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It may be noted that most of the writings of Sri Aurobindo in the *Arya* were later revised by him and published in book form.

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CONTENTS

Vol. V.

A RATIONALISTIC CRITIC ON INDIAN CULTURE ... 442.
476, 542, 602, 668, 729.

ASCENDING UNITY ... 694

ESSAYS ON THE GITA-

The Two Natures ... 13
The Synthesis of Devotion and Knowledge ... 82
The Supreme Divine ... 142
The Secret of Secrets ... 203
The Divine Truth and the Way ... 269
Works, Devotion and Knowledge ... 331
The Supreme Word of the Gita ... 385
God in Power of Becoming ... 449
The Theory of the Vibhuti ... 513
The Vision of God the World-Spirit 577, 641
ETERNAL WISDOM

BOOK II. 3 THE CONQUEST OF SELF (Continued)

The Mastery of Thought ... ... 356
The Mastery of Self ... ... 359
The Internal Law ... ... 415
The Good Combat ... ... 417

BOOK II. 4 THE VICTORY OF THE DIVINE

The Root of Evil ... ... 473
The Healing ... ... 538
Purification ... ... 599
The Great Choice ... ... 662
To Choose to day ... ... 726

FEAST OF YOUTH ... ... 233

FUTURE POETRY

The Course of English Poetry ... ... 56
111, 172, 249, 314
The Movement of Modern Literature ... ... 376, 433
The Poets of the Dawn ... ... 510, 557, 619
The Victorian Poets ... ... 682
Recent English Poetry ... ... 731

INDIAN CULTURE AND EXTERNAL
INFLUENCE ... 490

INevOLUTION AND EVOLUTION ... 753
IS INDIA CIVILISED? ... 301, 363, 420
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>XLVIII</td>
<td>The Crown of Rebirth</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>XLIX The Metaphysical Basis of Divine Life</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>L The Four Theories of Existence</td>
<td>129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LI The Necessity of the Gnostic Being</td>
<td>193</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LII The Spiritual Gnostic Being</td>
<td>257</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LIII Conclusion</td>
<td>321</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MATERIALISM</td>
<td>179</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>REBIRTH, EVOLUTION, HEREDITY</td>
<td>502</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>REBIRTH AND SOUL EVOLUTION</td>
<td>568</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SELF-DETERMINATION</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SENTENCES EROM BHARTRIHARI</td>
<td>242</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SIGNIFICANCE OF REBIRTH</td>
<td>630</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SYNTHESIS OF YOGA</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Chap. XLV The Divine Personality</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>XLVI The Delight of the Divine</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>XLVII The Ananda Brahman</td>
<td>155</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>XLVIII The Mystery of Love</td>
<td>214</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>THE YOGA OF SELF-PERFECTION</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>XLIX The Principle of the Integral Yoga</td>
<td>281</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>L The Integral Perfection</td>
<td>347</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LI The Psychology of Self-Perfection</td>
<td>404</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chap. LI The Perfection of the Mental Being ... 460
LIII The Instruments of the Spirit ... 525
LIV Purification—The Lower Mentality ... 589
LV ... Intelligence & Will ... 649
LVI The Liberation of the Spirit ... 716

UNSEEN POWER ... ... ... 289

'1919' ... ... ... 765
CONTENTS

THE LIFE DIVINE.................... Aurobindo Ghose
Chapter XLVIII. The Crown of Rebirth

ESSAYS ON THE GITA................. A. G.
The Two Natures

THE SYNTHESIS OF YOGA............. A. G.
Chapter XLV. The Divine Personality

THE RENAISSANCE IN INDIA

THE FUTURE POETRY
A PHILOSOPHICAL REVIEW

CONTENTS

THE TETEUR OF THE OCEAN
Chapter XI / The Ocean of Life

THE TWO VENUS
My Life

THE SYMPTOMS OF YOUR
Cancer / XVI / The Drama of

THE LITTLE ROYAL
The Life Divine

CHAPTER XLVIII

THE CROWN OF REBIRTH

What we have said so far amounts to this that, first, the soul develops by the assumption of a series of higher and higher forms until it reaches the human existence, and is not born from the beginning as the human being, nor is our present humanity the last stage of its earthly evolution; it is only the transitional step between the animal, the vital being touched with mind, and the perfected mental being in the body that man is trying to become. Nor is this perfected mental being the last human potentiality. There is also the possibility of a supramental being, which will be the beginning of a new spiritual humanity and by which there can come the full manifestation of the Spirit in life. All this progress can only be accomplished by a succession of rebirths in the human body. For as a long succession of assumptions of lower forms was necessary to bring about our present human birth, so a long series of assumptions of the human form is necessary to bring about the full mental, supramental and spiritual evolution of the human being.

But this is not to be developed by a series of immediate transmigrations from one human body to another human body. It is brought about by a constant re-
sort to the higher planes, the mental, the supramental, the spiritual in which these graded poises of the being have successively their natural home and their free and characteristic play. This resort takes place even during the earthly life by an exchange of influences; for in reality we are already living within ourselves upon those other planes, in our subliminal and superconscient being, and all that we are and do in our conscious earthly life derives from them and goes back to them to be assimilated and come forward in new shapes of mentality, supramentality or spirituality. This constant resort must take shape after the dissolution of our earthly body in a resort of our conscious being to the higher worlds and an assimilation there of the results of all our earthly experience by which a fresh start in our progression becomes possible. That is to say that between death and birth we dwell in other worlds than the physical and we return from them with our souls ready for a new life and a fresh development. We move between earth and the other worlds with each terrestrial life as an episode in the progressive self-expression of the divine soul in the human being.

The question remains, what is the end of this movement? For the mind of man seeks always an end, a final upshot, a termination. And here we come across the wide-spread idea common to so many religions that the highest aim of life is to get away from earthly existence to a more elevated plane, to heavens beyond, and never to return. We leave aside as unworthy of consideration the cruel and irrational dogma that the end of life for most of us, the destiny for which the Divine has sent us here or created us here, is an endless torture in eternal hells of pain; there can, evidently, be no such thing. We have also given our reasons for refusing to accept the proposition that there is only one human life, a solitary episode, whether initial or intermediate, and that all the rest of our history is elsewhere than in the physical universe. But is it
not possible, even on our own data, that at a time or stage in our development the return to earth ceases and the soul enjoys its celestial destiny upon other and higher planes? To get to a heaven beyond would then be the ultimate object of our spiritual evolution in the terrestrial existence.

This idea can be defended on two very different lines. First, on the supposition that this world is a separate world into which we have deviated from our natural celestial being,—practically, that we are, in the phrase of the poet, angels fallen from heaven, who have the memory and the nostalgia of the skies, are attracted to our real home and that therefore our effort and destiny must be to return to them; or, alternately, that we are each a separate soul beginning here as an earthly being who can grow into fitness for a heavenly existence. In the first case, our life here, granting a constant succession of rebirths, would be a long wandering from form to form until we had got rid of the cause of our fall. The difficulty would be to reconcile this with an internatal existence in higher planes beyond; for the higher mental and vital worlds are what are usually figured in our ideas of heaven. Either, the soul once able to enter these heavens would have proved its fitness to shake off the earth-life, its transcendence of the fall, and would not at all return,—and we should then have to suppose no internatal life beyond, but only an uninterrupted succession of human births until the return to our natural plane becomes possible,—or we must suppose that the original cause of our fall has power still to remain even after ascent beyond earth and draw us back always to mortal life. We should have merely redeveloped sufficient of our lost higher nature for a temporary heavenward return and must wait for its complete development before the return can be successful and permanent. Till then, we must suppose that after a temporary sojourn on the higher planes the attraction of the earth-plane
sort to the higher planes, the mental, the supramental, the spiritual in which these graded poises of the being have successively their natural home and their free and characteristic play. This resort takes place even during the earthly life by an exchange of influences; for in reality we are already living within ourselves upon those other planes, in our subliminal and superconscious being, and all that we are and do in our conscious earthly life derives from them and goes back to them to be assimilated and come forward in new shapes of mentality, supramentality or spirituality. This constant resort must take shape after the dissolution of our earthly body in a resort of our conscious being to the higher worlds and an assimilation there of the results of all our earthly experience by which a fresh start in our progression becomes possible. That is to say that between death and birth we dwell in other worlds than the physical and we return from them with our souls ready for a new life and a fresh development. We move between earth and the other worlds with each terrestrial life as an episode in the progressive self-expression of the divine soul in the human being.

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would return upon us. Or perhaps it is only a certain amount of active merit, punya, that has raised us, and our nature still remains divided between earth and heaven; therefore when the power that has raised us is exhausted, there is a lapse, a repetition of the fall, a redescend into material existence. Or else we must suppose that the heavens to which we now rise are not our real home, but half-way houses, and so long as we can rise only to these, we must return, presumably because till then the earth attraction must still be the strongest thing in us, or because they represent only an attempt to rise out of the desire or error which brought about our descent, and do not represent the eradication of the desire or the entire curing of the error. Beyond them there must be some supreme world or worlds of the spirit to which we really belong, and only when the downward desire is slain or the error totally uprooted, can we return to those heights whence there can be no coming back to mortality.

On the other supposition, that we are in our origin earthly beings, each with his separate destiny, but capable severally of evolving into heavenly beings, we must suppose a succession of births in which we become progressively what we never were before in any part of our nature. We must imagine that as we thus develop our nature, we develop also a capacity of ascending to the higher planes. But this capacity ought in that case to be quite definitive. Once we are capable of going beyond earth, there is no need for a return. To explain rebirth after a dwelling on other planes, we should have to suppose again that a partial fitness was sufficient to raise us, but this partial fitness would not be sufficient to keep us on that elevation, and therefore a redescend became inevitable, until complete fitness was accomplished. But this latter theory can only hold if we suppose that the spiritual evolution is a progressive creation of a non-existent spiritual out of an existent material being, not merely a manifestation in the
material being itself of that which is already involved in it. We should have to suppose that there are quite different worlds each with its own order of beings and that the soul of man is a native of the physical who is promoted to worlds not his own. But we are proceeding on the perception that this is not so; man is the divine individual already possessing in himself the nature of Sachchidananda, only manifesting it progressively out of the material nescience. Already he is spirit and supermind as well as mind, life and body, spirit which has arrived at the manifestation of its mental being in the physical life and must arrive here at the manifestation of the supramental and the spiritual being. The object of human life is not therefore the growth of a totally physical being into a totally spiritual existence and its resulting promotion to higher worlds, but the descent of the spirit upon earth and the raising of a characteristically physical life to its utmost spiritual power.

The idea of the fallen celestial being also starts from an incurable division between two worlds and two natures. It seems that there is within us something which seeks to rise beyond this earth and humanity and which has an ideal of itself that is very different from the present earthly nature. It supposes then that there are two opposite natures in us, celestial and earthly, spiritual and material, and that between these two there is an incurable antinomy. One nature must be utterly discarded, the other utterly embraced; one world must be entirely renounced and transcended, the other is the reward of the renunciation and the result of the transcendence. This supposition too is in conflict with the perception from which we have started. The worlds are not separate and hostile systems; rather there is one world with many planes, and if the physical looks upward to the spiritual and finds there its full hope and meaning, the spiritual also leans downward to the physical, has put it forth in order to throw into
it under physical conditions the progressive greatness of its own self-realisation. Man, moreover, already, we may say, exists on the higher planes as well as in the terrestrial existence, for he possesses all that perfect and ready within his own superconscient being. Therefore to return to the higher planes cannot be all the object of the spirit's descent into the terrestrial existence, for it already possesses them. It has never really lost its higher self, it has not been cast down from heaven; it has only descended in the conscious superficial part of its being into a sort of outward layer of itself in which it is developing its experience under the conditions proper to the physical existence. To suppose heaven to be all its aim and the rejection of the earth life its proper desire, we must suppose this existence to be a degradation, a disease of the spirit, a morbid excrescence of our being. This we do not admit; the earth life is indeed in its first phenomena an apparent statement of conditions that seem the very contraries of the supreme truth of the spirit, but it is in the basis of these opposites that we see the truths of the spirit developing themselves in a progressive evolution. They are the conditions of its self-finding on the material plane.

It follows that at least until the purpose of the spirit in this manifestation is perfectly fulfilled, a final departure to heavens beyond has no justification or spiritual utility. The desire for such a release is only the impatience of the human vital mind to get done with its task and arrive at unalloyed joy and pleasure, and it is no more binding on the spirit behind our vital being than the desire of that vitality to make earthly pleasure itself the aim and end of human life. Still we must see whether there are any conditions which would cut short our succession of terrestrial rebirths in such a way that existence in heavens beyond and not the complete self-finding of spirit in the earthly life becomes inevitably its terminus. Such conditions might arise if we suppose man to be incapable of
growing in the human body and the human life beyond the status of the mental being; for if he can only achieve so much spirituality as is possible on the lower basis of mind, if he cannot rise here beyond mind, cannot develop the full power of spirit upon earth, then either of two consummations are inevitable. He must leave the earth life to dwell in heavens of the spirit beyond where alone he can realise his spiritual being in some kind of cosmic existence, or else he cannot realise it in any kind of cosmic being and then, his only choice lying between mentality and some supreme state of featureless self-existence, he must, once he has completed the cycle of his mental possibilities, return abruptly to the transcendent reality, the Parabrahman.

But we have come to the conclusion that man is not destined to remain limited by his mental being; he can develop in himself the supramental being and by that manifest the power of the Spirit in his human existence. Once that possibility is actual, its fulfilment becomes part of his destiny in the physical universe. Therefore the limitation imposed by this condition of a mental limit does not intervene, since the condition itself is not final and binding. There is still the possibility that so long as the general state of mankind is limited by the mental being, the individual soul which has gone quite beyond it, having risen too high for the earth-life and being no longer able to find there its proper field or fit instruments, must travel beyond. Something of the kind we may deduce from the figure in one of the Upanishads that so long as man rises after death only to worlds to which he is uplifted by the rays of the sun, that is to say, to the highest planes of mind, he must return, but when he passes through the gates of the sun,—the body of the sun being the symbol of the spiritual or supramental knowledge,—he returns to mortal life no longer. But even then this incommunica-

able transcendence need not be final. If the general hu-
man type is to develop the supramental being, it is these souls that have gone beyond which would naturally be its leaders, and their return, now or hereafter, in this or another round of the cycle, would be one necessary aid or condition of the advance.

For not only the self-finding of the spirit in this human life, but its highest possible self-expression in that life is the aim of our earthly evolution. Indian religious and philosophical thought generally admits that the ascension to the mental heavens,—the life beyond in Swarga or Paradise, as it is popularly put,—is not the term of the cycle of rebirths. From that intermediary elevation return is inevitable. Certain schools of devotional thought suppose, however, that there are diviner heavens beyond, to which they give different names,—heavens of the spirit, let us say,—where the human soul enjoys eternally the presence of the Divine. But the most wide-spread idea is that it is only by the self-finding of the spirit that the chain of births can come to an end; that is the release, the mukti, the loosening of the tedious chain. This thought, which is pushed to its extreme conclusions by the Illusionists, assumes that the human birth or any kind of birth or life is in itself, in its ineradicable nature, a descent from the truth of being, a bondage to ignorance and desire, a self-forgetfulness of the Spirit or else its self-deceiving, and the only way to escape from it is to get rid of life and birth and to move back and away from the cosmic existence. On this supposition individual salvation must become the whole object of our effort.

For each soul is an individual existence, a spirit trying in the end to get away from its own error of cosmic being; it has then nothing to do with the destiny of the cosmos or its work, nothing to do with other souls in the cosmos, but has eventually to leave all that as a part of the ignorance and be concerned only with its own release. The illusionists deny indeed the reality of the individual
being, but they insist still upon the sole necessity of our individual salvation. In each soul separately the Spirit has deceived itself into the idea of individual being; in each soul separately it has to get rid of the deception and it has nothing to do with the continuance of its self-deception in myriads of other souls. It is eternally free in itself, it is eternally bound in the cosmos of illusion, and all that it does in between these two eternally incurable antinomies is to release itself in one soul here and there from time to time out of the illusion; it draws itself separately in them out of the error of separation. This seems a rather futile proceeding and in itself a weird kind of paradox, however logically it may syllogise from its own self-given premisses. The Sankhya idea squares more closely with this extreme importance of the individual existence; for there each soul is a separate eternal entity which falls into subjection to Nature and enters by her into relation with others, but always from its own separate standpoint of consciousness, pursues its separate cycle of cosmic existence and returns from it to itself by a separate release. But it is not clear by what force this release is to be final, since the free soul that has once fallen into subjection to Nature by disturbance of equilibrium, may, one would think, always fall back into subjection by a repetition of the disturbance. In any case, it is on such ideas, an antinomy between spirit in itself and spirit in cosmos or between soul in itself and soul lost in Nature, that is founded the idea of a chain of births and of salvation as an individual release from rebirth.

