition, intuitive discrimination, were the capital processes of ancient enquiry. To the logical reason of modern men revelation is a chimera, inspiration only a rapid intellectual selection of thoughts or words, intuition a swift and obscure process of reasoning, intuitive discrimination a brilliant and felicitous method of guessing. But to the Vedic mind they were not only real and familiar, but valid processes; our Indian ancients held them to be the supreme means of arriving at truth, and, if any Vedic Rishi had composed, after the manner of Kant, a Critique of Veda, he would have made the ideas underlying the ancient words drishti, sruti, smriti, ketu, the principal substance of his critique; indeed, unless these ideas are appreciated, it is impossible to understand how the old Rishis arrived so early in human history at results which, whether accepted or questioned, excite the surprise and admiration even of the self-confident modern intellect. I shall try to show at a later stage what I hold to be, in the light of the psychological experience of Yoga, the exact processes involved in these ancient terms and their practical and philosophical justification. But, whatever the validity attached to them or the lack of validity, it is only by reproducing the Vedic processes and recovering the original starting point that we can recover also whatever is, to the intellect, hopelessly obscure in the Veda and Vedanta. If we know of the existence of a buried treasure, but have no proper clue to its exact whereabouts, there are small chances of our enjoying those ancient riches;

but if we have a clue, however cryptic, left behind them by the original possessors, the whole problem is then to recover the process of their cryptogram, set ourselves at the proper spot and arrive at their secret cache by repeating the very paces trod out by them in their lost centuries.

All processes of intellectual discovery feel the necessity of reposing upon some means of confirmation and verification which will safeguard their results, deliver us from the persistent questioning of intellectual doubt & satisfy, however incompletely, its demand for a perfectly safe standing-ground, for the greatest amount of surety. Each therefore has a double movement, one swift, direct, fruitful, but unsafe, the other more deliberate and certain. The direct process of metaphysics is speculation, its confirmatory process is reasoning under strict rules of verbal logic; the direct process of science is hypothesis, its confirmatory process is proof by physical experiment or by some kind of sensational evidence or demonstration. The method of Veda may be said to have in the same way a double movement; the revelatory processes are its direct method, experience by the mind and body is the confirmatory process. The relation between them cannot, indeed, be precisely the same as in the intellectual methods of metaphysics & science; for the revelatory processes are supposed to be self-illumining and self-justifying. The very nature of revelation is to be a supra-intellectual activity occurring on the plane of that self-existent, self-viewing Truth, independent of our searching & finding, the presumed existence of which is the sole justification for the long labour of the intellect to arrive at truth. In Veda drishti & sruti illumine & convey, the intellect has only to receive & understand. Experience by the mind & body is necessary not for confirmation, but for realisation in the lower plane of consciousness on which we mental and physical beings live. We see a truth self-existent above this plane, self-existent in the satyam ritam brihat of the Veda, the True, the Right, the Vast which is the reality behind phenomena, but we have to actualise it on the levels on which we live, levels

of imperfection & uncertainty, striving & seeking; otherwise it does not become serviceable to us; it remains merely a truth seen and does not become a truth lived. But when we moderns attempt to repeat the Vedic revelatory processes, experience by the mind and body becomes an indispensable confirmatory process, even a necessary preliminary process for their acquisition; for the use of these supreme instruments of intuitive & revelatory knowledge is naturally attended, for those to whom the intellect is and has always been the chief and ordinary mental organ, by dangers and difficulties which did not to the same extent pursue the knowledge of the ancient Rishis. To them it was natural in its possession, easily purified in its use; to us it is a difficult acquisition, hampered in its use by the interference of the lower movements. Experience is, for us, indispensable; we may not be certain of excluding by its means all false sight and false intuition, but we can correct much that has been imperfectly seen and confirm beyond the possibility of all intellectual scepticism that which does clearly come down to us as illumination from our Higher self to be confirmed in life & experience, constantly and regularly, by our lower instruments.

We have, for instance, the remarkable passages in the Isha Upanishad about the sunless worlds, the luminous lid concealing Truth, the marshalling & concentration of the rays of Surya & his goodliest form of all, that form which, once seen, leads direct to the supreme realisation of oneness, So'ham asmi. Our intellect sees in these expressions a brilliant poetry, but no determinable philosophical sense; yet no one can follow thoughtfully the succession of the phrases without feeling that the Seer of the Upanishad did not really intend to lead up to the direct clarity of his supreme philosophical statement by a flight of vague poetical images; he has a more serious meaning, detailed, definite, precise, pregnant, in the carefully arranged procession of these splendid images. How are we to discover it? Using the scholastic method we may hunt for a clue in the other Upanishads; we may find it or imagine we have found

it and by the aid of speculative inference and a liberal dose of fancy we may construct a brilliant or even a plausible theory of the Rishi's meaning. Or, without any such clue, by the aid of a clear intelligence and putting together of the ascertainable ideas of Veda or Vedanta, we may fix a meaning which will adequately explain the text, fit into the course of the argument and, in addition, justify itself by shedding light on other passages where there is a reference to the Sun, to its rays or to its revelatory function. These means, however, can only conduct us to a plausible hypothesis, a twilight certainty, or at most a convincing probability. Nor, in this passage at least, will the metaphysical methods of Shankara at all assist us; for it is a question not of metaphysical logic but of the meaning of an ancient symbol, the connotation of certain antique figures. On the other hand, if we have been able to revive by Yoga the old methods used by the ancients themselves, we may, either in the ordinary course of our experiments or guided by the suggestion of the Upanishad, arrive at the actual experiences on which, in Vedic times, the use of this symbol and these figures was founded. We may perceive in our own selves the interposition of the golden vessel, the action of the rays, their disposition, their concentration; we may have the vision of the goodliest form of all, tejo yat te rupam kalyanatamam, and know, by luminous experience, the link between that vision and the realisation of the supreme Vedantic truth, So'ham asmi. We shall then be certain of our knowledge, our unity with the one & only existence. If the ancient ideas of our psychology are correct, by process of revelation and intuition we could have arrived at the same results; the old Rishis, accustomed to use that process habitually and follow its progressive action with as much surety and confidence as we follow the steps of a logician, would have needed nothing more for certainty, though much more for realisation; but we, habitually intellectual, pursued into the higher processes, when we can arrive at them, by those more brilliant and specious movements of the intellect which ape their luminosity & certainty, could not feel entirely safe & even, one might say,

ought not to feel entirely safe against the possibility of error. The confirmation of experience is needed for our intellectual security.

This method, by which, as I hold, the meaning of Veda can alone be entirely recovered, is, then, a process of psychological experiment and spiritual experience aided by the higher intuitive or revelatory faculties, – the vijnana of Hindu psychology, – of which mankind has not yet, indeed, anything but a fitful and disordered use, but which are capable of being, within certain limits, educated and put into action even in our present transitional & unsatisfactory stage of evolution. It differs from the method by which the ancient Rishis received Vedic truth, – revelation confirmed by experience, – only by the side of approach which must be for us from below, not from above, and the weight of the emphasis which must rest for a mentality preponderatingly intellectual and only subordinately intuitional, on experience more than on intuition. For the rest, the common consent of humanity has agreed that only by higher than intellectual faculties can the truths of a supra-human or supra-sensuous order, if at all they exist, be really known. Religion, except in ethical & rationalistic creeds like Buddhism and Confucianism which have put aside all such questionings as outside the human domain, has always insisted that revelation is the indispensable angel and intermediary and the intellect at best only its servant, assistant and pupil. Science & rationalism have virtually agreed to this distinction; they have accepted the idea that all knowledge, which does not reach us through the doors of the senses and, on its arrival, submit its pretensions to the judgment of the reason, is incapable of solution by the intellect; but they add that, for this very reason, precisely because the senses are our only doors of experience and the reason our only safe counsellor, the questions raised by religion and metaphysics are utterly vain and insoluble; they relate either to the unknowable or the non-existent; either the material only exists, or, if there is any other existence, the material only can be known and

therefore alone exists for the purview of humanity. As man marches upon the dust and is circumscribed by the pressure of the terrestrial atmosphere, so also his thought moves only in the material ether and is circumscribed within the laws & results of material form and motion. Recently we see, even in Europe or chiefly in Europe, – for Asia is too busy imitating Europe of yesterday to perceive whither Europe of today is tending, – a revolt against this arbitrary denial of the rarest parts of human experience. The existence of the supra-sensuous &the infinite is reconquering belief and, at the same time, it is coming again to be admitted that there are faculties of intuitive &supra-rational knowledge which answer in the domain of Consciousness to these supra-sensuous facts of the domain of Being. The belief & the admission go together rationally. For to every order of facts in Nature there should be in the same Nature, inevitably, a corresponding order of faculties in knowledge by which they can be comprehended; if we have no certain knowledge of the facts, it is because we have not as yet the clear and steady use of the faculties.