But if all cosmos is a manifestation of Sachchidananda under certain conditions and the material existence an involution in nescience and a returning through partial knowledge, which we call ignorance, to an integral self-knowledge, then the long series of births is not essentially a chain of bondage, but a means for this return. The idea of bondage is itself an illusion of the superficial mind
since the spirit within us is always free and master of its world, its manifestation, free not only in some supreme plane of being, but here in the cosmos by a superconscient immanence in it and by a superconscient sustaining of it. Salvation, mukti, will then consist not in the shaking off of all body, life or cosmic existence, but in a recovery by this individual conscious being of all that which is now superconscient to it,—or, from a certain point of view, subliminal,—this freedom, this transcendence, this free immanence, this free containing. Therefore the object or essential law of cosmic existence is not to lose knowledge in order to recover it, but to manifest it under the cosmic conditions, and here on earth * to manifest it by the succession of births with the individual existence as a pivot; for the spiritual individual in us is the Divine enjoying in his multiplicity of souls, the possible relations of his oneness in diversity. Just as the individual existence in life is not a thing absolutely apart, but it is there as part of all the divine self-manifestation in the universe, not for the purpose of the Divine in us alone and independently, but for that purpose as part of his will in the universe, so it must be too with the individual salvation. As our individual life has its existence not only for our own sake, but for the sake of others, for the Self indeed, but not for the Self in one alone, rather for the one Self in all, so our individual salvation is not only for our own sake, but for the sake of all; it is part of the plan of the Spirit in the universe. We are one with the Divine in ourselves, but one also with the Divine in all, and any conclusion which comes from an exclusive dwelling on one side of the truth, has only a partial validity. We have securely to base ourselves on the integral reality.

* Not meaning necessarily, on this planet, but in the physical existence, the terrestrial formula.
It follows that an individual salvation, an individual joy of heaven or an individual rising into the bliss of transcendence, is not the whole object of our being, because it is not the whole Divinity. To the planes beyond we have to rise, but that cannot be the whole object of our being, because we already possess them and cannot have descended merely to reascend; to manifest also the law of them on the earth enters equally into the object of the rising. To the transcendence also we have to attain, but that too is not the whole object of our being, for that we always are on our secret summits; to bring down and reveal the secret light and truth, by the power of the transcendent being to manifest the Divine here where he is concealed, must enter into the object. In other words, the divine life in the cosmic being is our cosmic goal, and the divine life in the physical being is part of its meaning, if not indeed the climax of its miracle. And the soul that has entered into complete oneness with the divine Being, must, even as does that Divine, continue to be one with all being; therefore the divine life in our one individual self cannot be all, but the growth also of the divine life in our other selves is part of our highest business, essential to the full meaning of our spiritual consummation. Not only self-finding here, but self-expression here is the object, and not only a self-expression accomplished in each separately, but a general self-expression in the race.

That, it may be said, need not imply a continuance of rebirth in humanity, but can be pursued from the higher planes or from beyond all planes, because all are connected and the influence from above is equal or superior to the participation below, while it is from the Highest always that the original power derives. This is true, but still the ultimate point of that influence for us in act is the descent of the Highest into human existence to manifest there the full power of the spirit, the Divine in man, the Avatar, and the ultimate point of our oneness with the Divine in
its act upon the cosmos must be analogous. The highest choice for the liberated spirit is its rejection of all lures of separate bliss and its free solidarity with the other selves with whom it has shared the cycle of its births. So long as the Spirit has not manifested its full power and light in the race, this intervention must be its completest help to all the growing Divine in humanity and the consummation which completes and justifies its individual descent into the cosmic existence.

That descent was not a descent of the individual separately out of some supreme state of existence beyond into cosmic life, not his lapse out of the being of Sachchidananda into some prolific zero of non-existence, asat, or some confused magic of non-existent existence. It was, as we conceive it, an incident of the self-formulation of Sachchidananda in a reverse movement of his being of which the progressive self-finding is the key of its method and an integral self-expression in the conditions of the reversal is the complete formula. But the self-finding and self-expression are not worked out in a number of fragmentary incidents, an individual self-finding here and an individual self-expression there; its method is not the method of chance and chaos or of an infinite play of caprice. All of it falls into a complex harmony and a largely varied universality. Each individual consummation is an incident of the universal movement and finds in that its integral joy and power and the sense of its immanence and its transcendence.
Essays on the Gita

SECOND SERIES

THE TWO NATURES

As we have treated the first six chapters of the Gita as a single block of teachings, its primary basis of practice and knowledge, so we may treat the remaining twelve chapters as two closely connected blocks which develop the rest of the doctrine from this primary basis. From the seventh to the twelfth we have a largely metaphysical statement of the nature of the Divine Being, which is made the occasion for closely relating and synthetising knowledge and devotion, just as the first part of the Gita related and synthetised works and knowledge. The vision of the World-Purusha comes in in the eleventh to give point to this stage of the synthesis and relate it to works and life, so bringing it back to the question of Arjuna round which the whole exposition revolves and completes its cycle. From that the Gita proceeds by the differentiation of the Purusha and Prakriti to work out its ideas of the action of the gunas, of the ascension beyond the gunas and of the culmination of desireless works with knowledge into the supreme secret of self-giving by devotion to the Divine.

v Gita VII. 1—14.
In this second part of the Gita we come to a more concise and easy manner of statement than we have yet had. In the first six chapters the definitions have not yet been made which give the key to the underlying truth; difficulties are being met and solved; the progress is a little laboured and moves through several involutions and returns; much is implied the bearing of which is not yet clear. Here we seem to get on to clearer ground and to lay hold of a more compact and pointed expression. But because of this very conciseness we have to be careful always of our steps in order to avoid errors and a missing of the real sense, because we are here not steadily on the safe ground of psychological and spiritual experience, but have to deal with intellectual statements of spiritual and often of supracosmic truth. Metaphysical statement has always this peril and uncertainty about it that it is an attempt to define to our minds what is really infinite, an attempt which has to be made, but can never be quite satisfactory, quite final or ultimate. The highest spiritual truth can be lived, can be seen, but can only be partially stated; the deeper method and language of the Upanishads with its free resort to image and symbol, its intuitive form of speech in which the hard limiting definiteness of intellectual utterance is broken down and the implications of words allowed to roll out into an illimitable wave of suggestion, is in these realms the only right method and language. But the Gita cannot resort to this form, because it is designed to satisfy an intellectual difficulty, answers a state of mind in which the reason, the arbiter to which we refer the conflicts of our impulses and sentiments, is at war with itself and cannot arrive at a conclusion. It has to be led to a truth beyond itself, but by its own means. It is offered a spiritually psychological solution, of the data of which it has no experience, and it can only be assured of it if it is satisfied by an intellectual statement of the truths of being upon which that solution rests,
So far the justifying truths that have been offered to it, are only those with which it is already familiar, and they are only sufficient as a starting-point. There is first the distinction between the Self and the individual being in Nature. That has been used to point out that the individual being in Nature is necessarily subject, so long as he lives shut up within the action of the ego, to the workings of the three gunas which make the whole scope and method of the reason, the mind and the senses in the body, and within this circle there is no solution. Therefore the solution has to be found by rising above this nature to the one and immutable Self and getting beyond that action of the ego and desire which is the whole root of the difficulty. But since this by itself seems to lead straight towards inaction, as beyond Nature there is no instrumentality of action and no cause or determinant of action,—for the immutable self is inactive, impartial and equal to all things, all workings and all happenings,—the Yoga idea is brought in of the Ishwara, the Divine as master of works and sacrifice, and it is hinted but not yet expressly stated that this Divine exceeds even the immutable self and that in him lies the key to cosmic being. Therefore by rising to him through the Self it is possible to have spiritual freedom from our works and yet to continue in the works of Nature. But it has not yet been stated who is this Supreme, incarnate here in the divine teacher and charioteer of works, or what are his relations to the Self and to the individual being in Nature. Nor is it clear how the Will to works coming from him can be other than the will in the nature of the three gunas, and, if it is only that, then the soul obeying it can hardly fail to be in subjection to the gunas in its action, if not in its spirit, and if so, at once the freedom promised becomes either incomplete or illusory. For Will seems to be an aspect of the executive part of being, to be power and active force of nature, Shakti, Prakriti. Is there then a higher Nature
than that of the three gunas? is there a power of pragmatic creation, will, action other than that of ego, desire, mind, sense and reason?

Therefore, in this uncertainty, what has now to be done is to give more completely the knowledge on which divine works are to be founded, and this can only be the complete, the integral knowledge of the Divine who is the source of works and in whose being the worker becomes by knowledge free; for he knows the free Spirit from which all works proceed and he participates in its freedom. Moreover this knowledge must bring a light that justifies the assertion with which the first part of the Gita has closed; it must ground the supremacy of bhakti over all other motives and powers of spiritual being and action; it must be a knowledge of the supreme Lord of all beings to whom alone the soul can offer itself in the perfect self-surrender which is the height of all love and devotion. This is what the Teacher proposes to give in the opening verses of the seventh chapter which initiate the development that occupies all the rest of the book. "Hear" he says, "how by practising Yoga with a mind attached to me and with me as ácaya, (the whole basis, lodgment, point of resort of the conscious being and action), thou shalt know me without any remainder of doubt, integrally, samagrem mam. I will speak to thee without omission or remainder, açeshatah," (for otherwise a ground of doubt may remain), "the essential knowledge, attended with all the comprehensive knowledge, by knowing which there shall be no other thing here left to be known." The implication of the phrase is that the Divine is all, vásudevah sarvam, and therefore if the integral Divine is known, then all is known, not only the pure Self, but the world and action and Nature. There is then nothing else here left to be known, because all is the Divine; only because our view here is not integral, because it rests on the dividing mind and reason and the separative idea of
the ego, therefore our mental view of things is the ignorance. We have to get away from this mental and egoistic view to the true unifying knowledge, and that has two aspects, the essential, jñāna, and the comprehensive knowing, vijñāna, the awareness of the supreme Being and the right knowledge of the principles of his existence, Prakṛiti, Purusha and the rest, by which all being can be known in its divine origin and in the supreme truth of its nature. That integral knowledge, says the Gita, is a rare and difficult thing; "among thousands of men one here and there strives after perfection, and of those who strive and attain perfection one here and there knows me in all the principles of my being, tat twātaḥ."

Then to start with, in order to found this integral knowledge, the Gita makes that distinction which is the practical basis of all its Yoga, the distinction between the two Natures, the phenomenal and the spiritual Nature. "The five conditions of material being, mind, reason and ego, this is my eightfold divided Nature. But know my other Nature different from this, the supreme which becomes the Jīva and by which this world is upheld." Here is the first new metaphysical idea of the Gita by virtue of which, starting from the notions of the Sankhya philosophy, it yet exceeds them and gives to its terms, which it keeps and extends, a Vedantic significance. The eightfold Nature of the five bhūtas,—elements, as it is rendered, but rather elemental or essential conditions of material being given the concrete names of earth, water, fire, wind and ether,—the mind with its various senses and organs, the reason-will and the ego, constitutes the Sankhya description of Prakṛiti. The Sankhya stops there, and because it stops there, it has to set up an unbridgeable division between the soul and Nature, it has to posit them as two quite distinct primary entities. The Gita also, if it stopped there, would have to make the same incurable antinomy between the Self and cosmic Nature which would
then be only the Maya of the three gunas and all this cosmic existence would be simply the result of this Maya; it could be nothing else. But there is something else, there is a higher principle, a nature of spirit, parā prakritir mama, a nature of the Divine which is the real source of cosmic existence and its fundamental creative force and effective energy and of which the other, lower Nature is only a derivation and a dark shadow. In this Purusha and Prakriti become one, for Prakriti is only the will and the executive power of being of the Purusha, his activity of being and not a separate entity.

This supreme Prakriti is not merely a presence of the power of spiritual being immanent in cosmic activities; for then it might be only the inactive presence of the all-pervading Self, immanent in all things or containing them, compelling in a way the world action but not itself active. Nor is it the anyakta of the Sankhyas, the primary unmanifest seed-state of the manifest active eight-fold nature of things, the one productive original force of Prakriti out of which her many instrumental and executive powers evolve. Nor, interpreting that idea of anyakta in the Vedantic sense, is it the power involved and inherent in unmanifest Spirit or Self out of which cosmos comes and into which it returns. It is that, but it is much more; for that is only one of its spiritual states. It is the integral conscious-power of the supreme Being, chit-shakti, which is behind the self and cosmos; in the immutable Self it is involved in the Spirit, in uivriti or its holding back from action; in the mutable self and the cosmos is its action, pravritti, in which it evolves in the Spirit all existences and appears in them as their essential spiritual nature, the persistent truth behind their play of objective phenomena, the essential quality or swabhāva, self-principle of their becoming, inherent principle and divine power of their phenomenal being, of which the balance of the gunas is only a quantitative and quite derivative play. All this
activity of forms, all this mental, sensuous, intellectual striving of the lower nature is only a phenomenon, which could not be at all except for this spiritual force and this power of being; it comes from that and it exists in that and by that solely. If we dwell in the phenomenal nature only and see things only by the notions it impresses on us, we shall not get at the real truth of our active existence. The real truth is this spiritual power, this divine force of being, this essential quality of the spirit in things or rather of the spirit in which things are and have their being. Get at that truth and we shall get at the real law of our becoming and the divine principle of our living.

This is to throw the sense of the Gita into language suited to our modern way of thinking; but if we look at its description of the Para Prakriti, we shall find that this is practically the substance of what it says. For first, this other higher Prakriti is, says Krishna, my supreme nature, *prakritiṁ me parāṁ*. And this "I" here is the Purushottama, the supreme Being, the supreme Soul, the Spirit. Speaking first of the origin of the world from the point of view of the active power of his Nature, he says, "This is the womb of all beings," *etad-yonīṁ bhuṭāṁi*; in the next line of the couplet, stating the same fact from the point of view of the originating soul, he says, "I am the birth of the whole world and so too its dissolution; there is nothing else supreme beyond Me." Here the supreme Soul and the supreme Nature are identified, they are put as two ways of looking at one and the same reality. For when he says that I am the birth of the world and its dissolution, it is evident that it is this Prakriti of his being which is both these things; for the Spirit is simply the Being in its infinite consciousness and the supreme nature is the infinite power or will of being which that consciousness is in its inherent energy and its action. The birth is the movement of evolution out of spirit, the activity of its being in the mutable universe; the dissolution is the withdrawing of
that by involution into the immutable existence and self-gathered power of the Spirit. That then is what is initially meant by the supreme Nature.

The supreme Nature, \textit{parā prakṛiti}, is then the conscious power of the self-existent Being out of which all existences in the cosmos are manifested; but in order to provide a spiritual basis for this manifold universal becoming in the cosmos it formulates itself as the Jiva, the multiple soul which appears as the individual spiritual existence in all the forms of the cosmos. All existences are instinct with the life of the one Spirit; all are supported in their personality, actions and forms by the one Purusha in his multiplicity. We must be careful not to make the mistake of thinking that this supreme Nature is identical with the Jiva in the sense that there is nothing else or that it is only nature of becoming and not at all nature of being. For then the only truth of it in the cosmos would be nature of multiplicity and there would be in it no nature of unity. That is not what the Gita says; it does not say that the supreme Prakṛiti is in its essence the Jiva, \textit{jīvātmakām}, but that it has become the Jiva, \textit{jīvabhūtām}; it is implied in that expression that behind its manifestation as the Jiva it is something else and higher, it is nature of the one supreme spirit. The Jiva, as we are told later on, is the Lord, \textit{īcvara}, but in his partial manifestation, \textit{ma- maivāncaḥ}; all the multiplicity of beings in the universe are not in their becoming the integral Divine, but only this partial manifestation. In them Brahman the one indivisible existence resides as if divided, \textit{avibhaktam cha bhūteshu vibhaktam īva cha sthītam}. The unity is the greater truth, the multiplicity is the lesser truth, though both are a truth and neither of them an illusion.