In three of the external aids by which Veda has been perpetuated in India, religion, Yoga, the guru-parampara, this fundamental principle is amply admitted. Religion starts from revelation; it rests upon spiritual and moral experience. Yoga, admitting the truth of verbal revelation, the word of God & the word of the Master, yet starts from experience and rises, as a result of experimental development by fixed methods, to the use of intuitive and revelatory knowledge. The Guru-parampara starts with the word of the Guru, accepted as the knowledge of one who has seen, and proceeds to personal mastery by the experience of the disciple who may indeed go beyond his master & even modify his knowledge, but is not allowed to disown his starting-point." (551-57)

9. Development of Rationalistic Methods in Darshana, the Path of Metaphysics

"…there is one of our great Indian spiritual activities which

has developed progressively in the direction of rationalistic methods and given the responsibility for nine-tenths of its work in these supra-sensuous fields to the very organ, pronounced by the consensus of human opinion insufficient for such inquiries, – the intellect. It is in Darshana, in the path of metaphysics, that this paradoxical phenomenon has been permitted. It is true that our metaphysical thinkers, unlike the European, do not launch themselves into the full flood of metaphysical rationalism; they hug the coast. They admit the supreme authority of revelation, but only of verbal revelation, of the spoken Veda. But the sense and the bearing of the Vedic text has long been doubtful and warring philosophies have founded themselves on the sacred Word; how is doubt to be resolved, dispute to be decided? By appeal to other texts? But if there is still dissonance, not entire consonance? By the aptavakya, the word of the fit authority. If that fails or there is, here also, a conflict? By logic; the intellect is called in as the arbiter of the sense of the Sruti. The word of the adept, the aptavakya, is admitted; but different Masters seem to have taught different doctrines. Who or what is to decide? Let it be settled by logical argument. Once more the intellect is called in as supreme judge; neither the Sruti, nor aptavakya, but logical judgment becomes the real master of our knowledge. Psychological experience also is admitted in certain fields of the argument; but men have different experiences, even different ultimate experiences. Adwaita asserts the pure self as an ultimate experience of consciousness; Buddhism denies it, holds it to be an illusion and goes beyond to the experience of psychological Nothingness. Yet again, logical argument is called in to decide the question. Therefore we find that our metaphysical method of arriving at the higher truth is practically, – though in theory this is subject to certain qualifications, – as much an intellectual & logical method as the method of European metaphysics or the method of scientific rationalism. Only, the Indian metaphysician admits certain data, values certain orders of evidence, which are ruled out of court as invalid or irrelevant by European thinkers.

The scientific rationalist observes the sensible facts of life & Nature; these are the data on which alone he feels himself entitled to build his conclusions. The European metaphysician observes the general facts of sensible existence and adds to them the study of words, abstract concepts & categories which answer to no concrete existence, but are the general forms into which human thought has cast itself; these vast nebulae are the metaphysician's data. It is in this ethereal void that he disports himself in a grandiose freedom. The Indian thinker adds to the generalities of natural phenomenon and the abstractions of thought two other classes of evidence, the facts of psychological experience and the word of the revealed Scripture or of competent authorities. But he uses them sparingly & as a last resort. All that is really solid in our metaphysics (I except Patanjali's Yoga Shastra which stands by itself in the six Darshanas,) consists in its parts of logical inference and analogy; – we value in it not what it builds on revelation & experience, but its strenuous manner of justifying certain great assertions of Veda & high experiences of spiritual seekers by the reason and by logical disputation. The method of Darshana, the way of Shankara and Buddha, although it works round and upon certain grand psychological experiences, Maya, Nirvana, is essentially speculative and logical, not intuitive and experiential." (557-58)

10. The Movement of Pure Intellectualism and the Cultural Temperament of the Aryan, Semitic and Mongolian Peoples

"The way of knowledge has become in India the way of metaphysical disquisition. Are we really bound to continue this tradition or is the more ancient method also the right method, to which humanity must eventually return; and, if so, what have we gained or lost by this more than millennial substitution of speculation for revelation and verbal logic for actual experience? The substitution itself has come about by a powerful general movement of humanity, simultaneous

throughout the world, although it most thoroughly affected Greece and through Greece extended to the general temperament & thought of modern Europe. It cannot quite be said that Greece invented the intellect or the intellectual temperament, but it is certain that the Hellenic race first began the application of reason, inexorably, to the remoulding of thought & life in the temperament of intellectuality. Mankind can never be wholly rational, because our race is essentially built up of various elements, none of which can be eliminated from its system of being. It is our nature to be physical, animal, emotional & sensational as well as intellectual and the coldest thinker or most inexorable rationalist cannot escape from the constitution of our common nature. But mankind, under the great impulse which overtook it at a certain stage of its conscious activity, felt the need of rationalising, as far as that could with safety be done, its other irrational members, the heart, the senses, the life-action, even the body. This tendency, pursued simultaneously by Graeco-Roman civilisation, by Confucian China, by philosophical & Post-Buddhistic India, combated in India by the vitality of Yoga and religion, in Europe by the great united floods of barbarism and Catholic Christianity, has finally triumphed and reached a pitch of success, an extent of victorious propagation which, in human movements, is usually the precursor of arrest and decay. The movement of pure intellectualism has itself, indeed, no clear premonition of its own end. It hopes to conquer, to perpetualise itself, to bring under its sway the nations that are still exempt from its yoke or only imperfectly subdued to it; outwardly it seems to be on the point of success. It still holds the mind of Europe, although the soul of Europe begins to attempt uneasily an escape from its narrowing rigidity & dryness; it has seized on Mongolian Japan & is revivifying the traditional intellectualism of China by a flood of fresh ideas, by the inspiration of a new & wider horizon; it has touched already the Mahomedan world; the political subjugation of India has been followed by a pervasive invasion of European intellectualism which is striving hard to substitute itself

progressively for the ancient law & nature of our Indian temperament and being. But these manifestations, however overwhelming in appearance, however conclusive they seem of approaching victory, conceal the seeds of a profound revolution in the inverse sense. An outward conquest is often the means of an inward defeat. What is happening now, has happened before on a smaller scale and under less developed conditions. When the combined intellectuality of Greece and practical materialism of the Latins, supported by the conquering military force of the Roman Republic and Empire, came into contact with the old tradition of Asia, the result was the collapse of the politically victorious civilisation under the assault of an Oriental religion which in its tenets & methods not only exceeded but trampled alike on the vital force of the body & on the free play of the intellect, alike on Greece & on Rome. And it was from a part of Asia which underwent directly the Roman yoke, but persisted with the most deep-rooted perseverance in its spiritual traditions that the revanche proceeded; conquered Judaea took captive the victorious civilisation. Once more Europe, much more profoundly intellectualised, much more profoundly materialised in its intellectualism, throws itself upon Asia with a yet more supreme military force, compelling a yet more widespread political subjugation; once more a penetrating eye can discover the preparation of the same result obscurely outlining itself behind the deceptive appearances of the moment. The first effect on the West from this impingement of the mental atmosphere of Europe on the mental atmosphere of Asia and the breaking down of the walls that separated them has been the revival of the invincible intuitionalism of the Aryan or Aryanised races. The philological tripartite division of the Old World into the Aryan, Semitic &Mongolian peoples, even if it be ethnologically untenable, does correspond roughly to real divisions in the cultural temperament of the human race, the result much less of original race than of historical formations & past influences. The Mongolian is predominantly intellectual, his lower nature is largely tamed & rationalised,

the intuitive parts of his mind are slow and their beats tepid in their impulse; there is much less in his temperament to resist the intellectualising process of rationalism than in any other portion of humanity; in the Semite intellect is subordinated, he is intuitional, but intuitional through his lower members only, with as much of the higher activity as the heart & senses allow; the Aryan is intuitional either directly or through and by the heart and the intellect. The Aryan is therefore unfitted by his temperament to persevere in the relentless rationalising of our whole being; always there comes a time when he pauses, listens to a voice within that he has disregarded and, convinced by that inner daemon, departs from the paths hewn for him by the sceptical intellect with the same speed and enthusiasm with which he has followed their straight & level vistas. The very nations which are today the hope of a purely intellectual civilisation, hold in themselves that which can never remain satisfied with the pure reason, and this ineradicable betraying force is now being powerfully stimulated by the mental currents which for almost a century have been consciously or subconsciously reaching Europe with a slowly increasing force from the East. Therefore, the repetition, no doubt in a very different form & to very different issues, of the miracle of Christianity is psychologically inevitable." (559-61)