It is by the unity of this spiritual nature of his being that the world is sustained, \textit{yayedam dhāryate jagat}, even as it is that from which it is born with all its becoming, \textit{etad-yoniṁ bhūtāni sārvāni}, and that which withdraws
the whole world and its existences into itself in the hour of dissolution, \textit{aham kr\'itsnasya jagatah prabhavah pralayas tath\'a}. But in the manifestation which is thus put forth in the Spirit, upheld in its action, withdrawn in its periodical rest from action, the Jiva is the basis of the multiple being, it is the multiple soul, if we may so call it, or, if we prefer, the soul of the multiplicity. It is one always with the Divine in its being, different from it only in the power of its being,—different not in the sense that it is not at all the same power, but in this sense that it only supports the one power in a partial action individualised multiply. Therefore all things are initially, ultimately and in the principle of their continuance too the Spirit; the fundamental nature of all is nature of the Spirit, and only in their lower differential phenomena do they seem to be something else, to be nature of body, mind, reason, ego, the senses. But these are phenomenal derivatives, they are not the essential truth of our nature and our being.

The supreme nature of spiritual being gives us then both an original truth and power of existence and a first basis of the truth of the manifestation. But where is the link between this supreme nature and the lower phenomenal nature? On me, says Krishna, all this is strung,—\textit{sarvam idam}, the common phrase in the Upanishads for the totality of phenomena in the mobility of the universe,—like pearls upon a thread. But this is only an image which we cannot press very far; for the pearls are only kept in relation to each other by the thread and have no other oneness or relation with the thread except dependence for this connection. Let us go then from the image to that which it images; it is the supreme nature of spirit, the conscious power of its being which maintains all these phenomenal existences in relation to each other, which penetrates them, which abides in and supports them and weaves them into the system of its manifestation. This power of the being manifests in each as the Jiva, the individual
spiritual presence, but it manifests also as the essence of quality of Nature,—not the working of the three gunas, which is phenomenon of quality and not its spiritual essence, but the inherent, one, yet variable inner power of all their superficial variations. The workings of the gunas are the superficial becoming of reason, mind, sense, ego and matter, sattvikā bhāvā rājasās tāmasāḥ cha; but this is rather the essential power of the becoming, swabhāva, which determines the primary law of the becoming and is immediately related to the divine becoming, madbhāvaḥ. In this relation of the swabhāva to the superficial bhāvaḥ, of the self-nature in its pure and original quality to the phenomenal nature in all its mixed and confused play of qualities, we find the link between that supreme and this lower nature. The powers of the latter derive from the powers of the former and can go back to them to find their own source and truth and essential law. So too the soul or Jiva involved here in the play of the phenomenal qualities can go back by resort to the pure action of his essential quality of swabhava to the higher law of his own being which shows him the will, power, principle of action of his divine nature.

This is clear from the immediately subsequent passage in which the Gita gives a number of instances to show how the Divine in the power of his supreme nature manifests and acts within the animate and so-called inanimate existences of the universe. We may disentangle them from the loose and free order which the exigence of the poetical form imposes and put them in their proper philosophical series. First, it works within the five elemental conditions of matter. "I am taste in the waters, sound in ether, scent in earth, energy of light in fire," and, it may be added for more completeness, touch or contact in wind,—that is to say, the energy that is the basis of the various sensory relations of which, according to the ancient Sankhya system, the ethereal, gaseous, liquid and other
conditions of matter are the physical medium. The five elemental conditions are the quantitative or material element in the lower nature and are the basis of forms; the five tattvamatras are the qualitative element, they are subtle energies whose action puts the sensory consciousness in relation to the forms; they are the basis of phenomenal knowledge. From the material point of view matter is the reality and the sensory relations are derivative; from the spiritual point of view the material media are derivative and only the conditions in which the actions of the quality of Nature in things manifest themselves through form of matter to the sensory consciousness. The main fact is the energy of Nature, the power of being which so manifests itself to the soul through the senses. That energy or power of being is the Divine in his Prakriti.

This we gather better from the other terms of the series. "I am the light of sun and moon, the manhood in man, the intelligence of the intelligent, the energy of the energetic, the strength of the strong, the ascetic force of those who do askesis, tapasya." "I am life in all existences." In each case it is the energy of the essential quality on which each of these becomings depends for what it has become, that is given as the presence of the divine power in their nature. Again, "I am pranava in all the Vedas," that is to say, the basic syllable OM, which is the foundation of all the potent creative sounds of the revealed word, the one universal formulation of the energy of sound and speech containing all its spiritual power and its potentiality, of which the other sounds, out of whose stuff words of speech are woven, are supposed to be the developed evolutions. That makes it quite clear. It is not the phenomenal developments of light, intelligence, energy, strength, manhood, ascetic force which are meant, but the essential quality in its spiritual power, the force of spirit so manifesting; it is the light of consciousness and the power of energy in things in their pure original sign. That is the seed
from which all other things are the developments and derivations. So the Gita throws in as the most general statement in the series, "Know me to be the eternal seed of all existences, O son of Pritha." Thus this eternal seed is the power of spiritual being, the conscious will in the being, the seed which, as is said elsewhere, the Divine casts into the great Brahman and from that all are born. It is that which manifests itself as the essential quality in all becomings and constitutes their svabhava.

The practical distinction between this original power of essential quality and the phenomenal derivations of the lower nature is indicated very clearly at the close of the series. "I am the strength of the strong devoid of desire and liking," stripped of all attachment to the phenomenal pleasure of things. "I am in beings the desire which is not contrary to their dharma." And for the subjective becomings of Nature, bhāvāḥ, (states of mind, affections of desire, movements of passion, the reactions of the senses, limited and dual play of reason, feeling and moral sense,) which are sattvic, rajasic and tamasic, as for the working of the three gunas, they are, says the Gita, not at all the pure action of the supreme spiritual nature, but are derivations from it; "they are verily from me," matta eva, they have no other origin, "but I am not in them, it is they that are in me." Here is indeed a strong and yet subtle distinction. "I am" says the Divine "the essential light, strength, desire, power, intelligence, but these derivations from them I am not in my essence, nor am I in them, yet are they all of them from me and they are all in my being. It is then upon the basis of these statements, that we have to view the transition of things from the higher to the lower and again from the lower back to the higher nature.

The first statement offers no difficulty. The strong man in spite of the divine nature of the principle of strength in him falls into subjection to desire and to attachment, stumbles into sin, struggles towards virtue; but that is
because he descends in all his derivative action into the grasp of the three gunas, does not govern that action from above, from his essential divine nature. The divine nature of his strength is not affected by these derivations, it remains the same in its essence in spite of every obscurity; the Divine is there in that nature supporting him by its strength through the confusions of his lower existence till he is able to recover the light, illumine wholly his life with the true sun of his being and govern his will and its acts by the pure power of the divine will in his higher nature. But how can the Divine be desire, Kāma? for this desire, this kāma has been declared to be our one great enemy who has to be slain. But that desire was the desire of the lower nature of the gunas which has its native point of origin in the rajasic being, rajo-guna-samudbhavah; for this is what we usually mean when we speak of desire. This other, the spiritual, is a will not contrary to the dharma.

Is it meant that the spiritual kāma is a virtuous desire, ethical in its nature, a sattvic desire,—for virtue is always sattvic in its origin? But then there would be here an obvious contradiction,—since in the very next line all sattvic affections are declared to be not the Divine, but only lower derivations. Undoubtedly sin has to be abandoned if one is to get anywhere near the Divine, but so too has virtue to be overpassed if we are to enter into the Divine. The sattvic nature has to be attained, but it has then to be exceeded. Ethical action is only a means of purification by which we can rise towards the divine nature, but that nature itself is lifted beyond the dualities,—and indeed there could otherwise be no pure divine presence or divine strength in the strong man who is subjected to the rajasic passions. Dharma, says the Gita elsewhere, is action governed by the swabhava,—the essential law of one's nature, and this resides in the pure quality of the spirit in its power of conscious will and its force of action.
desire meant here is therefore the will of the Divine in us seeking, not the pleasure of the lower nature, but the Ananda, the divine delight of its own conscious force of action in accordance with the law of the spiritual nature.

But what again is meant by saying that the Divine is not in the becomings, the forms and affections of the lower nature, even the sattvic, though they all are in his being? In a sense he must evidently be in them, otherwise they could not exist. But what is meant is that the true spiritual nature of the Divine is not imprisoned there; they are only phenomena in his being created by the action of the ego and the ignorance. The ignorance presents everything to us in an inverted vision. We imagine that the soul is in the body, almost a result and derivation from the body; even we so feel it; but it is the body that is in the soul and a result and derivation from the soul. We think of the spirit as a small part of us,—the Purusha who is no bigger than the thumb,—in this great mass of material and mental phenomena; really, it is the latter which is a very small thing in the infinity of the being of the spirit. So it is here. This lower nature of the three gunas which creates so false a view of things is a Maya, a power of illusion, by which it is not meant that it is all non-existent, but that it bewilders our knowledge, creates false values, envelops us in ego, mentality, sense, physicality, limited intelligence and there conceals from us the supreme truth of our being; it hides the Divine that we are, the infinite and imperishable spirit. "By these three kinds of becoming which are of the nature of the gunas, this whole world is bewildered and does not recognise Me supreme beyond them and imperishable." If we could see that that Divine is the real truth of our existence, all else also would change to our vision, assume its true character and our life and action acquire the divine values and move in the law of the divine nature.

But why then, since the Divine is there after all
and the divine nature at the root even of these bewildering derivations, since we are the Jiva and the Jiva is that, is this Maya so hard to overcome, maya duratayat. Because it is still the Maya of the Divine, daivi hyeshā guna-mayi mama mayā; this is my divine Maya of the gunas."

It is itself divine and a development from the nature of the Divine, but the Divine in the nature of the gods; it is daivi, of the godheads or, if you will of the Godhead, but of the Godhead in its divided subjective and lower cosmic aspects, sattvic, rajasic, tamasic. It is a cosmic veil which the Godhead has spun around our understanding; Brahma, Vishnu and Rudra have woven its complex threads; the Shakti, the Supreme Nature is there at its base and is hidden in its every tissue. We have to work out this web in ourselves and turn through it and from it, turn from the gods to the original and supreme Divine in whom we shall find the spiritual verities of our being. "To Me who turn and come, they cross over beyond this Maya."
The Synthesis of Yoga

CHAPTER XLV

THE DIVINE PERSONALITY

One question rises immediately in a synthetic Yoga which must not only comprise but unify knowledge and devotion, the difficult and troubling question of the divine Personality. All the trend of modern thought has been towards the belittling of personality; it has seen behind the complex facts of existence only a great impersonal force, an obscure becoming, and that too works itself out through impersonal forces and impersonal laws, while personality presents itself only as a subsequent, subordinate, partial, transient phenomenon upon the face of this impersonal movement. Granting even to this Force a consciousness, that seems to be impersonal, indeterminate, void in essence of all but abstract qualities or energies; for everything else is only a result, a minor phenomenon. Ancient Indian thought starting from quite the other end of the scale arrived on most of its lines at the same generalisation. It conceived of an impersonal existence as the original and eternal truth; personality is only an illusion or at best a phenomenon of the mind.

On the other hand, the way of devotion is impossible if the personality of the Divine cannot be taken as a reality, a real reality and not a hypostasis of the illusion. There can be no love without a lover and beloved. If our
personality is an illusion and the Personality to whom our adoration rises only a primary aspect of the illusion, and if we believe that, then love and adoration must at once be killed, or can only survive in the illogical passion of the heart denying by its strong beats of life the clear and dry truths of the reason. To love and adore a shadow of our minds or a bright cosmic phenomenon which vanishes from the eye of Truth, may be possible, but the way of salvation cannot be built upon a foundation of wilful self-deception. The bhakta indeed does not allow these doubts of the intellect to come in his way; he has the divinations of his heart, and these are to him sufficient. But the sadhaka of the integral Yoga has to know the eternal and ultimate Truth and not to persist to the end in the delight of a Shadow. If the impersonal is the sole enduring truth, then a firm synthesis is impossible. He can at most take the divine personality as a symbol, a powerful and effective fiction, but he will have in the end to overpass it and to abandon devotion for the sole pursuit of the ultimate knowledge. He will have to empty being of all its symbols, values, contents in order to arrive at the featureless Reality.

We have said, however, that personality and impersonality, as our minds understand them, are only aspects of the Divine and both are contained in his being; they are one thing which we see from two opposite sides and into which we enter by two gates. We have to see this more clearly in order to rid ourselves of any doubts with which the intellect may seek to afflict us as we follow the impulse of devotion and the intuition of love or to pursue us into the joy of the divine union. They fall away indeed from that joy, but if we are too heavily weighted with the philosophical mind, they may follow us almost up to its threshold. It is well therefore to discharge ourselves of them as early as may be by perceiving the limits of the intellect, the rational philosophic mind, in its peculiar
way of approaching the truth and the limits even of the spiritual experience which sets out from the approach through the intellect, to see that it need not be the whole integraliety of the highest and widest spiritual experience. Spiritual intuition is always a more luminous guide than the discriminating reason, and spiritual intuition addresses itself to us not only through the reason, but through the rest of our being as well, through the heart and the life also. The integral knowledge will then be that which takes account of all and unifies their diverse truths. The intellect itself will be more deeply satisfied if it does not confine itself to its own data, but accepts truth of the heart and the life also and gives to them their absolute spiritual value.

The nature of the philosophical intellect is to move among ideas and to give them a sort of abstract reality of their own apart from all their concrete representations which affect our life and personal consciousness. Its bent is to reduce these representations to their barest and most general terms and to subtilise even these if possible into some final abstraction. The pure intellectual direction travels away from life. In judging things it tries to get back from their effects on our personality and to arrive at whatever general and impersonal truth may be behind them; it is inclined to treat that kind of truth as the only real truth of being or at least as the only superior and permanent power of reality. Therefore it is bound by its own nature to end in its extremes at an absolute impersonality and an absolute abstraction. This is where the ancient philosophies ended. They reduced everything to three abstractions, existence, consciousness and bliss of being, and they tended to get rid of the two of these three which seemed dependent on the first and most abstract, and to throw all back into a pure featureless existence from which everything else had been discharged, all representations, all values, except the one infinite and timeless fact
of being. But the intellect had still one farther possible step to take and it took it in Buddhistic philosophy. It found that even this final fact of existence was only a representation; it abstracted that also and got to an infinite zero which might be either a void or an eternal inexpressible.

The heart and life, as we know, have an exactly opposite law. They cannot live with abstractions; they can find their satisfaction only in things that are concrete or can be made seizable; whether physically, mentally or spiritually, their object is not something which they seek to discriminate and arrive at by intellectual abstraction; a living becoming of it or a conscious possession and joy of their object is what they seek. Nor is it the satisfaction of an abstract mind or impersonal existence to which they respond, but the joy and the activity of a being, a conscious Person in us, whether finite or infinite, to whom the delights and powers of his existence are a reality. Therefore when the heart and life turn towards the Highest and the Infinite, they arrive not at an abstract existence or nonexistence, a Sat or else a Nirvana, but at an existent, a Sat Purusha, not merely at a consciousness, but at a conscious Being, a Chaitanya Purusha, not merely at a purely impersonal delight of the Is, but at an infinite I Am of bliss, an Anandamaya Purusha; nor can they immerge and lose his consciousness and bliss in featureless existence, but must insist on all three in one, for delight of existence is their highest power and without consciousness delight cannot be possessed. That is the sense of the supreme figure of the intensest Indian religion of love, Srikrishna, the All-blissful and All-beautiful.

The intelligence can also follow this trend, but it ceases then to be the pure intellect; it calls in its power of imagination to its aid, it becomes the image-maker, the creator of symbols and values, a spiritual artist and poet. Therefore the severest intellectual philosophy admits the
Saguna, the divine Person, only as the supreme cosmic symbol; go beyond it to reality and you will arrive, it says, at last to the Nirguna, the pure Impersonal. The rival philosophy asserts the superiority of the Saguna; that which is impersonal is, it will perhaps say, only the material, the stuff of his spiritual nature out of which he manifests the powers of his being, consciousness and bliss, all that expresses him; the impersonal is the apparent negative out of which he looses the temporal variations of his eternal positive of personality. There are evidently here two instincts, or, if we hesitate to apply that word to the intellect, two innate powers of our being which are dealing each in its own manner with the same Reality.