11. The Place of Reason in Evolution

"If indeed, as modern thought imagines, intellectual reason were the last & highest term of evolution, this consummation need not have been inevitable, or, if inevitable, it would have been deplorable; for perfection depends on the rule of our highest member over its inferior cohabitants. But our evolution is only the progressive unfolding of our nature and faculties, & in the list of those faculties reason does not hold the highest place; it is not even a separate and independent power, but a link, servant and intermediary. Its business, when it is allowed to rule, is to train the lower man so as to make him a fit vessel for an activity higher than its own. The animal is content to

follow his impulses under the flashlight of instinct. If ever, as is likely, there was a time when man also was a supreme animal, he must have been guided by an instinct different, perhaps, in its special kind but as trustworthy as animal instinct & of the same essential nature. It was, then, the development in us of that reason which we see ill developed in the animal which deprived man of his sure animal instinct & compelled him to seek for a higher guide. Everything goes to show that he must have sought it at first in the lower intuition & revelation which works in the heart, the aesthetic impulses, the senses. Again, it is the insistent development of reason that has served to make him dissatisfied with these powerful, but still inferior guides. But not until reason, without lapsing back to the lower movements, yet becomes permanently dissatisfied with its own limitations, can it fulfil its work of preparation. For there is a faculty in us superior to the rational, there is that direct seeing & touch of things which shows itself in the higher revelation & intuition & works obscurely, like a fire enveloped in smoke, in the phenomena of intellectual genius & unusual personality. Beyond direct seeing there is a faculty of direct being, if I may so express it, which, if we can entirely reach & hold to it, makes us one with God, brahmabhúta, can reveal in this material life the perfection of Brahman as it is intended to be manifested in humanity, so that man on the human level, in the human cadre, becomes perfect as God is perfect. The intellect itself cannot reach these heights. It can only discipline, chasten & prepare the lower members to receive & hold without harm or disintegration that higher force which has alone the power to raise us to the summits. In the intellectual ages of mankind, reason forgets these limitations; it tries to do a double work, to judge correctly all the knowledge which presents itself to the sensorium & its instruments and also to know things directly & in their essence. The former is its legitimate work & deserves the name of Science; the latter is an illegitimate attempt to go beyond its sphere and conceals an error under the name of Metaphysics. The intellect can know & judge phenomena;

by its labour in examining them it arrives, in spite of much presumption & error, at a considerable number of phenomenal certainties; but it cannot know & judge the essence of things; by attempting to examine that field, whether unaided or as the principal inquirer, it only arrives, if it is honest with itself, at this one truth, that it can be certain of nothing; – all the rest is appearance, asseveration or opinion. We can know things as they seem to be in the order of the physical Nature in which they live; by the reason we cannot be sure what anything is, in itself, in that order of realities of which physical Nature is only the external seeming. Therefore the last refuge of reason, when it becomes conscious of its blunder, is to deny that such an order of realities exists at all, & to confine itself to the knowledge of material & phenomenal certainties. But such a restriction of knowledge brings with it a lowering, narrowing & petrifying of our humanity, because contrary to the whole nature and ineradicable tendency of our kind & sure therefore to falsify & slow down the springs of our action & being. Therefore Nature, mightier & wiser than the Scientist, compels man to revolt against the cold & debasing tyranny of a negative scepticism. She compels him back to the way to his internal skies & compels him to recover, in whatever new terms, the promise of his Scriptures & his Gospels. She makes him listen again for some indirect echo, if not for the actual resonance of the eternal, immutable chant, the ever-rhythmic unwritten Veda.

The European attempt must, therefore, come to nought the moment it is brought face to face, as daily it is being brought more & more nearly face to face with its own inalienable insufficiency. The tradition of Asia will again impose itself on humanity, & it is probable that it will be again a country politically subject to Europe but more than any other tenacious of its spiritual temperament & tradition, which will be the instrument of the revanche. But the revelation that will conquer this time the forces of material rationalism must be one which includes the intellect in exceeding it, fulfils, not annuls it; for

the conditions demand this greater consummation. In the Roman days the intellect was attacked before its constructive work had proceeded beyond the first insufficient paces; today the intellect has done its constructive work and the work must be accepted. It is India alone that can satisfy this double claim of the human reason & the divine intelligence; & the new reconquest will differ as much and in the same way from the old as India differs from old Judaea." (561-64)

12. The Workings of the Great Intellectual Movement of Humanity in India and the Great World-Work that India Has to Do in the Future

"It is true that in this country the reason has never fulfilled itself, triumphed & held undisputed sway to the same extent as in modern Europe. If we take in its general results in India the great intellectual movement of humanity, we see that it broke up & scattered about in fragments the ancient catholic tradition & knowledge, placed its stamp on much that yet remains, destroyed a great deal which it could not assimilate, left a little surviving under veils & in our remote & secret places. On the mental temperament of our people, the long struggle had a disastrous effect; for it has deprived all except the few of the higher supra-intellectual inner life of our forefathers, it has made impossible any general resort to that discipline which gave them the use to a certain extent, at least, of the higher intuitive mentality, the satyadrishti, the direct sight, and has driven the many to be content rather with the irregular intuitions of the heart, the aesthetic faculties & the senses; we have kept those faculties which receive the actual touch of the higher truth obscurely, with the eyes of the intellect closed but lost those which receive them directly, with the eyes of the intellect open and luminously transmitting them to the mind imprisoned in matter. We have therefore neither been able to organise the intellectual efficiency of the Europeans, nor retain the principles of inner greatness known to our forefathers. Nevertheless, we still have among us important

remnants of the old knowledge & discipline & we have firm hold in our schools of Yoga on the supreme means by which its lost parts can be recovered. The key of a divine life upon earth lies, rusted indeed in an obscure corner of our mansion, used only by a few, but still it lies there & is still used. It has to be singled out from amid much waste matter, made fit for complete & general use and given freely to mankind. We have kept, fortunately, the intuitional temperament to which its use is easy & natural. The failure of the intellect to assume complete sway and entirely rationalise our life, was a necessary condition for the preservation of that temperament, itself necessary for the appointed work & God-decreed life of our nation. On the other hand, the indispensable work of Buddha and his predecessors & successors has not been entirely lost on our nation. Their great movement which denied, limiting itself in rationality, the capacity or the need of the human mind to know beyond the laws of phenomena, seized in metaphysical philosophy upon only so much as was necessary for conduct, sought to establish on pure logic & reason the few fundamental principles it needed and, feeling obscurely the necessity of completing itself by physical science, as soon as it entered that field, far outpaced the accomplishment of Europe or Arabia, ended in a defeat & collapse necessary for the final salvation of humanity. Its defeat necessitated in the divine scheme the later arrival in India of an intellectual & rationalistic civilisation, armed, organised, politically dominant, culturally aggressive, so that we might be forced, against our will & natural tendency, to hear from the rational intellect that which it was entitled to say to us & to perceive at last that the indirect & inferior intuition, great, divine & inspiring as it is in its more intense individual results, is still insufficient for humanity & that we must turn back to a higher guide & recover a lost & superior state. When, without falling into the European error, we have recognised this truth, – and the logical & rationalistic capacity developed in us by Buddha & Shankara gives us the power to recognise it & the tendency, – we shall be ready both for our national survival and for that

greater world-work for which, alone among the nations, we keep still the necessary materials and the necessary capacity. Children of the Rishis, not entirely disinherited, repositories of the Veda, still clinging to our trust, we alone can recover in our experience its half lost truths for the growing need of humanity. We have acquired, too, by our long philosophical discipline, the power of stating supra-intellectual knowledge in that language of the intellect on which the modern world insists as the proper vehicle of understanding and the first condition of acceptance.

We can see, from this point of view, the causes of the general substitution of the logical & speculative method for the intuitional & experiential; it was an incident in the inevitable recurrence of one of those periods in which pure intellectuality dominates & which have for their function to refine & chasten the lower nature in the general mass of humanity. We can see what we have gained, – the power of ratiocination, the openness to the processes of reason, the ability to express intellectually – so far as that is possible – supra-intellectual knowledge & experience, the control of the lower members by the reason. We can see, too, the natural limitations of the intellect & the inevitably inferior validity of the metaphysical method to the experiential in the attempt to grasp the truths of Veda, in that the certainty of these truths cannot be acquired either by speculation or logic. We can see how this inferiority has worked for the obscuration or elimination of much that was potent, active & living in the more ancient knowledge; for the intellect tends to reject in its self-confidence what it cannot grasp & define, just as the heart tends to reject in its self-will what it does not desire or enjoy; yet what the intellect cannot grasp & define, includes often the most valuable parts of experience and knowledge." (564-66)

13. The Seeds and the History of the Development of the Intellectual Movement In India

"The seeds of this movement of the intellect are contained

in the Sanhitas & Upanishads themselves, although the movement itself is foreign to the Scriptures. The Sanhitas are Karmakanda; their object is not the enunciation of the general Truths of Brahman, but the practice of its particulars; they are the perfect monuments, sufficient to themselves, of especial moments, stages, movements in the progress of the individual towards his divine goal; they are instruments by thought & speech for the stabilisation of his increasing gains in light, force & joy; they are the praise & invocation of the gods who preside over particular functionings in our nature & in world-nature; they are statements of experience packed full of psychological detail and minute spiritual realisation, which confirm the seer & help the seeker. They are truth of experience & have therefore no room for speculation; they are ascertained truth & give therefore no room to doubt, debate & logical reasoning. But there are passages, rare seeds of the method pursued by the Upanishads, in which a general question is put and the suggestion of an answer offered. The Upanishads, on the contrary, are Jnanakanda; they have for their object the enunciation of the Truth of Brahman & the fundamental principles of Brahman's self-manifestation in universe. But with one remarkable exception they do not use, in order to arrive at this truth, these principles, the method of logical reasoning. Unlike the Sanhitas, they admit, not so much of doubt, as of debate; they move by positive questioning and the positive answer to questioning. But, again, the answer to questioning does not move by logic either in its inception, in its process or in its consummation. When Yajnavalkya holds his grand debate with the Brahmavadins at the court of King Janaka, when the proud Balaki vails his pride to the superior knowledge of King Ajatashatru, it is not by the field of logic or with the arms of metaphysic disquisition that they encounter each other. The question one puts to another is not "What thinkest thou of this?" but "What dost thou know?" and he whose knowledge proves to be deeper than his adversary's, is the conqueror in the discussion. Nor has this superior knowledge been arrived at by a more just or a

more brilliant speculation, but by deeper sight, by a more powerful concentration. He has arrived at it, tapas taptwa; that is the method laid down by Varuna to his son Bhrigu in the Taittiriya Upanishad; for, he adds, tapo Brahma, Tapas is Brahman. Tapas, in other words, is the dwelling of the soul on its object, by which Brahman originally created the world through vision – sa ikshata – saw Itself, that is to say, as world & what It saw, became, – the dwelling of the soul on its object whether, prospectively, in creative vision, outwardly realising, as the poet & the genius of action dwells, or, retrospectively, in perceptive vision of the thing created, inwardly realising, as the prophet dwells; tapas is the very foundation of the method of revelation & intuition. Therefore, as in the acquisition of knowledge, speculation & logic are not used, so also in the imparting of knowledge, disquisition and logic are not used. The thing has been seen by the seer, he is the drashta & to him Veda is drishti; it is spoken to the hearer & he sees, indirectly, through the medium of the word what the seer has seen by the self-vision, directly; to the hearer, Veda is Sruti. Yajnavalkya speaks his knowledge, his adversaries do not dispute it; they, too, see, being themselves habituated to these supreme processes, and the thing seen they silently & without debate acknowledge. If they are to dispute, since dispute is only a comparison of knowledge, of sight, of Veda, of drishti,[1] they must themselves first see farther, more profoundly, more subtly; and to see farther, they must first plunge into farther tapas, remain long constant in a farther dwelling of the soul on its object.

Still, just as in the Sanhitas there is the seed of the Upanishadic method, so in the Upanishads there is the seed of the later philosophical & intellectual method; we have, very occasionally, an obscure & casual preparation for the Darshanas. One passage, indeed a line, entirely typifies

[1] The word for knowledge, vid, veda, is the Latin word for sight &, for the early Rishis, had probably not yet lost entirely all colour of its physical & more primitive meaning.

this secret bridging of the two methods; by a slight glance at it we can see how the mighty many branching tree of the metaphysical philosophies burgeoned out from a very insignificant grain of tendency. Gautama in the Chhandogya, declares to his son Swetaketu the fundamental principle that all existence apparent to us here comes out of one anterior & ultimate existence, and he immediately notices the opposite appreciation, accepted as a starting point in the Aitareya, that existence originally emerges out of an original state of non-being, but only to reject it on the ground of a logical difficulty, "How could existence be created or create itself out of the non-existent";[2] it is the earliest statement of the metaphysical principle common to all our positive & orthodox philosophies that nothing comes out of Nothing. The logic is large, axiomatic & elemental; we have a perception of logic rather than a process of logic or a generalisation from one perception & a priori exclusion of another as evidently impossible, not a logical demonstration of the impossibility. We are still within the four walls of the Upanishadic process, but stand already in the cadre of the doorway leading out into metaphysical disquisition. When we come to the sermons of Buddha, one knows not how many centuries later, and the formal foundation of the six orthodox philosophies we see, in spite of an immense logical & rationalistic development, that they proceed, initially, on this method of Gautama; they start from an act of logical discrimination, the acceptance of one statement of general perception & the rejection of another which seems to be inconsistent with the first or its contrary. All the ancient philosophies refer back to the Veda for the justification of the fundamental formulas in which they differ most obstinately & irreconcilably from each other. They are right in their positive claim; where they are wrong, where Shankara himself goes so hopelessly astray, is in founding on the same authority not only their own ultimate justification,

[2] The language of the Sruti is remarkable, Asat ekam evadwitiyam, Non-Being one without a second, & shows that the old use of not-being differs essentially from our idea of nothingness.

but the confutation of their adversaries. The Veda is not logical, does not really confute anything; its method is experiential, intuitional; its principle is to receive all experiences, all perceptions of truth about the Brahman, and either to place them side by side in order of experience & occasional relation, as in the Sanhitas, or to arrange them in order of perception and fundamental relation, as in the Upanishads, putting each in its place, correcting misplacement & exaggeration, but not excluding, not destroying. This is admirably seen in the colloquy of Ajatashatru & the proud Balaki; Ajatashatru does not deny the experiences & perceptions of Balaki; he accepts them, denies only their claim to represent the ultimate truth, gives them their true character, puts them in their right place & leads up by this purificatory process to his own deeper knowledge. Harmony, synthesis is the law of the Veda, not discord & a disjection of the members of truth in order to replace the manysided reality of existence by a narrower logical symmetry. But the metaphysical philosophies are compelled by the law of their being to effect precisely this disjection. Veda can admit two propositions that are logically contradictory, so long as they are statements of fundamental experience & perception; it does not get rid of the contradiction by denying experience but seeks instead the higher truth in which the apparent contradiction is reconciled. Logic, by its very nature, is intolerant even of apparent contradiction; its method is verbal, ideative; it accepts words & thoughts as rigid & iron facts instead of what they really are, imperfect symbols & separate sidelights on truth. Being & Non-Being are ideas opposed to each other; therefore, in logic, one or the other must be excluded. The One cannot be at the same time the many; therefore, in logic, either the Many is an illusion, or Duality is the fundamental reality of things. Brahman is Nirguna, without qualities, beyond definition; therefore, to the rigid Adwaitins, the Saguna Brahman, the Infinite Personality of God becomes a supreme myth of Maya, a basic & effective fact indeed, but basic & effective only in and of the grand cosmic illusion which It directs. Logic, the tyrant of

the metaphysician, is satisfied by these abstract processes, but Truth is hurt & dismembered. Illusions of truth, dogmas of syllogism, take its place, and war upon each other, as indeed, so long as they live, they must go on warring for ever, since none can ever be established as undisputedly true, resting, as they do, on pure opinion of Smriti poured into the mould of Opinion, having, as they all have, a part only of Truth which they pretend vainly to be the whole.