Both the ideas of the intellect, its discriminations, and the aspirations of the heart and life, their approximations, have behind them realities at which they are the means of arriving. Both are justified by spiritual experience; both arrive at the divine absolute of that which they are seeking. But still each tends, if too exclusively indulged, to be hampered by the limitations of its innate quality and its characteristic means. We see that in our earthly living, where the heart and life followed exclusively fail to lead to any luminous issue, while an exclusive intellectuality becomes either remote, abstract and impotent or a sterile critic or dry mechanist. Their sufficient harmony and just reconciliation is one of the great problems of our psychology and our action.

The reconciling power lies beyond in the intuition. But there is an intuition which serves the intellect and an intuition which serves the heart and the life, and if we follow either of these exclusively, we shall not get much farther than before; we shall only make more intimately real to us, but still separately, the things at which the other and less seeing powers are aiming. But the fact that it can lend itself impartially to all parts of our being,—for even the body has its intuitions,—shows that the intuition is not
exclusive, but an integral truth-finder. We have to question the intuition of our whole being, not only separately in each part of it, nor in a sum of their findings, but beyond all these lower instruments, beyond even their first spiritual correspondents, by rising into the native home of the intuition which is the native home of the infinite and illimitable Truth, r'itasya sve dame, where all existence discovers its unity. That is what the ancient Veda meant when it cried, "There is a firm truth hidden by truth (the eternal truth concealed by this other of which we have here these lower intuitions); there the ten hundred rays of light stand together; that is One." R'itena r'itam apihitam dhrurvam...daça çatã saha taatthatus, tad ekam."

The spiritual intuition lays hold always upon the reality; it is the luminous harbinger of spiritual realisation or else its illuminative light; it sees that which the other powers of our being are labouring to explore; it gets at the firm truth of the abstract representations of the intellect and the phenomenal representations of the heart and life, a truth which is itself neither remotely abstract nor outwardly concrete, but something else for which these are only two sides of its psychological manifestation to us. What the intuition of our integral being perceives, when its members no longer dispute among themselves but are illumined from above, is that the whole of our being aims at the one reality. The impersonal is a truth, the personal too is a truth; they are the same truth seen from two sides of our psychological activity; neither by itself gives the total account of the Reality, and yet by either we can approach it.

Looked at from one side, it would seem as if an impersonal Thought were at work and created the fiction of the thinker for the convenience of its action, an impersonal Power at work creating the fiction of the doer, an impersonal existence in operation which uses the fiction of a personal being who has a conscious personality and a
personal delight. Looked at from the other side, it is the thinker who expresses himself in thoughts which without him could not exist and our general notion of thought symbolises simply the power of the nature of the thinker; the Ishwara expresses himself by will and power and force; the Existent extends himself in all the forms integral and partial, direct, inverse and perverse of his existence, consciousness and bliss, and our abstract general notion of these things is only an intellectual representation of the triple power of his nature of being. All impersonality seems in its turn to become a fiction and existence in its every movement and its every particle nothing but the life, the consciousness, the power, the delight of the one and yet innumerable Personality, the infinite Godhead, the self-aware and self-unfolding Purusha. Both views are true, except that the idea of fiction, which is borrowed from our own intellectual processes, has to be exiled and each must be given its proper validity. The integral seeker has to see in this light that he can reach one and the same Reality on both lines, either successively or simultaneously, as if on two connected wheels travelling on parallel lines, but parallel lines which in defiance of intellectual logic but in obedience to their own inner truth of unity do meet in infinity.

We have to look at the divine Personality from this standpoint. When we speak of personality, we mean by it at first something limited, external and separative, and our idea of a personal God assumes the same imperfect character. Our personality is to us at first a separate creature, a limited mind, body, character which we conceive of as the person we are, a fixed quantity; for although in reality it is always changing, yet there is a sufficient element of stability to give a kind of practical justification to this notion of fixedness. We conceive of God as such a person, only without body, a separate person different from all others with a mind and character limited by
certain qualities. At first in our primitive conceptions his deity is a thing of much inconstancy, freak and caprice, an enlarged edition of our human character; but afterwards we conceive of the divine nature of personality as a quite fixed quantity and we attribute to it those qualities alone which we regard as divine and ideal, while all the others are eliminated. This limitation compels us to account for all the rest by attributing them to a Devil, or by lending to man an original creative capacity for all that we consider evil, or else, when we perceive that this will not quite do, by erecting a power which we call Nature and attributing to that all the lower quality and mass of action for which we do not wish to make the Divine responsible. At a higher pitch the attribution of mind and character to God becomes less anthropomorphic and we regard him as an infinite Spirit, but still a separate person, a spirit with certain fixed divine qualities as his attributes. So are conceived the ideas of the divine Personality, the personal God which vary so much in various religions.

All this may seem at first sight to be an original anthropomorphism terminating in an intellectual notion of the Deity which is very much at variance with the actualities of the world as we see it. It is not surprising that the philosophical and sceptical mind should have found little difficulty in destroying it all intellectually, whether in the direction of the denial of a personal God and the assertion of an impersonal Force or Becoming or in that of an impersonal Being or an ineffable denial of existence with all the rest as only symbols of Maya or phenomenal truths of the Time-consciousness. But these are only the personifications of monotheism. Polytheistic religions, less exalted perhaps, but wider and more sensitive in their response to cosmic life, have felt that all in the cosmos has a divine origin; therefore they conceived of the existence of many divine personalities with a vague sense of an indefinable Divine behind, whose relations with
the personal gods were not very clearly conceived. And in their more exoteric forms these gods were crudely anthropomorphic; but where the inner sense of spiritual things became clearer, the various godheads assumed the appearance of personalities of the one Divine,—that is the declared point of view of the ancient Veda. This Divine might be a supreme Being who manifests himself in various divine personalities or an impersonal existence which meets the human mind in these forms; or both views might be held simultaneously without any intellectual attempt to reconcile them, since both were felt to be true to spiritual experience.

If we subject these notions of the divine Personality to the discrimination of the intellect, we shall be inclined to reduce them, according to our bent, to fictions of the imagination or to psychological symbols, in any case, the response of our sensitive personality to something which is not this at all, but is purely impersonal. We may say that That is in reality the very opposite of our humanity and our personality and therefore in order to enter into relations with it we are impelled to set up these human fictions and these personal symbols so as to make it nearer to us. But we have to judge by spiritual experience, and in a total spiritual experience we shall find that these things are not fictions and symbols, but truths of divine being in their essence, however imperfect may have been our representations of them. Even our first idea of our own personality is not an absolute error, but only an incomplete and superficial view beset by many mental errors. Greater self-knowledge shows us that we are not fundamentally the particular formulation of form, powers, properties, qualities with a conscious I identifying itself with them, which we at first appear to be. That is only a temporary fact, though still a fact, of our partial being on the surface of our active consciousness. We find within an infinite being with the potentiality of all qualities, of infinite
quality, *ananta-guna*, which can be combined in any number of possible ways, and each combination is a revelation of our being. For all this personality is the self-manifestation of a Person, that is to say of a being who is conscious of his manifestation.

But we see too that this being does not seem to be composed even of infinite quality, but has a status of his complex reality in which he seems to stand back from it and to become an indefinable conscious existence, *anirdeśyam*. Even consciousness seems to be drawn back and leave merely a timeless pure existence. And again even this pure self of our being seems at a certain pitch to deny its own reality, or to be a projection from a self-less, baseless unknowable, which we may conceive of either as a nameless somewhat, or as a Nihil. It is when we would fix upon this exclusively and forget all that it has withdrawn into itself that we speak of pure impersonality or the void Nihil as the highest truth. But a more integral vision shows us that it is the Person and the personality and all that it had manifested which has thus cast itself upward into its own unexpressed absolute. And if we carry up our heart as well as our reasoning mind to the Highest, we shall find that we can reach it through the absolute Person as well as through an absolute impersonality. But all this self-knowledge is only the type within ourselves of the corresponding truth of the Divine in his universality. There too we meet him in various forms of divine personality; in formulations of quality which variously express him to us in his nature; in infinite quality, the Anantaguna; in the divine Person who expresses himself through infinite quality; in absolute impersonality, an absolute existence or an absolute non-existence, which is yet all the time the unexpressed Absolute of this divine Person, this

*Anuttiyyam anilasamam. Tattiriya Upanishad.*
conscious Being who manifests himself through us and through the universe.

Even on the cosmic plane we are constantly approaching the Divine on either of these sides. We may think, feel and say that God is Truth, Justice, Righteousness, Power, Love, Delight, Beauty; we may see him as a universal force or as a universal consciousness. But this is only the abstract way of experience. As we ourselves are not merely a number of qualities or powers or a psychological quantity, but a being, a person who so expresses his nature, so is the Divine a Person, a conscious Being who thus expresses his nature to us. And we can adore him through different forms of this nature, a God of righteousness, a God of love and mercy, a God of peace and purity; but it is evident that there are other things in the divine nature which we have put outside the form of personality in which we are thus worshipping him. The courage of an unflinching spiritual vision and experience can meet him also in more severe or in terrible forms. None of these are all the Divinity; yet these forms of his personality are real truths of himself in which he meets us and seems to deal with us, as if the rest had been put away behind him. He is each separately and all altogether. He is Vishnu, Krishna, Kali; he reveals himself to us in humanity as the Christ personality or the Buddha personality. When we look beyond our first exclusively concentrated vision, we see behind Vishnu all the personality of Shiva and behind Shiva all the personality of Vishnu. He is the Ananta-guna, infinite quality and the infinite divine Personality which manifests itself through it. Again he seems to withdraw into a pure spiritual impersonality or beyond all idea even of impersonal Self and to justify a spiritualised atheism or agnosticism; he becomes to the mind of man an indefinable, anirdeśyam. But out of this unknowable the conscious Being, the divine Person, who has manifested himself here, still speaks, "This too is I;
even here beyond the view of mind, I am He, the Purushottama."

For beyond the divisions and contradictions of the intellect there is another light and there the vision of a truth reveals itself which we may thus try to express to ourselves intellectually. There all is one truth of all these truths; for there each is present and justified in all the rest. In that light our spiritual experience becomes united and integralised; no least hair's breadth of real division is left, no shade of superiority and inferiority remains between the seeking of the Impersonal and the adoration of the divine Personality, between the way of knowledge and the way of devotion.
The Renaissance in India

Mr. J. H. Cousins has just published a number of essays* with this general title. The subject suggested by the name is, however, rather an idea in the background of the thought than the actual substance of the book. This is really a number of essays on religion, art and literature with a constant reference to the varying spirit of the East and West and the possibilities of a new movement of a spiritualised art and poetry and with recent artistic and poetic creations in India as a point of reference. There are, besides the opening essay upon the Renaissance in India two of appreciative criticism on the Bengal painters, another on the poetry of Sarojini Naidu, another on the Tantra suggested by Mr. Arthur Avalon's publications; the rest deal with such subjects as the arts in nation-building, Indian art-origins, the relations of philosophy and poetry, the orientation of Western literature under the impact of Indian influences. Whatever Mr. Cousins writes is always of great interest; for he is full of subtle and stimulating thought and, as he carries the poet with him into his prose, he writes in a style which gives a deeper value of suggestiveness to all he thinks. His thoughts carry with them a penumbra of revealing lights and revealing shades and succeed therefore

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* Ganesh and Co., Madras.
in setting one on a fresh line of thinking, which is in the end the chief value of good critical writing. But to follow him into all the rich field of thought which he opens up in this book would take too long. I shall confine myself to the subject of the Renaissance, with the thread rather than with the pearls he has strung on it.

There is the very first question, which the writer himself raises in the opening essay, whether there is really a Renaissance in India. That depends a good deal on what we mean by the word; it depends also on the future, for the thing itself is only in its infancy and it is too early to say to what it may lead. The word carries the mind back to the turning-point of European culture to which it was first applied; that was not so much a reawakening as an overturn and reversal, a seizure of Christianised, Teutonised, feudalised Europe by the old Graeco-Latin spirit and form with all the complex and momentous results which came from it. That is certainly not a type of renaissance that is at all possible in India. There is a closer resemblance to the recent Celtic movement in Ireland, the attempt of a reawakened national spirit to find a new impulse of self-expression which shall give the spiritual force for a great reshaping and rebuilding: in Ireland this was discovered by a return to the Celtic spirit and culture after a long period of eclipsing English influences, and in India something of the same kind of movement is appearing and has especially taken a pronounced turn since the political outburst of 1905. But even here the analogy does not give the whole truth.

We have to see moreover that the whole is at present a great formless chaos of conflicting influences with a few luminous points of formation here and there where a new self-consciousness has come to the surface. But it cannot be said that these forms have yet a sufficient hold on the general mind of the people. They represent an advance movement; they are the voices of the vanguard, the
torchlights of the pioneers. On the whole what we see is a giant Shakti who awakening into a new world, a new and alien environment, finds herself shackled in all her limbs by a multitude of gross or minute bonds, bonds self-woven by her past, bonds recently imposed from outside, and is struggling to be free from them, to arise and proclaim herself, to cast abroad her spirit and set her seal on the world. We hear on every side a sound of the slow fraying of bonds, here and there a sharp tearing and snapping; but freedom of movement has not yet been attained. The eyes are not yet clear, the bud of the soul has only partly opened. The Titaness has not yet arisen.

Mr. Cousins questions also whether the word renaissance at all applies since India has always been awake and stood in no need of reawakening. There is a certain truth behind that and to one coming in with a fresh mind from outside and struck by the living continuity of past and present India, it may be especially apparent; but that is not quite how we can see it who are her children and are still suffering from the bitter effects of the great decline which came to a head in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Undoubtedly there was a period, a brief but very disastrous period of the dwindling of that great fire of life, even a moment of incipient disintegration, marked politically by the anarchy which gave European adventure its chance, inwardly by an increasing torpor of the creative spirit in religion and art,—science and philosophy and intellectual knowledge had long been dead or petrified into a mere scholastic Punditism,—all pointing to a nadir of setting energy, the evening-time from which according to the Indian idea of the cycles a new age has to start. It was that moment and the pressure of a superimposed European culture which followed it that made the reawakening necessary.

We have practically to take three facts into considera-
tion, the great past of Indian culture and life with the moment of inadaptive torpor into which it had lapsed, the first period of the Western contact in which it seemed for a moment likely to perish by slow decomposition, and the ascending movement which first broke into some clarity of expression only a decade or two ago. Mr. Cousins has his eye fixed on Indian spirituality which has always maintained itself even in the decline of the national vitality; it was certainly that which saved India always at every critical moment of her destiny, and it has been the starting-point too of her renascence. Any other nation under the same pressure would have long ago perished soul and body. But certainly the outward members were becoming gangrened; the powers of renovation seemed for a moment to be beaten by the powers of stagnation, and stagnation is death. Now that the salvation, the reawakening has come, India will certainly keep her essential spirit, will keep her characteristic soul, but there is likely to be a great change of the body. The shaping for itself of a new body, of new philosophical, artistic, literary, cultural, political, social forms by the same soul rejuvenescent will, I should think, be the type of the Indian renascence,—forms not contradictory of the truths of life which the old expressed, but rather expressive of those truths restated, cured of defect, completed.

What was this ancient spirit and characteristic soul of India? European writers, struck by the general metaphysical bent of the Indian mind, by its strong religious instincts and religious idealism, by its other-worldliness, are inclined to write as if this were all the Indian spirit. An abstract, metaphysical, religious mind overpowered by the sense of the infinite, not apt for life, turning away from life as Maya, dreamy, unpractical, this, they said, is India; and for a time Indians in this as in other matters submissively echoed their new western teachers and masters. They learned to speak with pride of their metaphy-
sics, of their literature, of their religion, but in all else they were content to be learners and imitators. Since then Europe has began to discover that there was too an Indian art of remarkable power and beauty; the rest of what India meant it has hardly at all seen. But meanwhile the Indian mind had begun to emancipate itself and to look upon its past with a clear and self-discerning eye, and it has very soon discovered that it had been misled into an entirely false self-view. All such one-sided appreciations indeed almost invariably turn out to be false. Was it not the general misconception about Germany at one time, because she was great in philosophy and music, but had blundered in life and been unable to make the most of its materials, that this was a nation of unpractical dreamers, idealists, erudites and sentimentalists, patient, docile and industrious certainly, but politically inapt,—"admirable, ridiculous Germany." Europe has had a terrible awakening from that error. When the renascence of India is complete, she will have an awakening, not of the same brutal kind, certainly, but startling enough, as to the real nature and capacity of the Indian spirit.

Spirituality is indeed the master-key of the Indian mind; the sense of the infinite is native to it. It dia saw from the beginning,—and, even in her ages of reason and her age of increasing ignorance, she never lost hold of the insight,—that life cannot be rightly seen in the sole light, cannot be perfectly lived in the sole power of its externalities. She was alive to the greatness of material laws and forces; she had a keen eye for the importance of the physical sciences, she knew how to organise the arts of ordinary life. But she saw that the physical does not get its full sense until it stands in right relation to the supra-physical; she saw that the complexity of the universe could not be explained in the present terms of man or seen by his superficial sight, that there were other powers behind, other powers within man himself of which he is normally una-
ware, that he is conscious only of a small part of himself, that the invisible always surrounds the visible, the suprasensible the sensible, even as infinity always surrounds the finite. She saw too that man has the power of exceeding himself, of becoming himself more entirely and profoundly than he is,—truths which have only recently begun to be seen in Europe and seem even now too great for its common intelligence. She saw the myriad gods beyond man, God beyond the gods, and beyond God his own ineffable eternity; she saw that there were ranges of life beyond our life, ranges of mind beyond our present mind and above these she saw the splendours of the spirit. Then with that calm audacity of her intuition which knew no fear or littleness and shrank from no act whether of spiritual or intellectual, ethical or vital courage, she declared that there was none of these things which man could not attain if he trained his will and knowledge; he could conquer these ranges of mind, become the spirit, become a god, become one with God, become the ineffable Brahman. And with the logical practicality and sense of science and organised method which distinguished her mentality, she set out immediately to find out the way. Hence from long ages of this insight and practice there was ingrained in her her spirituality, her powerful psychic tendency, her great yearning to grapple with the infinite and possess it, her ineradicable religious sense, her idealism, her Yoga, the constant turn of her art and her philosophy.

But this was not and could not be her whole mentality, her entire spirit; spirituality itself does not flourish on earth in the void, even as our mountaintops do not rise like those of an enchantment of dream out of the clouds without a base. When we look at the past of India, what strikes us next is her stupendous vitality, her inexhaustible power of life and joy of life, her almost unimaginably prolific creativeness. For three thousand years at least,—it is
indeed much longer,—she has been creating abundantly and incessantly, lavishly, with an inexhaustible many-sidedness, republics and kingdoms and empires, philosophies and cosmogonies and sciences and creeds and arts and poems and all kinds of monuments, palaces and temples and public works, communities and societies and religious orders, laws and codes and rituals, physical sciences, psychic sciences, systems of Yoga, systems of politics and administration, arts spiritual, arts worldly, trades, industries, fine crafts,—the list is endless and in each item there is almost a plethora of activity. She creates and creates and is not satisfied and is not tired; she will not have an end of it, seems hardly to need a space for rest, a time for inertia and lying fallow. She expands too outside her borders; her ships cross the ocean and the fine superfluity of her wealth brims over to Judaea and Egypt and Rome; her colonies spread her arts and epics and creeds in the Archipelago; her traces are found in the sands of Mesopotamia; her religions conquer China and Japan and spread westward as far as Palestine and Alexandria, and the figures of the Upanishads and the sayings of the Buddhists are reechoed on the lips of Christ. Everywhere, as on her soil, so in her works there is the teeming of a superabundant energy of life. European critics complain that in her ancient architecture, sculpture and art there is no reticence, no holding back of riches, no blank spaces, that she labours to fill every rift with ore, occupy every inch with plenty. Well, but defect or no, that is the necessity of her superabundance of life, of the teeming of the infinite within her. She lavishes her riches because she must, as the Infinite fills every inch of space with the stirring of life and energy because it is the Infinite.

But this supreme spirituality and this prolific abundance of the energy and joy of life and creation do not make all that the spirit of India has been in its past. It is not a
confused splendour of tropical vegetation under heavens of a pure sapphire infinity. It is only to eyes unaccustomed to such wealth that there seems to be a confusion in this crowding of space with rich forms of life, a luxurious disorder of excess or a wanton lack of measure, clear balance and design. For the third power of the ancient Indian spirit was a strong intellectuality, at once austere and rich, robust and minute, powerful and delicate, massive in principle and curious in detail. Its chief impulse was that of order and arrangement, but an order founded upon a seeking for the inner law and truth of things and having in view always the possibility of conscientious practice. India has been preeminently the land of the Dharma and the Shastra. She searched for the inner truth and law of each human or cosmic activity, its dharma; that found, she laboured to cast into elaborate form and detailed law of arrangement its application in fact and rule of life. Her first period was luminous with the discovery of the Spirit; her second completed the discovery of the Dharma; her third elaborated into detail the first simpler formulation of the Shastra; but none was exclusive, the three elements are always present.

In this third period the curious elaboration of all life into a science and an art assumes extraordinary proportions. The mere mass of the intellectual production during the period from Asoca well into the Mahomedan epoch is something truly prodigious, as can be seen at once if one studies the account which recent scholarship gives of it, and we must remember that that scholarship as yet only deals with a fraction of what is still lying extant and what is extant is only a small percentage of what was once written and known. There is no historical parallel for such an intellectual labour and activity before the invention of printing and the facilities of modern science; yet all that mass of research and production and curiosity of detail was accomplished without these facilities and
with no better record than the memory and for an aid the perishable palm-leaf. Nor was all this colossal literature confined to philosophy and theology, religion and Yoga, logic and rhetoric and grammar and linguistics, poetry and drama, medicine and astronomy and the sciences; it embraced all life, politics and society, all the arts from painting to dancing, all the sixty-four accomplishments, everything then known that could be useful to life or interesting to the mind, even, for instance, to such practical side minutiae as the breeding and training of horses and elephants, each of which had its Shastra and its art, its apparatus of technical terms, its copious literature. In each subject from the largest and most momentous to the smallest and most trivial there was expended the same all-embracing, opulent, minute and thorough intellectuality. On one side there is an insatiable curiosity, the desire of life to know itself in every detail, on the other a spirit of organisation and scrupulous order, the desire of the mind to tread through life with a harmonised knowledge and in the right rhythm and measure. Thus an ingrained and dominant spirituality, an inexhaustible vital creativeness and gust of life and, mediating between them, a powerful, penetrating and scrupulous intelligence combined of the rational, ethical and aesthetic mind each at a high intensity of action, created the harmony of the ancient Indian culture.

Indeed without this opulent vitality and opulent intellectuality India could never have done so much as she did with her spiritual tendencies. It is a great error to suppose that spirituality flourishes best in an impoverished soil with the life half-killed and the intellect discouraged and intimidated. The spirituality that so flourishes is something morbid, hectic and exposed to perilous reactions. It is when the race has lived most richly and thought most profoundly that spirituality finds its heights and its depths and its constant and many-sided fruition.
In modern Europe it is after a long explosion of vital force and a stupendous activity of the intellect that spirituality has begun really to emerge and with some promise of being not, as it once was, the sorrowful physician of the malady of life, but the beginning of a large and profound clarity. The European eye is struck in Indian spiritual thought by the Buddhistic and illusionist denial of life. But it must be remembered that this is only one side of its philosophic tendency which assumed exaggerated proportions only in the period of decline. In itself too that was simply one result, in one direction, of a tendency of the Indian mind which is common to all its activities, the impulse to follow each motive, each specialisation of motive even, spiritual, intellectual, ethical, vital, to its extreme point and to sound its utmost possibility. Part of its innate direction was to seek in each not only for its fullness of detail, but for its infinite, its absolute, its profoundest depth or its highest pinnacle. It knew that without a "fine excess" we cannot break down the limits which the dull temper of the normal mind opposes to knowledge and thought and experience; and it had in seeking this point a boundless courage and yet a sure tread. Thus it carried each tangent of philosophic thought, each line of spiritual experience to its farthest point, and chose to look from that farthest point at all existence, so as to see what truth or power such a view could give it. It tried to know the whole of divine nature and to see too as high as it could beyond nature and into whatever there might be of supradivine. When it formulated a spiritual atheism, it followed that to its acme of possible vision. When, too, it indulged in materialistic atheism,—though it did that only with a side glance, as the freak of an insatiable intellectual curiosity,—yet it formulated it straight out, boldly and nakedly, without the least concession to idealism or ethicism.

Everywhere we find this tendency. The ideals of the
Indian mind have included the height of self-assertion of the human spirit and its thirst of independence and mastery and possession and the height also of its self-abnegation, dependence and submission and self-giving. In life the ideal of opulent living and the ideal of poverty were carried to the extreme of regal splendour and the extreme of satisfied nudity. Its intuitions were sufficiently clear and courageous not to be blinded by its own most cherished ideas and fixed habits of life. If it was obliged to stereotype caste as the symbol of its social order, it never quite forgot, as the caste-spirit is apt to forget, that the human soul and the human mind are beyond caste. For it had seen in the lowest human being the Godhead, Narayana. It emphasised distinctions only to turn upon them and deny all distinctions. If all its political needs and circumstances compelled it at last to exaggerate the monarchical principle and declare the divinity of the king and to abolish its earlier republican city states and independent federations as too favourable to the centrifugal tendency, if therefore it could not develop democracy, yet it had the democratic idea, applied it in the village, in council and municipality, within the caste, was the first to assert a divinity in the people and could cry to the monarch at the height of his power, "O king, what art thou but the head servant of the demos?" Its idea of the golden age was a free spiritual anarchism. Its spiritual extremism could not prevent it from fathoming through a long era the life of the senses and its enjoyments, and there too it sought the utmost richness of sensuous detail and the depths and intensities of sensuous experience. Yet it is notable that this pursuit of the most opposite extremes never resulted in disorder; and its most hedonistic period offers nothing that at all resembles the unbridled corruption which a similar tendency has more than once produced in Europe. For the Indian mind is not only spiritual and ethical, but intellectual and artistic, and both the rule of
the intellect and the rhythm of beauty are hostile to the spirit of chaos. In every extreme the Indian spirit seeks for a law in that extreme and a rule, measure and structure in its application. Besides, this sounding of extremes is balanced by a still more ingrained characteristic, the synthetical tendency, so that having pushed each motive to its farthest possibility the Indian mind returns always towards some fusion of the knowledge it has gained and to a resulting harmony and balance in action and institution. Balance and rhythm which the Greeks arrived at by self-limitation, India arrived at by its sense of intellectual, ethical and aesthetic order and the synthetic impulse of its mind and life.

I have dwelt on these facts because they are apt to be ignored by those who look only at certain sides of the Indian mind and spirit which are most prominent in the last epochs. By dwelling only upon these we get an inaccurate or incomplete idea of the past of India and of the integral meaning of its civilisation and the spirit that animated it. The present is only a last deposit of the past at a time of ebb; it has no doubt also to be the starting-point of the future, but in this present all that was in India's past is still dormant, it is not destroyed; it is waiting there to assume new forms. The decline was the ebb-movement of a creative spirit which can only be understood by seeing it in the full tide of its greatness; the renaissance is the return of the tide and it is the same spirit that is likely to animate it, although the forms it takes may be quite new. To judge therefore the possibilities of the renaissance, the powers that it may reveal and the scope that it may take, we must dismiss the idea that the tendency of metaphysical abstraction is the one note of the Indian spirit which dominates or inspires all its cadences. Its real key-note is the tendency of spiritual realisation, not cast at all into any white monotone, but many-faceted, many-coloured, as supple in its adaptability as it
is intense in its highest pitches. The note of spirituality is dominant, initial, constant, always recurrent; it is the support of all the rest. The first age of India’s greatness was a spiritual age when she sought passionately for the truth of existence through the intuitive mind and through an inner experience and interpretation both of the psychic and the physical existence. The stamp put on her by that beginning she has never lost, but rather always enriched it with fresh spiritual experience and discovery at each step of the national life. Even in her hour of decline it was the one thing she could never lose.

But this spiritual tendency does not shoot upward only to the abstract, the hidden and the intangible; it casts its rays downward and outward to embrace the multiplicities of thought and the richness of life. Therefore the second long epoch of India’s greatness was an age of the intellect, the ethical sense, the dynamic will in action enlightened to formulate and govern life in the lustre of spiritual truth. After the age of the Spirit, the age of the Dharma; after the Veda and Upanishads, the heroic centuries of action and social formation, typal construction and thought and philosophy, when the outward forms of Indian life and culture were fixed in their large lines and even their later developments were being determined in the seed. The great classical age of Sanskrit culture was the flowering of this intellectuality into curiosity of detail in the refinements of scholarship, science, art, literature, politics, sociology, mundane life. We see at this time too the sounding not only of aesthetic, but of emotional and sensuous, even of vital and sensual experience. But the old spirituality reigned behind all this mental and all this vital activity, and its later period, the post-classical, saw a lifting up of the lower life and an impressing upon it of the values of the spirit. This was the sense of the Puranic and Tantric systems and the religions of Bhakti. Later Vaishnavism, the last fine flower of the Indian spirit, was
in its essence the taking up of the aesthetic, emotional and sensuous being into the service of the spiritual. It completed the curve of the cycle.

The evening of decline which followed the completion of the curve was prepared by three movements of retrogression. First there is, comparatively, a sinking of the superabundant energy of life and a fading of the joy of life and the joy of creation; even in the decline this energy is still something splendid and extraordinary and only for a very brief period sinks nearest to a complete torpor; but still a comparison with its past greatness will show that the decadence was marked and progressive. Secondly, there is a rapid cessation of the old free intellectual activity, a slumber of the scientific and the critical mind as well as the creative intuition; what remains becomes more and more a repetition of ill-understood fragments of past knowledge. There is a petrification of the mind and life in the relics of the forms which a great intellectual past had created. Old authority and rule become rigidly despotic and, as always then happens, lose their real sense and spirit. Finally, spirituality remains but burns no longer with the large and clear flame of knowledge of former times, but in intense jets and in a dispersed action which replaces the old magnificent synthesis and in which certain spiritual truths are emphasised to the neglect of others. This diminution amounts to a certain failure of the great endeavour which is the whole meaning of Indian culture, a falling short in the progress towards the perfect spiritualisation of the mind and the life. The beginnings were superlative, the developments very great, but at a certain point where progress, adaptation, a new flowering should have come in, the old civilisation stopped short, partly drew back, partly lost its way. The essential no doubt remained and still remains in the heart of the race and not only in its habits and memories, but in its action it was covered up in a great
smoke of confusion. The causes internal and external we need not now discuss; but the fact is there. It was the cause of the momentary helplessness of the Indian mind in the face of new and unprecedented conditions.

It was at this moment that the European wave swept over India. The first effect of this entry of a new and quite opposite civilisation was the destruction of much that had no longer the power to live, the deliquescence of much else, a tendency to the devitalisation of the rest. A new activity came in, but this was at first crudely and confusedly imitative of the foreign culture. It was a crucial moment and an ordeal of perilous severity; a less vigorous energy of life might well have foundered and perished under the double weight of the deadening of its old innate motives and a servile imitation of alien motives. History shows us how disastrous this situation can be to nations and civilisations. But fortunately the energy of life was there, sleeping only for a moment, not dead, and, given that energy, the evil carried within itself its own cure. For whatever temporary rotting and destruction this crude impact of European life and culture has caused, it gave three needed impulses. It revived the dormant intellectual and critical impulse; it rehabilitated life and awakened the desire of new creation; it put the reviving Indian spirit face to face with novel conditions and ideals and the urgent necessity of understanding, assimilating and conquering them. The national mind turned a new eye on its past culture, reawoke to its sense and import, but also at the same time saw it in relation to modern knowledge and ideas. Out of this awakening vision and impulse the Indian renaissance is arising, and that must determine its future tendency. The recovery of the old spiritual knowledge and experience in all its splendour, depth and fullness is its first, most essential work; the flowing of this spirituality into new forms of philosophy, literature, art, science and critical knowledge is the se-
cond; an original dealing with modern problems in the light of the Indian spirit and the endeavour to formulate a greater synthesis of a spiritualised society is the third and most difficult. Its success on these three lines will be the measure of its help to the future of humanity.