We see, as a result, a progressive disjection of the fundamental truths of Veda, &, curiously enough, a disjection of the various parts of method which make up the totality of the Veda. The totality of Vedantic knowledge consists of several processes; first, Vedanta, the direct perception of the fundamental reality out of which all emerges & to which all returns; secondly, Sankhya, the analysis, by the discriminating perception, of the fundamental principles of being & knowledge in which the Reality manifests itself as world, as subject, & as object; thirdly, Yoga, the psychological basis of experience, experiment, practical analysis, synthesis which verifies the discriminative analysis; fourthly, Vaisheshika, the physical analysis of the form or matter in which the manifesting world-energy is expressed & established to our outgoing perceptions; fifthly, Nyaya, the analysis of the processes of discrimination whether by the intellect or by higher functions; sixthly, Karma of Veda, the application of the knowledge acquired in formulas of life action by which the individual & the community can ensure the highest phenomenal expression of the fundamental Reality of which their special nature is capable, – by which, let us say, man can express Brahman in his superior & more plastic kind as the bee or the ant expresses Brahman in its inferior & more rigid &limited nature; – these six rank among other processes, – for life of Veda is supple, flexible and wide, – some of which are the foundation of Purana & Itihasa. The fundamental perception, separating, narrowed itself and became the Uttara Mimansa of Badarayana; the discriminative analysis, separating, narrowed

itself and became Sankhya of Kapila; the psychological experimentation, separating, narrowed itself & became Yoga of Patanjali; the physical analysis, separating, narrowed itself and became Vaisheshika of Kanada; the analysis of discriminative processes, separating, narrowed itself and became Nyaya of Gautama; the application in formulas of life-action, separating, narrowed itself extremely & became the Purva Mimansa of Jaimini; yet each of the six arrogated to itself the functions & the sufficiency of the other five. Other parts of knowledge & process, ejected by the ever-narrowing tendency of logical exclusiveness, established themselves in other philosophies and branches of practice & knowledge and have come down to us, changed, often disfigured, in Shastra, in Purana, in legend & history, in different schools of Yoga.

The original method of all these differences was the method of Gautama in the episode of the Chhandogya, the exclusive affirmation of one's own seeing, the logical exclusion, by process of verbal & ideative distinction, of that which has [been] seen by others. We perceive very well this root of the evil in the grand example, supreme in its kind, of the Buddha. Unhelped by the conflicting philosophies of the schools, dissatisfied with the too rigorously materialised methods of the Yogins, he takes the right, the supreme step, he retires into himself & gives his soul the charge of the Truth. Sa tapo atapyata. He emerges from this concentration of soul, tapas taptwa, with the great illumination received in the ever-memorable night under the Bo tree. What is this illumination of Buddha? It is the perception of the chain of Karma, of the impermanence of sanskaras, of the illusoriness of the mental ego, of the release into the motionless peace of Nirvana. There was nothing new in these things considered merely as tenets; they belong, in one form or another, to Vedanta; they cannot have been unknown to the philosophers of the age. What was new in them was their puissant revivification in a supreme soul and a great personality, their removal from the category of metaphysical dogmas & abstractions, into realities of life,

concrete, human, vivid, which could once more be pursued by all, realised, practised and lived. It was this return to the sources, this puissant reconnection of Vedanta with ordinary life which was the secret of the Buddha's tremendous effectuality. New also was the particular connection & interlinking of all these central ideas in the thought of the Buddha, the singular cast given to them by his unique, yet universal temperament & the formulation in the mould of that temperament of a system of Vedantic ethics. Still, in his fundamental method, in his approach to truth &his handling of truth, Buddha had not, so far, gone beyond the method of the Vedantic Rishis; Yajnavalkya or Pippalada would have so sought in themselves for the truth, received illumination in the same fashion, equally cast that knowledge into well-linked formulae of experience which could be lived and practised. But Yajnavalkya or Pippalada would not have shot the iron bolt of logic on the knowledge they had gained and shut themselves in a prison of ratiocination to the experiences of others and to fresh vision. It was here that, owing, perhaps, to the very strenuousness of Buddha's search as well as to the limits of the question with which he had started, "How shall one escape from the pain & grief of the world," he turned from the ancient path and allowed the metaphysical & logical training of his past [to] lay its heavy hand upon him. He built up walls of logic; he shut himself up in a creed. Thus it came about that this great destroyer of the ego, sanctioned in his disciples the supreme act of intellectual egoism and this giant render of chains imposed on his Sangha, without positively intending it, deprecating it indeed, the bondage to a single personality & the chain of a specific formula of thought. The movement of the metaphysical philosophies, more purely intellectual, far less temperamental & personal than the Buddha's, yet followed the same limiting process. They obeyed not a personal illumination, but the logic of their starting point. Sankhya, for instance, proceeded on a discriminative analysis of the world, proceeded indeed to the last limit of that analysis and found that, fundamentally, Existence starts

& maintains its manifestation of world on the basis, first, of the Unity of Nature, – the unity, the Yogin would say, of the energy of the Lord, – and, secondly, of the multiplicity of souls observing & reflecting the works of Nature, – the multiplicity, the Vedantin would say, of the individual souls, in which Brahman, the Lord, the one Supreme soul, puts Himself forth to enjoy the works of His energy. Of these two fundamental principles the Sankhya metaphysician made a formula, an ultimate perception; he refused to go beyond; he built up a wall of logical disquisition to shelter himself from wider perceptions and a more complex experience. Such was the method of all these schools, the developed method of which we find so indistinct a seed in the Upanishads.

Still, it was from some fundamental experience or revelation that the metaphysicians started; the logical element intervened only as a second term of knowledge. Moreover, the method of the aphorism preserved the suggestive profundity of the intuition or revelatory experience & tended to maintain in the practice of knowledge the original closeness of the intellectual concept to that vision in the soul which thought can only translate very imperfectly to the reason. But about a thousand years later we find a new movement of the intellect in force, illustrated by the names of Shankara, Ramanuja, Madhwa, in which logic covers the whole field, leaving only a narrow corner to experience & intuition; but, for that very reason, the experience, the intuition assumes a character of much more eager intensity, exclusiveness, monotone of emphasis and steeps itself more fervently in the personality & temperament of the thinker. Hence a passion of dispute, an intolerance in logomachy which leaves far behind the measure of more ancient disputants. The battle is, finally, a civil strife between Vedantist & Vedantist; temporarily victorious over rival schools, they turn to rend each other; but the strife is still mainly about fundamental perceptions. The great question now is the fundamental unity or difference between the supreme soul & the individual or another, which would have

astonished greatly the ancient Rishis, the question whether the world is false or real, – false, not only in its appearance to the senses, but per se, in itself, in its essence & its being. In the Mayavada of Shankara, Buddha, the rationalist, completes his work in India. He has led the reason to a great act of self-slaughter, the denial of existence to the world which alone it can study, more, the denial of Brahman in the world on the authority of that very Veda which spends so much time in affirming& elaborately explaining Brahman in the world. In other countries, in other ages, the Buddhistic agnostic train of thought led to a still more supreme suicide of reason; for it came to the denial of its own power to know anything real & fundamental, came almost, like Buddhistic Nihilism, to deny the existence of anything real & fundamental. In India the farther advance after Shankara & his successors has been mechanical & practical rather than theoretic; it has led towards the final divorce of intellect from experience. The metaphysician, devoted to intellect, has abandoned experience in favour of the authority of departed Acharyas. The schools of Yoga devoted to experience, have practised their psychological methods according to a fixed tradition without the harmonising touch, the generalising light; Sankhya dispensed with Yoga, Yoga divided itself from Sankhya. Thus has the spiritual life of India, by a misplaced & intolerant action of Intellect & its servant, rash-moving, light-winged, – the chameleon-hued phantasm Opinion, been shredded, parcelled out, narrowed into many streams & shallows, like the Oxus of the poet. Thus has it come down to our own age, ever narrowing more & more, shorn of its victorious streams, awaiting its return to a wider flood and a more grandiose motion." (566-74)

14. Defects of the Speculative and Logical Method Based On Intellectual Reasoning

"In the first place, by the method of intellectual reasoning we are compelled to apply the processes of logic to entities

which are beyond the grasp of logic. A single instance will suffice. We find, as a matter of experience, that existence is one and yet existence is multiple; everywhere, to whatever nook or corner of being we penetrate, we find this riddle presenting itself, undeniable & ineffugable, of a multiplicity which appears, a unity concealed which yet the mind insists on as the sole truth of the multiplicity. Nor is the unity which our mind thus asks us to perceive, a sum of factors; that oneness exists, but behind it there is an essential unity out of which both the sum & its factors emerge. Yet, divorce that essential unity from all notion of multiplicity expressed or latent, & it ceases to be unity; it becomes something else of which unity & multiplicity are mutually related aspects. But when we have arrived at this coexistent & coincident unity & multiplicity, before we can proceed to the something else which is neither one nor many, logic has already taken alarm. It cannot be, it says, that two opposites really coexist & coincide as the nature of Being. If we ask why not, – since after all, it is an universal experience, – the answer is that the thing is illogical & irrational; – unintelligible & contradictory to the view of logic & reason, it is, therefore, to them impossible of credence. A sum and its factors, may & must coexist, but not a thing which is at once one and many. Therefore Logic sets to work to get rid of one or both of the two irreconcilable, yet strangely reconciled opposites. Buddhism dismisses the Many as phenomena of sensation, the One as an ideative illusion of sensation; it gets rid of the unity in sum as a mere combination of sensational factors in the figure of the chariot and its parts, having no existence apart from the factors, no real existence at all; it gets rid of the essential unity as a mere illusion of continuity created by the uninterrupted succession of sensations, in the figure of the flame & the wick. It drives by logical process towards a Nullity, although not all its schools are bold enough to arrive at that void & yawning haven. For the rest, its final conclusion is illogical, for though it claims to be the pure concept of Nullity, it is in reality, when examined, a something that is nothing. Therefore, originally, Buddha

seems to have turned aside from the problem and declared to his disciples, Seek not to know, for to know, even if it be possible, helps not at all & leads to no useful result. Buddhism was satisfied with having got rid of the original, actual & pressing contradiction in this world here & now which it had set out to destroy. Adwaita asserts the One on the ground of ultimate experience; it dismisses the Many as an illusion; yet since both are ineffugable, since the soul escaping from the illusion, escapes from it merely & does not destroy it, it has to be admitted that the substratum of multiplicity exists eternally. Here again we are led by logical process to a result which is illogical; we have, in the end, a Maya that at once exists and does not exist. This difficulty is at once put aside as beyond enquiry; the contradiction exists, inexplicable but true; we need not enquire farther, for we have got rid of the original contradiction in which we were entangled & cutting through this Gordian knot of Nature, we have released the individual soul from the illusion of multiplicity & therefore from the necessity of phenomenal existence. In both cases the process & result are similar & a like subterfuge is utilised. In both cases Logic, like Cato at Utica, has committed suicide in order to assert its rights & liberties; but it has died, as the patients of Molière's doctors had the felicity of dying, according to the rules of the science; therefore it is satisfied. It is not, however, Buddhism & Adwaita alone, but every logical philosophy that arrives at a similar result; we find always that when we would explain existence in an ultimate term which shall be subject to logic, we fail; we arrive either at a term which is plainly illogical, or at an explanation which fails to explain or a success which seems to succeed only because it ignores or suppresses or juggles away an important part of the data. The suggestion irresistibly arises whether this is not so, whether it must not be always so merely because the formulae of logic, a creature as it is & a limited movement of intellectual ideation, which is itself a creature and a limited movement of existence, useful enough within the sphere of their birth & movement, & in the circle of their jurisdiction, cannot control

that which is beyond & wider than ideation, yet farther beyond & wider than its creature logic? Invaluable in relating correctly the particulars of the universe and purging our ideas about them, it may be of less sovereign efficacy in dealing with the fundamental things which underlie phenomena and of no efficacy at all in discovering the Reality which lies farther back behind phenomena.

Much of the luminous confusion of Metaphysics is due to the self-satisfied content with which it leans upon words & abstract ideas & uses them not merely as instruments, but as data, forgetting that these are merely useful to symbolize & formulate very imperfectly truths of experience & perception. Therefore in dealing with abstract ideas & conceptions we are unsafe unless we insist always on returning to the thing itself which they symbolise. Otherwise we lose ourselves in facile words or in confusing abstractions. For instance, in order to get rid of the anomaly of a Maya that exists & exists not, we say sometimes that the Many have a relative reality, but no essential reality. But what have we said, after all? Merely this, that we do not find the Many existing except in some relation to a unity behind, established in that Unity and, as far as we can see, existent by that unity, as indeed the unity itself exists in a certain relation to the eternally existent Many either in their manifestation or in their substratum of Maya. How much farther have we got by this manipulation of words? We have found a fresh formula which expresses the difficulty, but does not solve the difficulty. We have taken refuge in a disingenuous phrase which suggests [to] us that phenomena are unreal, but tries to escape from the consequences of its admission. As well may we say, that water is in any sense unreal because it only exists by the mixture of oxygen & hydrogen; oxygen & hydrogen unreal, because they only exist by the congregation of atoms; atoms unreal because they only exist by some obscure principle of the transformation of energy into forms; energy unreal because it exists to us only in its works & manifestations. In all this we are playing with words, we

are making an argument of our own ideative limitations. So again, in a different way, with the question of the Personality & Impersonality of God. Personality is to us a word which we use too lightly without fathoming the depth of the thing which it indicates. We confuse it perhaps with the idea of a separate ego, we imagine God in His personality as one Ego among millions separate from all the others, superior & anterior to them; we refuse to extend or to subtilise our conception, and according to our personal predilections we argue that such a Personal God cannot exist or that He must exist. But the whole method was illegitimate. We ought rather to fathom in experience all the possibilities of human personality & of divine personality, if such a thing exists, in order to know them & arrive at sure results about them instead of battling over a verbal symbol or an arbitrary abstraction & ending only in an eternal war of ill-grounded opinions.

This danger of intellectual predilections thrusting out Truth is the third disadvantage of the logical method. Logic claims & even honestly attempts to get rid of predilection and to see things in the sure light of truth, but it is not equal to its task; our nature is full of subtle disguises and, the moment we form an opinion, attaches itself to it & secretly takes it under its protection under pretence of an exclusive attachment to Truth or a militant zeal for reason & the right opinion. We come to our subject with a predisposition towards a particular kind of solution established either in our feelings, in our previous education & formed ways of thinking or in our temperament & very cast of character. We seize passionately or we select deliberately & reasonably the arguments that favour our conclusion; we reject, whether with impatience or after scrupulous & fair attention, the arguments that would shake it. Logic, a malleable & pliant servitor behind all its air of dry & honest rigidity, asks only that it should be provided with suitable premises, unsuitable premises excluded or explained away, & its conscience is entirely satisfied. We perform the comedy with perfect sincerity, but

it is still a comedy which Nature plays with us; our garb of intellectual stoicism has concealed from ourselves, the epicure of his own dish of thoughts, the mind enamoured of its favourite ideas. Shankara comes to the Upanishads with a judgment already formed; he is an Adwaitin, his temperament predisposes him to Mayavada. But the Sruti does not contain the Mayavada, at least explicitly; it does contain, side by side with the fundamental texts of Adwaita, a mass of texts which foster the temper & views of the Dualist. But the Sruti is the supreme & infallible authority; it contains nothing but truth; it can inculcate, therefore, nothing but Adwaita. Obviously, then, these dualistic texts must have a meaning & a bearing different from their surface meaning or their apparent bearing; it is Shankara's business, as a commentator in search of truth, to put always the right, that is to say always the Adwaitic interpretation on Sruti. Watch him then seize the text in his mighty hands and, with a swift effort, twist & shape & force it to assume a meaning or a bearing which will either support or at least be consistent with Adwaita, – a giant victoriously wrestling with & twisting into a shape a mass of obstinate iron! There is no insincerity in the process, rather the fervour of a too passionate sincerity. Still, Truth often veils her face with a tear or a smile, when Shankara comments on the Sruti. He is the greatest; the others are not likely to escape from the snare into which he casts himself headlong. Nor do I think the philosopher has yet been born who has escaped from these original meshes of intellectual preference, predestined belief & ineffugable personal temperament.