The Spirit is a higher infinite of verities; life is a lower infinite of possibilities which seek to grow and find their own truth and fulfilment in the light of these verities. Our intellect, our will, our ethical and our aesthetic being are the reflectors and the mediators. The method of the West is to exaggerate life and to call down as much—or as little—as may be of the higher powers to stimulate and embellish life.* But the method of India is on the contrary to discover the spirit within and the higher hidden intensities of the superior powers, and to dominate life in one way or another so as to make it responsive to and expressive of the spirit and in that way increase the power of life. Its tendency with the intellect, will, ethical, aesthetic and emotional being is to sound indeed their normal mental possibilities, but also to upraise them towards the greater light and power of their own highest intuitions. The work of the renaissance in India must be to make this spirit, this higher view of life, this sense of deeper potentiality once more a creative, perhaps a dominant power in the world. But to that truth of itself it is as yet only vaguely awake; the mass of Indian action is still at the moment proceeding under the impress of the European motive and method and, because there is a spirit within us to which they are foreign, the action is poor in will, feeble in form and ineffective in results, for it does not come from the roots of our being. Only in a few directions is there some clear light of self-knowledge. It is when a greater light prevails and becomes general that we shall be able to speak, not only in prospect but in fact, of the renaissance of India.

* Mr. Cousins' distinction between invocation and evocation.
The Future Poetry

THE COURSE OF ENGLISH POETRY

These are the general characteristics of English poetry, the powers which have been at work in it. For we have to see first what are the spirit and temper that have stood behind and come to the front in a literature in order to understand the course that it has taken and the forms that it has assumed. The field which poetry covers is common ground, but each nation has its own characteristic spirit and creative quality which determine the province in which it will best succeed, the turn or angle of its vision and the shape of its work. The English poetical genius was evidently predestined by the complexity of its spirit and its union of opposite powers to an adventurous consecutive seeking over the whole field; but in first potentiality its limitations point to a more facile success in the concrete or imaginative presentation of life, a more difficult success in the intellectual or spiritual interpretation of life, while most difficult of all for it would be a direct presentation of the things beyond, of mystic realities or of the higher truths of the spirit. Yet on the other hand if this difficulty could once be overcome, then because of the profounder intensity of the power of poetical speech which this literature has developed, the very highest expression of these things would be possible, a nearer
expression than would be possible without much fashioning to the poetry of the Latin tongues whose speech has been cast in the mould of a clear or high intellectuality rather than into the native utterance of imaginative vision. We see in modern French creation a constant struggle with this limitation and, even, a poet like Mallarmé breaking the mould of the French speech in his desperate effort to force it to utter what is to its natural clear lucidity almost unutterable. No such difficulty presents itself in English poetry; the depths, the vistas of suggestion, the power to open the doors of the infinite are already there for the mind rightly gifted to evoke and use for the highest purposes. Much less naturally fitted for fine prose utterance, the language has all the close lights and shades, the heights and depths, the recesses of fathomless sense needed by the poet.

We have to see how this has come about; for it has not been accomplished at all easily, but only by much effort and seeking. We observe first that English poetry has covered the field that lies before the genius of poetry by successive steps which follow the natural ascending order of our developing perceptions. It began by a quite external, a clear and superficial substance and utterance. It proceeded to a deeper vital poetry, a poetry of the power and beauty and wonder and spontaneous thought, the joy and passion and pain, the colour and music of Life, in which the external presentation of life and things was taken up, but exceeded and given its full dynamic and imaginative content. From that it turned to an attempt at mastering the secret of the Latins, the secret of a clear, measured and intellectual dealing with life, things and ideas. Then came an attempt, a brilliant and beautiful attempt to get through Nature and thought and the mentality in life and Nature and their profounder aesthetic suggestion to certain spiritual truths behind them. This attempt could not come to perfect fruition, partly because there had not been
the right intellectual preparation or a sufficient basis of spiritual knowledge and experience and only so much could be given as the solitary individual intuition of the poet could by a sovereign effort attain, partly because after the lapse into an age of reason the spontaneous or the intenser language of spiritual poetry could not always be found or, if found, could not be securely kept. So we get a deviation into another age of intellectual, artistic or reflective poetry with a much wider range, but less profound in its roots, less high in its growth; and partly out of this, partly by a recoil from it has come the turn of recent and contemporary poetry which seems at last to be approaching the secret of the utterance of profounder truth with its right magic of speech and rhythm.

We get the first definite starting-point of this movement in the poetry of Chaucer when the rough poverty of the Anglo-Saxon mind first succeeded in assimilating the French influence and refining and clarifying by that its speech and its aesthetic sense. It is characteristic of the difficulty of the movement that as in its beginning, so at each important turn, or at least on the three first occasions of a new orientation, it has had thus to go to school, to make almost a fresh start under the influences of a foreign culture and poetry, needing in spite of so much poetic originality and energy and genius a strong light of suggestion from outside to set it upon its way. All modern literatures have at one time or another needed this kind of external help, but once formed and in possession of themselves they adopt impresses more or less lightly and only as a secondary assistance. But here we have a remodelling of the whole plan under foreign teaching, Chaucer gives English poetry a first shape by the help of French romance models and the work of Italian masters; the Elizabethans start anew in dependence on Renaissance influences from France and Italy and a side wind from Spain; Milton goes direct to classical models;
the Restoration and the eighteenth century take pliantly the pseudo-classical form from the contemporary French poets and critics. Still this dependence is only in externals; in the essential things of poetry some native character prevails, a new turn is rapidly given, an original power and method emerges; the dynamic vitality of the race was too great not to arrive almost at once at a transmutation.

The first early motive and style of this poetry as it emerges in Chaucer strikes at once an English note. The motive is the poetic observation of ordinary human life and character—without any preoccupying idea, without any ulterior design, simply as it reflects itself in the individual mind and temperament of the poet. Chaucer has his eye fixed on the object, and that object is the external action of life as it passes before him throwing its figures on his mind and stirring it to a kindly satisfaction in the movement and its interest, to a blithe sense of humour or a light and easy pathos. He does not seek to add anything to it or to see anything below it or behind its outsides, nor does he look at all into the souls or deeply into the minds of the men and women whose appearance, action and easily apparent traits of character he describes with so apt and observant a fidelity. He does not ask himself what is the meaning of all this movement of life or the power in it or draw any large poetic idea from it; he is not moved to interpret life, a clear and happy presentation is his business. It is there simply in the sunlight with its familiar lines and normal colours, sufficiently interesting in itself, by its external action, and he has to record it, to give it a shape in lucid poetic speech and rhythm; for to turn it into stuff of poetry that and the sunlight of his own happy poetic temperament in which he bathes it is all he needs. And the form he gives it is within its limits and for its work admirably apt, sufficient and satisfying,—provided we ask from it nothing more than it has to offer us. Chaucer had learnt ease, grace and lucidity from
the French romance poetry and from the great Italians a sufficient force and compactness of expression which French verse had not yet attained. But neither his poetic speech nor his rhythm has anything of the plastic greatness and high beauty of the Italians. It is an easy, limpid and flowing movement, a stream rather than a well,—for it has no depths in it,—of pure English utterance just fitted for the clear and pleasing poetic presentation of external life as if in an unsullied mirror, at times rising into an apt and pointed expression, but for the most part satisfied with a first primitive power of poetic speech, a subdued and well-tempered even adequacy. Only once or twice does he by accident strike out a really memorable line of poetry; yet Dante and Petrarch were among his masters.

No other great poetical literature has had quite such a beginning. Others also started with a poetry of external life, Greek with the poetry of Homer, Latin with the historical epic of Ennius, French with the feudal romances of the Charlemagne cycle and the Arthurian cycle. But in none of these was the artistic aim simply the observant presentation of Greek or Roman or feudal life. Homer gives us the life of man always at a high intensity of impulse and action and without subjecting it to any other change he casts it in lines of beauty and in divine proportions; he deals with it as Phidias dealt with the human form when he wished to create a god in marble. When we read the Iliad and the Odyssey, we are not really upon this earth, but on the earth lifted into some plane of a greater dynamics of life, and so long as we remain there we have a greater vision in a more lustrous air and we feel ourselves raised to a semi-divine stature. Ennius' object was like Virgil's to cast into poetical utterance the spirit of Rome. So the spirit of catholic and feudal Europe transmutes life and gives in its own way an ideal presentation of it which only misses greatness by the inadequa-
cy of its speech and rhythmic movement and the diffuse prolixity of its form. Chaucer’s poetic method has no such great idea or uplifting motive or spirit. Whether the colour he gives happens to be realistic or romantic, it falls within the same formula. It is the reflecting of an external life, with sometimes just a tinge of romantic illumination, in an observing mind that makes itself a shining poetic mirror.

The spirit of English poetry having thus struck its first strong note, a characteristic English note, having got as far as the Anglo-Saxon mind refined by French and Italian influence could go in its own proper way and unchanged nature, came suddenly to a pause. Many outward reasons might be given for that, but none sufficient; for the real cause was that to have developed upon this line would have been to wander up and down in a cul-de-sac; it would have been to anticipate in a way in poetry the self-imprisonment of Dutch art in a strong externalism, of a fairer kind indeed, but still too physical and outward in its motive. English poetry had greater things to do and it waited for some new light and more powerful impulse to come. Still this external motive and method are native to the English mind and with many modifications have put their strong impress upon the literature. It is the method of English fiction from Richardson to Dickens; it got into the Elizabethan drama and prevented it, except in Shakespeare, from equaling the nobler work of other great periods of dramatic poetry. It throws its limiting shade over English narrative poetry, which after its fresh start in the symbolism of the Faery Queen and the vital intensity of Marlowe ought either to have got clear away from it or at least to have transmuted it by the infusion of much higher artistic motives. To give only one instance in many, it got sadly in the way of Tennyson, who yet had no real turn for the reproduction of life, and prevented him from working out the fine
subjective and mystic vein which his first natural intuitions had discovered in such work as the *Lady of Shalott* and the *Morte d'Arthur*; we have to be satisfied instead with the *Princess* and *Enoch Arden* and the picturesque triviality of the *Idylls of the King* which give us the impression of gentlemen and ladies of victorian drawing-rooms masquerading as Celtic-mediaeval knights and dames, with a meaning of some kind in it all that does not come home to us because it is lost in a falsetto mimicking of the external strains of life. Certainly, it is useless to quarrel with national tendencies and characteristics which must show themselves in poetry as elsewhere; but English poetry had opened the gates of other powers and if it could always have lifted up the forms of external life by these powers, the substance of its work might then have meant much more to the world and the strength of its vision of things might constantly have equalled the power and beauty of its utterance. As it is, even poets of great power are being constantly led away by this tendency from the fulfilment of their more characteristic potentialities.

The new light and impulse that set free the silence of the poetic spirit in England for its first abundant and sovereign utterance, came from the Renaissance in France and Italy. The Renaissance meant many things and it meant too different things in different countries, but one thing above all everywhere, the discovery of beauty and joy in every energy of life. The Middle Ages had lived strongly and with a sort of deep and sombre force, but, as it were, always under the shadow of death and under the burden of an obligation to aspire through suffering to a beyond; their life is bordered on one side by the cross and on the other by the sword. The Renaissance brings in the sense of a liberation from the burden and the obligation; it looks at life and loves it in excess; it is carried away by the beauty of the body and the senses and the intellect, the beauty of sensation and action and speech.
and thought,—of thought hardly at all for its own sake, but thought as a power of life. It is Hellenism returning with its strong sense of humanity and things human, \textit{nihil humani alienum},* but at first a barbarised Hellenism, unbridled and extravagant, riotous in its vitalistic energy, too much overjoyed for restraint and measure.

Elizabethan poetry is an expression of this energy, passion and wonder of life, and it is much more powerful, disorderly and unrestrained than the corresponding poetry in other countries, having neither a past traditional culture nor an innate taste to restrain its extravagances. It springs up in a chaos of power and of beauty in which forms emerge and shape themselves by a stress within it for which there is no clear guiding knowledge except such as the instinctive genius of the age and the individual can give. It is constantly shot through with brilliant threads of intellectual energy, but is not at all intellectual in its innate spirit and dominant character. It is too vital for that, too much moved and excited; for its mood is passionate, sensuous, loose of rein; its speech sometimes liquid with sweetness, sometimes vehement and inordinate in pitch, enamoured of the variety of its notes, revelling in image and phrase, a tissue of sweet or violent colours, of many-hued fire, of threads of golden and silver light.

It bestowed on the nation a new English speech, rich in capacity, gilded with an extraordinary poetic intensity and wealth and copiousness, but full also of the disorder and excess of new formation. A drama exultant in action and character, passion and incident and movement, a lyric and romantic poetry of marvellous sweetness, richness and force are its strong fruits. Here the two sides of the national mind throw themselves out for the first time with a full energy, but within the limits of a vital,

* Nothing human is alien to me.
sensuous and imaginative mould, the one dominant in its pure poetry, the other ordinarily in its drama, but both in Shakespeare welded into a supreme phenomenon of poetic and dramatic genius. It is on the whole the greatest age of utterance,—though not of highest spirit and aim,—of the genius of English poetry.
CONTENTS

THE LIFE DIVINE.......................... Aurobindo Ghose
Chapter XLIX. The Metaphysical Basis of the Divine Life

ESSAYS ON THE GITA..................... A. G.
The Synthesis of Devotion and Knowledge

THE SYNTHESIS OF YOGA............... A. G.
Chapter XLVI. The Delight of the Divine

SELF-DETERMINATION

THE FUTURE POETRY
The Course of English Poetry (2)

THE RENAISSANCE IN INDIA (2)
A PHILOSOPHICAL REVIEW

CONTENTS

The True Dharma. .......................... ..........................

Chapter XIII: The Buddhism of

The Ruan of the Dragon

The Buddha of the Golden

The Revolution of Zoroaster

The World of the Greeks

The Philosophy of Immanuel Kant

The Persistence of Immanuel Kant
The Life Divine

CHAPTER XLIX

THE METAPHYSICAL BASIS OF THE DIVINE LIFE

(SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS)

We have now completed our examination of the whole question of the nature of our being and our spiritual destiny on the lines which our Vedantic starting-point has suggested, and may restate our conclusions as a metaphysical basis of the divine life. We start with the three great facts of our existence which meet us at our very first glance upon ourselves and the world around us, the great primal fact of Matter, the energy which we see emerging in it as Life, and Mind, that supreme power of this energy by which it turns round upon its works in order to understand and master them and know itself. Modern thought, so far as it has followed the direction of science and based itself upon the data of science, recognises only these three principles of being, and for the most part either tries to reduce them all to workings of matter or of inconscient energy or else to the phenomena of a vast Life, an evolutionary becoming in Time. This character of modern philosophical thought is evidently no more than a temporary phase of the human mind;
for it arises from the accident that science,—of which philosophy has made itself the handmaid, just as it was once in Europe the handmaid of religion and theology, so that it is now the slave of a limited external experience as it was once the slave of a limiting faith,—has only examined carefully the phenomena of Matter and Life, knows little about the deeper phenomena of Mind and has persisted in denying the reality of soul and spirit. Naturally, then, the thought which follows in the track of the footsteps of Science, must attempt to explain existence in the light of those powers and values which it knows and not of those which are still to its view vague, uncertain and obscure, in the light of that which it feels to be substantial and real and not of that which seems to it to be only a subjective result of life, like mind, or nonexistent like spirit. Once mind becomes better known as psychology advances beyond its present crude beginnings, and its latent powers become apparent by a greater boldness of psychic enquiry and experiment, once its secret sovereignty appears, an idealistic trend of philosophy will become inevitable. Beyond that idealism lies the knowledge of the spirit which will bring with it, along with the discovery of spiritual truth, a spiritual foundation of thought and wisdom.

The line of thought we have followed, takes these farther data for granted, and it is able to do so because we have already at our disposal a psychology and a basis of discovered spiritual truth, which may not indeed be complete in the form in which it is now extant, but is yet sufficient for our purpose. We can rely on it safely, both because in its main lines and its significant results it is always verifiable by experience and because modern research, thought, experience, though starting from an opposite standpoint and proceeding by very different methods, are arriving at what are substantially the same truths under other names, a very striking testimony to its
soundness. What emerges from its larger self-view, its deeper experience of world and being, is the existence of another power than the triple superficial fact of mind, life and matter, one in which they are englobed and of which they are the active results and expressive significances. In the method of ancient thought and discipline soul was the key which was used to open the doors of experience to this greater truth, this original, eternal and universal reality of all being. If indeed we remain on the surface, soul may seem to be only a composite or result of the action of mind, life and material existence; but if allowed to follow out its own deeper potentialities and hidden actualities, soul reveals to us the truth of spirit. And if, not satisfied with a vague apprehension or else a general global comprehension of this truth of Spirit, we scrutinise andanalyse its workings, we find in it an essential nature of its being as well as an active nature of its becoming. The essential nature we find to be a pure existence, consciousness—which is also will or force, and delight of conscious being; these three are one and inseparable, the triune essence of the self-awareness of the absolute Reality. Combining the three words by which these three things were expressed, we give to this Reality for the convenience of thought the name of Sachchidananda.

All proceeds from it, goes back to it, exists by it. It is something transcendent of universe which manifests in its being the universe, is itself both concealed in its forms and manifests itself in them. It is timeless, spaceless, beyond causality and condition, but deploys itself in time, in space, in causality and condition. In its transcendence we may conceive of it as a transcendent, absolute existence, Parabrahman, or we may speak of it,—because it seems to be beyond even the pure self, Atman, through which we arrive at this absolute,—as a transcendent non-existence. But these are different ways of envisaging the same reality; the negative way means only a transcendence,
and therefore for our intelligence a denial, of all that formulates itself to that intelligence as existence, but its spiritual effect is the possession of an absolute and unconditioned bliss. It is only through such an unconditioned bliss, the sign of an unconditioned consciousness in our pure being, that we can become aware of this transcendent reality of our being or our non-being.

The problem of the becoming or of our individual experience of universal being arises from this difficulty that here there appear manifestations which seem the very opposite of what the Reality is in its original truth and in our pure highest experience of it. We may get rid of the difficulty by a short cut, a convenient summary solution, if we regard the becoming as an illusion, a paradox of contraries or a creation of mind in its ideas or of mind in its sensations; and mind we have then to look on as a bewildering energy creative of false values which has somehow come into phenomenal being in spite of the eternal and inalienable purity of the original self-existence. But this is not a solution; it is only a combined statement of the two periods of an eternal opposition without any patient attempt to explain it; its logic starts from an intellectual assumption, and once we stand back from that assumption, raises more difficulties than it solves; and its truth in experience,—for it has a certain truth in experience,—proceeds by carrying to an extreme that sense of an unreconciled opposition between the two terms of our consciousness from which we start, while it rigidly excludes other possible experience which might lead to a reconciliation. Before we accept it, it is at least permissible to follow out to its integral issues and consequences this other quite possible spiritual experience. By doing so we arrive at the discovery of a key to the unity of the two terms; we relate harmoniously, not denying the opposition but resolving it in oneness, the individual's experience of the transcendent and the individual's inter-
play in and with the universal; we find a link of transition between the limited and superficial consciousness with all its lower cosmic basis in which we dwell and a higher wider and profounder consciousness in which the cosmic and the transcendent are reconciled in the individual being and by which the full meaning of the individual existence also stands out revealed. The possession of our being in this higher consciousness opens the doors to the possibility of a total, an integral, an all-transforming spiritual life; that we have called the life divine.

We have first to look beyond the apparent facts of the universe and of our own being and see whether they really are what they appear to our superficial consciousness. So examining the primal fact of matter, we see that it is not really primal and that it is a fact only in the sense of being factum, a thing made, created, not a thing independently self-existent. It is not for that reason unreal; it is being, but being as it forms itself to sense,—not to the sense of the individual human being, for that is not the creator, but to the sense of a universal consciousness of which the human faculties are only a partial and limited action. Matter is therefore being as it is represented to its own consciousness by a special action of the power or force of consciousness. As it takes form in the material universe, it is the first fact which meets us, the basis of our material existence, the condition here of the outflowering of life, mind and spirit in the body; but it does not therefore follow that it is the cause, substance and reality of all the rest, as the thoroughgoing materialist imagines,—logically enough from his premisses, but those premisses are incomplete and therefore the conclusion drawn from them invalid. Matter and spirit are really one, all this sensible universe is really the Brahman and nothing else, sarvam khaliu idam brahma; but spirit is the greater self-existent truth of being, matter is only a sign and external effect of its power of being, incom-
pletely expressive, one only of the complex terms by which spirit manifests itself in its cosmic activity.

This is not at first apparent, because matter seems at first to be a formulation of force, a result or medium of an active energy, and this energy seems to be unspiritual, inconscient, although, as life emerges, it ends by developing in that life a nervous and a mental consciousness. But in reality we find that this inconscience is something which we may regard from our point of view as an involved consciousness. If we are unwilling to recognise a consciousness in unmentalised life and matter, it is simply because we have begun by applying that term to our own mental consciousness and to so much of other consciousness, in the animals, as we can recognise to be akin to our own. But the scale of human or animal awareness does not represent the whole range of conscious being; there are degrees below, there are degrees above it. We have discovered or are discovering that even in ourselves there is a subliminal awareness which is in part subconscious to our superficial conscient being, in part superconscious to it and which is active even in our sleep and our insensibility. So in what seems to us the sleep or the insensibility of matter and inconscient force, there is a consciousness which we shall find to be essentially the same in all, but which differs in its action, its pitch and its organisation. Matter therefore is not only form of being, but form of conscious being; it contains in itself essential mind, even where there is no sign of organic mind. It is, as we have said, a sign and effect of the power of being of universal spirit.

For the same reason that we have refused to see consciousness in other being than the human and animal, so also we have refused to see in it life. But now we are being compelled gradually to admit a wider presence of life. We see now that the plant has precisely the same kind of life as ourselves and that the difference is
not vital, but psychological: that is to say, the plant has
an organised nervous psychology, but not like ourselves
an organised mental psychology. What we now call mind,
that is to say, the self-awareness in being turning upon
and regarding being and the action of its energies, is not
there; or it is still involved, absorbed and imprisoned in
the formation and self-forgetful in the action. In animal
and man it evolves and is progressively organised. But
we shall also have to see, as it has already been hinted,
that life is there also in the metal and in all other material
being which is now to our view subvital. It is subvital
only in this sense that life is there, but only essential, and
not nervously organised, or at least far less developed in
that direction than in the plant existence. We may regard
then life as an action of consciousness operating as force,
but in very different gradations, first in the way proper to
material being, then in a way proper to nervous being,—
which is the basis of what we preeminently call life,—
then in a way proper to mental being, but essentially the
same in all of these stages. We need not suppose that the
gradation must stop here; on the contrary, if there is
above mind a higher power or powers of spirit, it is rea-
sonable to believe that where and when these develop,
there will be a change and a raising of the power of life
also and the consequent emergence of a new vital opera-
tion proper to these higher principles.

At any rate we have these two universal powers,—life
and matter. And as we have seen that matter is form of
being, a sign and effect of the power of spirit, so we see
life to be a universal action of being, an operation of
the power of spirit; for it is a force, but a force which
is informed always with consciousness even when that
consciousness appears to be involved and forgetful of it-
self in the absorption of its mere activity. What then is
mind? Evidently, it is a self-regarding action of the con-
sciousness of being evolving here out of that absorption
aud turning upon all that it has done, is doing or aims at doing in order to sense clearly, observe, understand and control it; nervous reaction becomes sense; involved, instinctive, mechanical consciousness becomes here intelligence; involved, instinctive, mechanical force of conscious being becomes will. It is evident that these are really no new creations, but were already present in their essential form and what we may call a brute operation in all forms of being from the plant down to the cell and the atom and electron: but the way in which they act in us seems to be so much their characteristic and only proper way that we easily deny the presence of a universal sense, intelligence and will and suppose that these are new creations which begin abruptly in man and the animal. A less obstinately human view of the universe permits us to see that if they have at all evolved in us, it is because they were already there in the force which has formed us. As universal matter and life are realities which we are obliged to admit, so also is universal mind a reality.

But in order to see this undeniably and not only in idea, but in fact and experience, we have to look beyond the superficial appearances of mind in the life and body; otherwise we may, like modern thinkers, be left oscillating between materialism and vitalism and shall have to hold either that life and mind are but active and conscious matter or that life is the one original truth and mind and matter its lower and higher operations. Fathoming mind we perceive that here too there are many gradations, mind essential but united in the subconscious, mind organised for the first apparent action of self-consciousness in the animal, mind farther organised at a higher intensity of self-consciousness in the human intelligence, mind raised to infinitely greater powers in what is to us still superconscient. We can awaken to these higher ranges of intelligence, and at a certain point we arrive at the per-
ception of a power of consciousness there quite superior to mind which turns upon it, enlightens and controls it and gives its workings a new meaning and value, just as the human intelligence turns upon, controls and gives a new meaning and value to the action of the rest of our being. To this higher power of consciousness we have given the name of supermind. It acts upon the human intelligence by pouring into it the light of intuition and direct experience of truth; it is capable of reshaping the intelligence partially or wholly into an intuitive mentality; but beyond the highest intellectual mentality is its own proper domain of integral light and power, where it reveals itself as a complete gnosis, the working of an infinite and universal divine mind or intelligence which is everywhere present and operative in the cosmos, but has its origin in the transcendent existence.

It is as the light of this gnosis falls upon our intelligence and our lower being that we begin to grow aware of the truth of Spirit, first in glimpses and partial experiences and always, up to a certain point, in a sort of reflection of what is now superconscient to all our normal activities. But we can grow into it and this superconscient can become conscient in our normal being. We perceive then that spirit was all along our real being and the rest was only its limited activity in partial and in degraded forms,—using the word not in any moral sense, but in that of a lower grading of consciousness, of will, of force and form of being and experience of delight of being. This spirit, our real being, we see to be a pure existence, self-aware, self-blissful, timeless, spaceless, unconditioned, not dependent for its being on the forms of its energy, not dependent for its consciousness on its sense of objects, not dependent for its delight on the gross or subtle touches of outward things. It is what Indian philosophy calls the Self, Being, Atman. We see that it is the same in all as in ourselves and not divided in this multitude of beings, but one
everywhere; it is extended in time and space and happenings, in form and thought and force and power and will, omnipresent and all-creative. It is transcendent, it is universal, it is individual; it is the many without for a moment ceasing to be the one: it is the Being which has become all these becomeings. It is the one reality, that which, if we knew it perfectly, would give us the key to the knowledge of all, because it is all, yasmin vijnāte sarma vijnātam.

But to know it perfectly is only possible to the supermind and by a knowledge of the gnostic supermind. Our first experience of it on the level of our intelligent mentality is essential; our second is essential and pervasive; our third is essential pervasive and global, our fourth is all this and at the same time both comprehensively and diversely, both universally and infinitesimally dynamic. That is to say, we know it first as essential self or the Atman; secondly as the essential immanent self pervasive and inhabitant in all things; thirdly, as also the continent self in which all things exist and take place, atmanam sarva bhūteshu sarvabhotani cha tmani; fourthly, as one with all things and happenings, the Being which has become all that is and yet is more than all; as the Upanishad puts it, atmā abhut sarvāni bhūtāni, it is the self-existent which became and ever becomes all things that have come into being. Here the difficulty for the intelligence is that it naturally envisages Being and becoming, self and the universe as if they were two opposites, and in its spiritual experience of them it is unable to bridge entirely and perfectly this gulf which our mental way of seeing and experiencing creates for us. For the Spirit is transcendent, infinite, universal and illimitable being; but the first fact that comes home to us in universe is limited and individual being, a separate body, a separate life and ego. The spirit is transcendent, infinite, universal and illimitable consciousness; but we are aware rather of a separate and limited mentality proper to our
separate being. The consciousness of the spirit is in its power a transcendent, infinite, universal and illimitable will and force; but we are aware of a separate and limited will and force proper to our separate mentality, body, life, ego. The nature of the conscious Being and will and all the dynamic action of spirit is a transcendent, infinite, universal and illimitable delight; but we are conscious of the dualities of pain and pleasure and the grey tint of neutral indifference or non-reception of pain or pleasure. It is natural to conclude that the cosmic being is some kind of illusion, a creation of false opposites, and that while the Brahman or self is in its absolute and essential being true and real, all the apparent action of Brahman is a falsehood, a self-delusion, an empirical truth and that all empirical truth is in ultimate fact a truth of illusion. A denial of and escape from all living becomes then the condition of a consummate spirituality.

But our supposition is that a divine life is not only possible, but the very aim of man in his evolution. A divine life means to live in the integral power of the spirit, and that integral power does not consist, as we can see, only of its possession of its infinite being, consciousness and delight in the repose of a featureless existence indifferent to or unaware of all activity, but resides in the simultaneous possession of a transcendent and a cosmic existence and its perfect delight in both its transcendence and its cosmic activity and therefore also in every individual activity and in all the grades of being. This simultaneous possession and delight are evident, for without that the cosmos could not remain in existence for a moment. The only question is whether man can attain to it, not merely in a passive experience and reflection of it,—for that is part of well-ascertained spiritual experience,—but in an active experience and secure acquisition. The crux of the difficulty lies in the possession by the spirit of the power and nature of supermind which maintains unity in diversity,
has the experience of the infinite in the finite, of the transcendent and universal consciousness in the individual, of the one all-harmonising will in a myriad diverse willings, of the reconciling supramental knowledge behind all the conflicting variations of mind, of the immortal life in the apparent mortality of our existence, of the inalienable self-existent delight in all the experience that to the mind takes on the tints of pain, pleasure and neutral indifference. If man too can possess this power and nature of supermind, perhaps even if he can at all securely reflect and be in perfect tune with it, his difficulty is solved; but if that is for ever to him impossible, then his progressive existence must end in defeat; or else there is no true progression, his nature must always move in a cycle of contradiction and imperfection, and self-elimination from the cosmos is his only issue.

To know this we have to understand or see how the Spirit by supermind creates the universe and acts in it. We find first that in all things in the universe the spirit is present, and behind each form is the whole presence of the spirit, not really divided, for it is the same spirit in all. Secondly, we find that in each and in all, working out each by the law of its being which it carries in itself, sees and spontaneously fulfils, is the supermind; the universal supermind is involved in all from the atom and electron upward. It is the secret divine knowledge and will inherent in all being, in each a hidden operative intuition of its being, which founds, compels, varies and harmonises all the action of the universe. This in the material universe; but we have to get rid of the obsession of our present experience which takes matter and physical being and the limitations of mind and life in matter and the apparent limitations of spirit and supermind in the medium of this physical life and mentality and corporeality as the whole sum of cosmic fact. Matter is the last, not the first term of the manifestation, material being
is not the first, but the last gradation of the workings of Spirit. There are higher gradations which precede in the logic of creation the material, higher planes which are not the result of material being, but on which rather the material depends for its existence. The full possession of the spiritual and the supramental nature depends on the opening up of these higher gradations or planes of conscious being in man in his physical existence.

These gradations depend on the seven principles of being of which we have found the web of existence to be woven. The three which are proper to the pure being of Sachchidananda are the first spiritual principles of infinite being, infinite consciousness and infinite bliss; the triple highest cosmic status of the spirit of which we can become aware, depends upon the successive formulation of each of these as a leading principle in the rhythms of existence; there the conscious possession of the truth of each in all and all in each would be the rule of existence, and awareness of the infinite would be the primary law. But wherever there is anything of the nature of cosmic existence, there must be a play of relations and some principle of determination of relations. This principle is found in the divine supermind whose double action amounts to the development of diversity upon the basis of a conscious unity. Supermind is, we have said, the creative real-idea; it is being in its power of consciousness turned into knowledge and will; it is self as knowledge, self as will, formulating in that light and power its own potentialities. It is not an unsubstantial phantasmagoric idea creating mere appearances; it is being creating real terms of being. When this supermind becomes the leading principle, the gradation over which it rules is one of a dual aspect of being, not only of the One developing and enjoying its diversities in its oneness, but of the one in each of its diversities possessing, realising and enjoying oneness. Here the many come forward to a play in which
each has his independent being, but is yet not separated from other existences, for the law of each in all and all in each is still present to the consciousness. Mind, life, substance are here not independent principles, but a subordinate action of being in supermind, a differentiation of conscious idea, of conscious force, of conscious substance of being. It is when mind, life, matter take the lead and become the dominant principles of their own grades of existence that separation of consciousness, life, physicality becomes the primal fact of experience and modifies it for the full enjoyment of the potentialities of differentiation. It is on the play of these potentialities that the mental, vital and material worlds are founded.