In fact, the supreme failing of the metaphysical method is that, owing to the paucity, abstract uncertainty and doubtful bearing of its most essential data, it becomes almost entirely a domain of opinion. The absolute contempt of scientific rationalism for metaphysics which for a long time past has conquered general opinion in Europe & put an end to fruitful philosophical thinking, is almost certainly exaggerated & unjustified. The emergence of a new metaphysical thinking,

more practical & realistic than the old abstract philosophies, presaged by Nietzsche, fulfilled in James & Bergson, is a sign at once of the return of Europe upon this dangerous error and of a perception, subconscious perhaps, of that real defect in the character of metaphysics which gave a hold to the destructive criticisms of modern realism. The long and imposing labours of the highest human intellects in the region of metaphysics, has not been a vain waste of priceless energy. Nature makes no such mistakes; her glance, though it seems to rove & fall at random and vary capriciously, is surer & more infallible in its selection than our human reason. Metaphysics have fulfilled a necessary and, when all has been said, a right & true function in our evolution; the materials of the great systems she has built have been general truths and not abstract errors. But the systems themselves are not final expressions of truth; they are the mould of the philosopher's personality, the stamp of his temperament and type of intellect. If we examine the method & substance of our own philosophies, we shall see why this must be so and cannot be otherwise. Their most important data are vast & vague conceptions, infinite in their nature, Being, Non-Being, Consciousness, Prakriti & Purusha (Nature & Soul), Mind, Matter. How can these entities be compelled to give us their secret except by a profound & exhaustive interrogatory such as modern Science has applied to the lowest principle of Being, analysing & experimenting in every possible way with Matter? But the metaphysician does not base his process on the sure steps of experience. He starts with an ideal definition of these great indefinables and he argues logically from the abstract idea to results which are faultless, indeed, in logic; – but how can we be sure of an equal faultlessness in the reality of things which is after all our proper business? We cannot be; for each thinker handles according to his own light this vague & plastic material of ideas: there is nothing to check him; he asserts his opinion &his opinion is dominated by his education or his temperament. Shankara asserts that works are incompatible with salvation, Jaimini that works are indispensable to salvation. Who shall decide,

when each proceeds with a perfect logic from his premises? Therefore, a second class of data have to be called in, the texts of the Sruti. But Jaimini & Shankara appeal equally to the texts of the Sruti; for there are some which, if pressed in their separate meaning, seem to declare the inutility of works, there are others which, if pressed in their separate meaning, seem to declare the indispensability of works. It is a question of interpretation and, where different interpretations are possible, we interpret, again, according to our opinion which is decided, as we have seen, by our education or our temperament. Even when an interpretation in the sense of our opinion seems to be impossible, an ingenious scholarship, a curious & intrepid learning can make it possible. Sa atma tattwamasi Swetaketo, cries Gautama to his son; "That is the Truth, that is the Self, that art thou, O Swetaketu." The evidence of Revealed Scripture seems to be conclusive for the Adwaitic view of existence. No, cries the Dualist, you have read it wrongly, you have separated átmátattwam into three distinct uncompounded words when there is really an euphonic combination of átmá atat twam, which gives us this result, "Thou art not that, O Swetaketu." Our inalienable perception of right, the satyam ritam in us, tells us that the Dualist's device is wrong, a desperate expedient only; but how shall we convince the Dualist, whose business it is, as a dualist, not to be convinced? For grammatically, textually, he is within his rights. Nor can Shankara at least complain of this amazing tour-de-force; for he himself has used the very same device, in his commentary on the Isha Upanishad, in order to read, for the convenience of his philosophy, asambhútyá, by the not coming into birth, where tradition, metre, sentence-structure & context demand sambhútyá, by the coming into birth. In this confusion, is there any other class of data handled by metaphysics which will help us out of the difficulty? Certain psychological experiences are so handled; notably, the phenomena of sleep, the phenomena of samadhi, the phenomena of ultimate experience in consciousness. But how are we to know that these experiences bear the construction

put on them or justify the conclusions drawn from them? how are we to know, for instance, that the experiences in consciousness which we find advanced as ultimate are really ultimate or even that they are not entirely illusory & deceptive? As metaphysics handles them, isolating them from each other, advancing them to demonstrate particular views & opinions, we cannot have any certainty. And, indeed, we find that each builder of a metaphysical system has a different formula of ultimate consciousness, ultimate to him, from which he starts; this difference of the ultimate step in experience which is also the starting-point for the chain of our logical systematising, is the strong foundation of all these age long jarrings in religious sect and school of philosophy. Here again opinion is master, very clearly founded not on data, not on pure truth, but on truth as seen in the colouring & with the limitation of our education & temperament. We can see from examples in modern Science how these differences work out & where their remedy is to be found. Physicists & geologists have disagreed in their view of the age of the earth; the geologists had certain data of experience before them which pointed to one conclusion, the physicists had a different set of data before them which pointed to a different conclusion. The difference here [is] a difference of education; the education of each had trained his mind to look only at a certain set of considerations, to move only in a certain way of thinking & reasoning. If physicist & geologist are combined in one mind, the age of the earth will not even then be indisputably fixed, for the necessary data are still wanting, but a juster perception will be gained, a better preparation for considering the problem, a superior chance of arriving as near to the truth as is now possible. Again, we see two scientists, absolutely agreed on all positive physical problems, confronted with the phenomena of the psychical world, partly true, partly the conscious or half conscious frauds of exploiters & illusions of enthusiasts. One turns eagerly to the new subject, examines widely, believes readily, is discouraged by no disappointments; the other refuses contemptuously to investigate or, if he investigates, hastens

as rapidly as he can to the conclusion that the whole business is a sink of fraud, imposture & mystification. It is difference of temperament, not of the facts, that has determined these conflicting opinions. In the positive questions on which they are agreed, in the conclusions of their respective sciences where the geologist & physicist would not dream of disputing each other's conclusions, intellectual type & temperament are by no means entirely banished as factors, but their play is restricted, a mass of actual fact & experience is there to check them & keep them in order. It is this check that is wanting to the method of the metaphysicians." (575-83)

15. The Experimental Method of Science

"If, then, our object is to take a number of general truths, a number of abstract conceptions, a few general statements of Vedanta and wide facts of consciousness, and out of these materials build ourselves a bright, aerial house of speculation in which our intellect can live satisfied with the sense of finality and our personal temperament assert itself as the ultimate truth of things, the method of abstract speculation supporting itself on logic will be sufficient for our purpose. But if we wish rather to know anything for certain about God & the ultimate reality of the world and the foundations of our life & existence, it is not by logic and speculation that we shall arrive at our desire. Experience is the first necessity; an experiential method, not a speculative & logical method. What is the utility of logical discussion & the marshalling of Vedic texts to decide whether works are incompatible with salvation or indispensable to it or neither incompatible nor indispensable, but only useful & permissible? What we need is experience. If once it is established by the experience of the Jivanmuktas that works & salvation are compatible, by the experience of the Karmayogins that works also lead to freedom in the Infinite & Divine Existence, – although they need not be the only path, nor the only requisite, although, even, it may be difficult to harmonise an active existence with

the calm & peace of Infinity, – then no amount of logic to the contrary can be of any avail. Nor will Vedic texts avail, since the bearing of the texts has itself to be first decided. And what is the use of proving by logic & a curious scholarship that Tattwam asi should be read atattwam asi or that Vidya & Avidya in a particular Upanishad do not mean what they mean in every other Upanishad or that amritatwam in one text means the state of the gods & in others the state of Brahman? We need rather to experience always, to experience our unity with the One Truth of things and our difference from it and the relations of the unity to the difference; having experienced we shall understand. We need by practice & experiment, under a fit human guide or guided by the Divinity within, if we have strength & faith in Him, to fathom the outer dissonances & the secret harmonies of Vidya & Avidya, to achieve & enjoy immortality instead of arguing about immortality, to realise the thing the Veda speaks instead of disputing about the words of the text. In the absence of knowledge of the object, touch with the object, direct experience of the object, argument tends to become a vain jangling and speculation a high sounding jargon. These things may be useful to awaken our intellectual interest in the subject and move us to the acquisition of knowledge, but only if we become dissatisfied with them & see the necessity of proceeding farther. The Greek philosophers argued, of old, that the world was made out of water or made out of fire, and their speculations & the logical ingenuities of the sophists awakened a widespread curiosity on the subject; but the moment the experimental methods of physical science give us actual experience of the constituents of the material world, such speculations become valueless; the simple relation of connected facts takes the place of abstract logic. No one would dream of trying to settle the constituents of water or the processes of water by speculative logic; the experiential method is there to forbid that inutility. Even if the right experiential method has to be found, it is still by progressive experience step after step aided by the eye of intuition that it has to be discovered. Argument from first

principles can only be of a minor and almost an accidental assistance; …" (583-85)

16. The Limitations of the Method of Science

"It might seem to follow that as the scientific method has been used to elucidate the problems of matter, so it should be used to elucidate the problems of mind & spirit. Certainly, in the absence of another, the scientific method would be the best, – the method of patient and courageous experiment & observation aided by a scrupulous use of hypothesis & exact reasoning. A beginning has been made in this direction in Europe by the examination of the abnormal conditions of hypnosis, divided personality & rare mental & psychic phenomena as well as in the tendency of psychology towards the abandonment of the superficial, academic and unfruitful methods of the past. But it is doubtful whether the scientific method will bear as great fruit in the things of mind as it has borne in the things of matter; it is certain that it is wholly unsuited to the investigation of the things of the spirit, because here we come into touch with Infinity & even cross the borders that divide the definite from the indefinable. The more we progress in that direction, the more the methods of scientific reasoning become inapplicable, unfruitful & misleading. Even the Mind gives a very limited hold to the scientist. In the first place, experiment is much more dangerous & difficult than in the physical sciences; in the latter we risk death & suffering, in the former we have to go out of the normal, face the dangers of the beyond from which man draws back shuddering, risk even the loss of that very reason which we have chosen for our instrument. The repugnance of mankind to take this step is much greater than that fear & repugnance which set the mass of mankind against the early experiments of science as diabolical sorcery & magic. Similarly, we find denounced as quackery, dupery, hallucination, superstition, the modern attempts to deal with the obscure phenomena of mind, – those in which observation of the familiar & normal

is not enough & experiment with the abnormal is necessary. But the difficulty of convincing the ignorant or the reluctant is here infinitely greater, because of the elusive nature of mind as compared with matter. This is the second capital disadvantage of the scientific method, – that our only field for full experiment is ourselves. In matter we can examine any object by bringing it sufficiently near to be within the vicinity of our senses; but in mind we are unable to see the movements & processes of the minds of others except in so far as we can judge them from their gestures, action & physical expression, – indices unutterably perilous to the reasoner, inconceivably misleading. Unless, therefore, we can discover & use mental instruments, answering to the microscope, telescope, retorts of the astronomer, chemist & physicist, by which we can see, study & analyse the mental processes of thought, feeling & sensation in others as well as in ourselves, we may know indeed the physical movements & organs corresponding to some of the motions of mind, but we shall never know mind itself. It is an obscure perception of this truth that explains the powerful revival in our own day of the occult. Erratic & ignorant as much of it is, it was inevitable & it is salutary. Nature, unerring in her action, is filling mankind with an instinctive sense, a sort of dim subterranean intuition that, now that Science has almost completed its analysis of Matter, the next subject of inquiry must be Mind & Mind cannot be known except by as yet undiscovered or little-used introscopic instruments. Even if these are found, the most dangerous, intricate, difficult & varied experiments will be necessary; for mind is infinitely more elusive & elastic than matter. Where physical Nature confines herself rigidly & stubbornly to a single process, psychical Nature uses, versatilely & intricately, a hundred. To have sufficient experience, to be sure of one's results, one must take oneself & others experimentally to pieces, combine & recombine, put in order & put in disorder one's mental & emotional functions in a way & to an extent which humanity of the present day would pronounce chimerical and impossible. Still our own philosophy founding itself on

experiments repeated continually through many millenniums declares that it is possible. Our Yoga, if its pretensions are true, enables us to do these things &, given certain difficult precautions, to do them with an eventual impunity; it separates the various functions, keeps some inactive while others are acting, experimentally analyses & creates new syntheses of mind and feeling, so that we are able to know the constituents, process & function at least of our own internal forces, with some perfection. Certain forms of Yoga claim to develop faculties by which we can not only know & watch the internal processes of others, but silently control them. If these pretensions are found to be justified, if we can really master & use such methods & instruments, a scientific knowledge & control of the forces of mind may become as possible as our present scientific knowledge & control of the forces of Nature. But how much shall we have gained? A knowledge of constituents, processes, functions we shall have, not, any more than in physical nature, a knowledge of things in themselves. The reality & spirit of objects & forces will still escape us, leaving us only their forms & phenomena. Reason will once more find herself baffled; with regard to the one thing that really matters, the one thing humanity is driven eternally to seek as necessary, supreme & the highest good, we shall have to return, as now, to the sterile result of agnosticism." (585-87)

17. The Superiority of the Vedantic Method Based on Experience and Inner Realisation

"Experience, yes; but experience illumined by Veda & vijnana. We must by experiment & experience develop those faculties which see the Truth face to face & not have to approach it indirectly & by inference only. The results of experience will then be illumined by this higher truth; the truth acquired will be confirmed & by experience. We shall be able to recover our lost kingdoms of the spirit, know the unknowable, enter into relations with the Infinite, be ourselves the reality of the Infinite as well as, if we so choose,

its expression in the apparent Finite. We shall not be confined to the silver & copper of mind & matter, but handle also the gold of the Spirit. We shall use indeed the smaller currency in which the Spirit makes itself negotiable in material form & mental impression, not despising even the most apparently insignificant cent or cowrie, since all are divine, but shall use them only as lesser symbols of the higher currency which is alone of a true & self-determined value. This knowledge &possession of the things of the Spirit is the promise of Veda& Vedanta, – a promise not delayed for its fulfilment to another life & world, but offered, ihaiva, in the present life & in this perishable body, nor only offered, but continually realised since prehistoric times by elect spirits in our Indian generations…." (587-88)

18. The Life of Sri Ramakrishna Paramhansa – A Consummate Practical Example of the Vedantic Method

"….Yoga, which offers us the knowledge & control of mental processes & forces in ourselves & others, offers us what is infinitely more valuable & the one thing worth pursuing for its own sake, the knowledge & possession of the truth of forms mental & material in the reality of the Self and the realisation of life in the world as the phenomena of a divine epiphany. We can know God, we can become the Brahman. This promise long confined to the few, to the initiates in India, is once more being placed before the whole world for its acceptance. Of this supreme offer a life recently lived in an obscure corner of the earth seems to me to be the very incarnation & illuminating symbol, – the life of the Paramhansa Ramakrishna of Dakshineswar. Not for any body of teachings that he left behind, not for any restricted type of living, peculiar system of ethics or religious panacea for the ills of existence, – but because it brought once more into the world with an unexampled thoroughness & liberality the great Vedantic method of experience & inner revelation & showed us its possibilities. An illiterate, poor & obscure Bengali peasant, one who to the end of his life used a patois full

of the most rustic forms & expressions, ignorant of Sanscrit, of any language but his own provincial dialect, ignorant of philosophy & science, ignorant of the world, yet realised in himself all the spiritual wisdom of the ages, shed in his brief sayings a light so full, so deep on the most difficult profundities of our inner being, the most abstruse questions of metaphysics that the most strenuous thinkers & the most learned Pandits were impressed by his superiority. By what process did he arrive at this great store of living knowledge? Never by any intellectual process, by any steps of reasoning. In all the things of the intellect, even the most elementary, he was as simple as a child, more unsophisticated than the most ignorant peasant of his native village. He could turn indeed an eye of infallible keenness on the hearts & intentions of men, but it was the eye of vision, not the eye of thought. Never indeed, in modern times or since the intellectualising of mankind began were reasoning & intellectual processes so rigidly excluded from the process of knowledge with such astonishing results. The secret of his success was that always he lived & saw; where most men only reason and translate thought into sentiment, feel and translate emotion into terms of thinking, he saw with the heart or a higher faculty & threw out his vision into experience with a power of realisation of which modern men have long ceased to be capable; thus living everything to its full conclusion of mental & physical experience his soul opened more & more to knowledge, to direct truth, to the Satyam in things, until the depths hid nothing from him & the heights became accessible to his tread. He first has shown us clearly, entirely & without reserve or attenuating circumstance, the supreme importance of being over thinking, but being, not in terms of the body & life merely, like the sensational & emotional man or the man of action, but in the soul as well and the soul chiefly, in the central entity of this complex human symbol. Therefore he was able to liberate us from the chains imposed by the makeshifts of centuries. He broke through the limitations of the Yogic schools, practised each of them in turn & would reach in three days the consummation which even to powerful Yogins is the accomplishment of decades or even of

more lives than one; broke through the limitations of religion and fulfilled himself in experience as a worshipper of Christ and of Allah while all the time remaining in the individual part of him a Hindu of the sect of the Shaktas; broke through the limitations of the Guruparampara, &, while using human teachers for outward process & discipline, yet received his first & supreme initiation from the eternal Mother herself and all his knowledge from the World-Teacher within; broke through the logical limitations of the metaphysical schools and showed us Dwaita & Adwaita inextricably yet harmoniously one in experience, even as they are shown to us in Veda & Vedanta. All that at the time still governed our spiritual life he took typically into his soul & into his mental & physical experience, swallowed up its defects & imperfections in the infinite abyss of his personality and brought out through these masks & forms always the something beyond that is perfect and supreme. Thus establishing experience and inward revelation as the supreme means of the highest knowledge, his became one of the seed-lives of humanity; and the seed it held was the loosening of the bonds of the rational intellect & the return of humanity's journey from its long detour on the mid-plateaus of reason towards the footpath that winds up to the summits of the spirit." (588-90)

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