But it is evident that this separation is only phenomenal, for unity is still and must always be the real basis of existence. Separate body is only a formulation of the one universal substance, separate life of the one universal life, separate mind of the one universal mind. By what power then is this ignored in our phenomenal consciousness? It is by the development of a power in conscious being, its power of dwelling in its idea of being, its act of being, its form of being; this is its creative power, Tapas. In a certain frontal action it becomes absorbed in the differentiating idea, the differentiating action, the differentiating form, puts the rest of its consciousness behind it, makes it subliminal to this superficial and frontal action. The integral self and consciousness remain behind, but the frontal action of conscious being is in that action unaware of it, though all the time it exists only by that, acts only by that; it lives in its phenomenal separateness and sees all from the standpoint of that separateness. This is the ignorance in which we live, an ignorance of our integral, universal and transcendent being; we live, or rather seem to ourselves to live, in matter and not in spirit, in physical life and not in the whole conscious force of being, in separate mentality and not in the infi-
finite consciousness of spirit. Yet we really exist in that which we ignore; for the rest is only a partial and superficial action. Ignorance is essentially this limitation and phenomenal separation. It limits our force of being and consciousness and therefore limits our capacity of delight of being and creates those contraries in our experience which seem to deny the truth of Sachchidananda. At its last point this self-forgetfulness of the conscious being in its action becomes the involution in material force and form, the entire self-oblivion of force in its operations, and brings about the phenomenon of the inconscience from which our existence in the physical universe emerges. Our earthly ignorance is a stage of the return of Spirit involved in material being to a recovery of self-knowledge; and the possession of this self-knowledge in the conditions of the terrestrial existence and the consequent domination of that existence by the law of the higher gradations of being and eventually by the perfect law of the Spirit is the consummation which lies open before the human race in its progress.

This development is made possible by the principle of evolution in the universe. For although the material is the first law and condition of this physical evolution, yet in Matter all the other principles of being are present and involved, and evolution is simply their inevitable emergence from this involution. First life, then mind, then spirit evolves; and spirit evolving must bring with it the evolution of supermind and of its own three essential powers in their fullness. Man is here the mental being in whom this spiritual evolution becomes possible. If the material universe alone existed, that evolution might be possible only in the strict limits imposed by the dominant condition of material being; but there are also the higher planes to which he has access and which indeed he already possesses within himself superconsciently in his integral being of spirit. To formulate them here in
his terrestrial existence, to open himself to their higher truths and by following a higher and higher law of the spirit to govern by them the life of his lower members is the condition of his perfection. At present he has only got so far as the attempt to govern life and matter by mind, but the spiritual elements are already evolving in him and his higher perfection will come when by increasing in himself the power and nature of the supermind, by growing into the gnosis he is able to govern entirely and transmute the mental, vital and physical by the spiritual being. This can only be done by a progressive and gradual growth, and that is possible to him because of a constant rebirth of the soul into the human form on earth with an internatal ascension to higher planes from which he returns for a new formulation of a developing experience and growth of the evolving and manifesting Spirit in humanity. An increasing self-discovery and an increasing self-manifestation are the law of his being, and each life is a fresh episode of his advance.

It is in the individual that this self-discovery and self-manifestation are effected. The Transcendent already is in full possession of self and world; the universal is in full possession of world-being and in full relation to the transcendent; it is in the individual that both are imperfectly possessed and have to be conquered. For in the Many, in the individual the spirit undertakes the adventure of the nescience and the ignorance; but it is also in the many, in the individual that he enjoys his unity. To break down the separateness of mind, life and body of which the separative ego sense is the knot, to open himself to and become one with the universal and the transcendent and in this new self-experience to develop the glories and powers of the spirit in his liberated being is the destiny of the human spirit. For man is the eternal individual, the Spirit in each soul of the multiplicity rising above satisfaction with the fixed round of his for-
mal becoming and impelled to undertake his own self-evolution. Man alone of physical beings seeks to exceed himself, to become his greater self, and envisages the ideal of the divine superman. And the rising of the individual to this height is the sign and promise of the elevation of the race, of which the liberated individual must be not only the type, but the chief assistant and instrument.

If it is asked why there is at all this involved and evolving action, why the spirit does not remain silent and absorbed in its motionless infinity, we answer that an eternal multiplicity of oneness is in the very nature of the infinity of being, the play of its delight of oneness with its delight of multiplicity is in the very impulse of its conscious force. We might ask too why the musician creates music, the poets chants his rhythms, the mathematician deals with the problems of space and number. Being has the delight of its unitities and multiplicities; multiplicity demands variation and variation means creation. Spirit being given, cosmos could not help existing.

And if we ask why then this creation of opposites, this nescience and ignorance with all its untoward results, we answer that this arises necessarily from the power of the impulse of differentiation to go to its utmost extremes, the consequent will in spirit to realise them and its capacity of absorbed concentration in what it does and creates in itself; all that originates a potentiality which must come somewhere into operation. There is a delight of self-limitation with all infinity behind, of self-forgetfulness with all self-discovery in front, of struggle and labour with all self-conquest above. Division gives the joy of union; the spirit by the figure of loss and withholding bestows a new value on its unities and powers. That is the meaning of our universe.
THE SYNTHESIS OF DEVOTION AND KNOWLEDGE

The Gita is not a treatise of metaphysical philosophy, in spite of the great mass of metaphysical ideas which arises incidentally in its pages; for here no metaphysical truth is brought into expression solely for its own sake. It seeks the highest truth for the highest practical utility, not for intellectual or even for spiritual satisfaction, but as the truth that saves and opens to us the passage from our present mortal imperfection to an immortal perfection. Therefore after giving us in the first fourteen verses of this chapter a leading philosophical truth of which we stand in need, it hastens in the next sixteen verses to make an immediate application of it. It turns it into a first starting-point for the unification of works, knowledge and devotion,—the preliminary synthesis of works and knowledge by themselves having been already accomplished.

We have before us the Purushottama as the supreme truth of that into which we have to grow, the Self and the Jiva; or, as we may put it, the Supreme, the impersonal spirit, and the multiple soul which is the foundation of spiritual personality. All these three are divine, are the Divine. The supreme spiritual nature of being is the nature of the Purushottama; in the impersonal Self it is the same nature in the state of eternal rest, equilibrium,
inactivity, nivritti; for activity, for pravritti, it becomes the multiple spiritual personality, the Jiva. But the inherent activity of the Jiva is always a spiritual, a divine activity; it is the conscious will of the being of the Supreme throwing itself out in various essential and spiritual power of quality. That essential power is the swabhava of the Jiva, and all act and becoming which proceed directly from this spiritual force are a divine becoming and a pure and spiritual action. Therefore it follows that in action the effort of the human individual must be to get back to his true spiritual personality and to make all his works flow from the power of its spiritual nature which develops action from the soul and the intrinsic being, so that all works shall be the pure outflowing of the will of the Supreme in him.

But there is also this lower nature of the three gunas whose character is the character of the ignorance and whose action is the action of the ignorance, mixed, confused, perverted; it is the action of the lower personality in this ignorance, of the ego, of the natural and not of the spiritual individual. It is in order to recede from that false personality that we have to resort to the impersonal Self and make ourselves one with it. Then, freed so from the ego personality, we can find the relation of our true individual being to the Purushottama; it is one with it in being though necessarily partial and determinative, because individual, in action and manifestation of nature. Freed too from the lower nature we can realise the higher, the divine, the spiritual. Therefore to act from the soul does not mean to act from the desire soul; for that is not the high intrinsic being, but only the lower natural and superficial. To act in accordance with the intrinsic nature, the swabhava, does not mean to act out of the passions of the ego, to enact with indifference or with desire sin and virtue according to the natural impulses and the unstable play of the gunas. Yielding to passion, an active or an
inert indulgence of sin is no way either to the spiritual quietism of the highest impersonality or to the spiritual activity of the divine individual who is to be a channel for the will of the supreme Person, a direct power and becoming of the Purushottama.

The Gita has laid it down from the beginning that the very first precondition of the divine birth, the higher existence is the slaying of rajasic desire and its children, and that means the exclusion of sin. Sin is the working of the lower nature for the crude satisfaction of its own ignorant, dull or violent rajasic and tamasic propensities in revolt against any high self-control and self-mastery of the nature by the spirit. And in order to get rid of this crude compulsion of the being by the lower Prakriti in its inferior modes we have to have recourse to the highest mode of that Prakriti, the sattwic, which is seeking always for a harmonious light of knowledge and for a right rule of action. The Purusha, the soul within us which acquiesces in nature in the varying impulses of the gunas, has to give its sanction to that sattwic impulse and that sattwic will and temperament in our being which seeks after such a rule; the sattwic will in our nature has to govern us and not the rajasic and tamasic will. This is the meaning of all ethical culture; it is the law of Nature in us striving to evolve from her lower and disorderly to her higher and orderly action, to act not in passion and ignorance with the result of grief and unquiet, but in knowledge and enlightened will with the result of inner happiness, poise and peace. We cannot get beyond the three gunas, if we do not first develop within ourselves the rule of the highest guna, sattwa.

"The evil-doers attain not to me," says the Purushottama, "souls bewildered, low in the human scale, for their knowledge is reft away from them by Maya and they resort to the nature of being of the Asura." This bewilderment is the befooling of the soul in Nature by the
deceptive ego; the evil-doer cannot attain to the Supreme because he is for ever trying to satisfy the idol ego on the lowest scale of human nature; his real God is this ego. His mind and will are hurried away in the activities of the Maya of the three gunas, not instruments of spirit, but slaves of his desire. He sees this lower self only and not his supreme self or the Godhead within himself or in the world, explains all existence to his will in the terms of ego and desire and serves only ego and desire. To serve ego and desire without aspiration to a higher nature and a higher law is to have the mind and the temperament of the Asura. A first necessary step upward is to aspire to a higher nature and a higher law, obey a better rule than the rule of desire, perceive and worship a nobler godhead then the ego or than any magnified image of the ego, to become a right thinker and a right doer. This too is not in itself enough; for even the sattwic man is subject to the bewilderment of the gunas, because he is still governed by wish and disliking, ichchā-dvesha; he moves within the circle of the forms of Nature and has not the highest, not the transcendental and integral knowledge. Still by the constant upward aspiration in his ethical aim he in the end gets rid of the obscuration of sin which is the obscuration of rajasic desire and passion and acquires a purified nature capable of deliverance from the rule of the triple Maya. By virtue alone man cannot attain to the highest, but by virtue he can develop a first capacity for attaining to it, adhikāra. For the crude rajasic or the dull tamasic ego is difficult to shake off and put below us, but the sattwic is less difficult and at last, when it sufficiently subtilises and enlightens itself, becomes even easy to transcend.

Man, therefore, has first of all to become ethical, sukra-iti, and then to rise to heights beyond any mere ethical rule of living, to the light, largeness and power of the spiritual nature, where he gets beyond the grasp of the dualities and its delusion, dwandwa-mohu; there he no longer seeks his
personal good or pleasure or shuns his personal suffering or pain, for by these things he is no longer affected, nor says any longer, "I am virtuous," "I am sinful," but acts in his own high spiritual nature by the will of the Divine for the universal good. We have already seen that for this end self-knowledge, equality, impersonality are the first necessities, and that that is the way of reconciliation between knowledge and works, between spirituality and activity in the world, between the ever immobile quietism of the timeless self and the eternal play of the pragmatic energy of Nature. But the Gita now lays down another and greater necessity for the Karmayogin who has unified his Yoga of works with the Yoga of knowledge, it demands also bhakti, devotion to the Divine, love and adoration and the soul's desire of the Highest. It had not expressly made this demand until now, but it prepared for it when it laid down as the necessary turn of its Yoga the conversion of all works into a sacrifice to the Lord of being and fixed as its culmination the giving up of all works into our impersonal Self and through impersonality into the Being from whom all our will and power proceed. What was there implied is now brought out, and we begin to see more fully the Gita's purpose.

We have now set before us three interdependent movements of our release out of the normal nature and the growth into the divine and spiritual being. "By the delusion of the dualities which arises from wish and disliking, all existences in the creation are led into bewilderment,"—that is the ignorance, the egoism which fails to see and lay hold on the Divine everywhere, because it sees only the dualities of Nature and is constantly occupied with its own separate personality and its seekings and shrinkings. For escape from this circle the first necessity in our works is to get clear of the sin, the fire of passion, the tumult of desire of the rajasic nature by the steadying sattwic impulse of the ethical being. When that is done,
vishām twanta gatam pāpam janānāṁ punyakarmanāṁ,—
or rather as it is being done, for after a certain point all
growth in the sattvic nature brings an increasing capacity for a high quietude, equality and transcendence,—
it is necessary to rise above the dualities and to become impersonal, equal, one self with the Immutable, one self with all existences. This growing into the spirit completes our purification. But while this is being done, while the soul is enlarging into self-knowledge, it has also to increase in devotion; for it has not only to act in the large spirit of equality, but to do also sacrifice to the Lord, to that Godhead in all beings which it does not yet know perfectly, but which it will be able so to know, integrally, samāgram mām, when it has firmly the vision of the one self everywhere and in all existences. Equality and vision of unity once perfectly gained, te dwandva-moha-nirnukaḥ, a supreme bhakti, an all-embracing devotion to the Divine, becomes the whole and the sole law of the being; all other law of conduct merges into that, sarva-dharmaṇ parityujya; the soul becomes firm in this bhakti and in the vow of its self-consecration of all its being, knowledge, works, because it has now for base the perfect, the integral, the unifying knowledge of the all-originating Godhead, te bhajante mām dridha-vratāḥ.

From the ordinary point of view any return into or continuation of bhakti after knowledge and impersonality have been gained, might seem to be a relapse; for in bhakti there is always some element of personality, since its motive-power is the love and adoration of the individual for the supreme and universal Being. But from the standpoint of the Gita, where the aim is not inaction and immerseness in the eternal Impersonal, but a union with the Purushottama through the integrality of our being, this objection does not at all intervene. In this Yoga the soul escapes indeed its lower personality by the sense of its impersonal and immutable self-being, but it still acts
and all action belongs to the multiple soul in the mutability of Nature. If we do not bring in as a corrective to excessive quietism the idea of sacrifice to the Highest, we have to regard this element as something not at all ourselves, some remnant of the play of the gunas without any divine reality behind it, a last dissolving form of ego, of I-ness, a continued impetus of the lower Nature for which we are not responsible since our knowledge rejects it and aims at escape from it into pure inaction. But by combining the tranquil impersonality of the one self with the stress of the works of Nature done as a sacrifice to the Lord, we by this double key escape from the lower egoistic personality and grow into the purity of our true spiritual personality; we become no longer the bound and ignorant ego in the lower, but the free Jiva in the supreme nature. We live in the knowledge no longer of the one immutable and impersonal self and this mutable multiple Nature as two opposite entities, but in the embrace of the Purushottama whom we thus find in and through both of these powers of our being simultaneously. All three are the spirit, and the two which are apparent opposites, prove to be only two faces of the third which is the highest. "There is the immutable and impersonal spiritual being (Purusha)," says Krishna later on, "and there is the mutable and personal spiritual being; but there is too another Highest (uttama purusha)-called the supreme self, Paramatman, he who has entered into this whole world and upbears it, the Lord, the imperishable; I am this Purushottama who am beyond the mutable and am greater and higher even than the immutable. He who has knowledge of me as the Purushottama, adores me, (has bhakti for me, bhajati,) with all-knowledge and in every way of his natural being." And it is this bhakti of an integral knowledge and integral self-giving which the Gita now begins to develop.

For note that it is bhakti with knowledge which the
Gita demands from the disciple and it regards all other forms of devotion as good in themselves but still inferior; they may do well by the way, but they are not the thing at which it aims. Among those who have put away the sin of the rajasic egoism and are moving towards the Divine, the Gita distinguishes between four kinds of bhaktas; those who turn to him as a refuge from sorrow and suffering in the world, ārta; those who seek him as the giver of good in the world, arthārthi; those who seek him in the desire for knowledge, jnānāsu; and those who seek him with knowledge, jnānī. All are approved by the Gita, but only on the last does it lay the seal of its complete sanction. All these movements without exception are high and good, udārāh sarva evaite, but the bhakti with knowledge excels them all, vicishyale. We may say that these forms are successively the bhakti of the emotional and affective nature, that of the practical and dynamic nature, that of the reasoning intellectual nature, and that of the highest intuitive being which takes up all the rest of the nature into unity with the Divine. Practically, however, the others may be regarded as preparatory movements; for the Gita itself here says that it is only at the end of many lives that one can, having become possessed of the integral knowledge and working that out in oneself in life after life, attain to the Transcendent. For the knowledge that the Divine is all that is, is difficult to attain; rare is the great soul, Mahatmā, that is capable of fully so seeing him and of embracing him with his whole being, in every way of his nature, by the wide power of this all-embracing knowledge, sāravāt sarvābhāvena.

It may be asked how is that devotion high and noble, udāra, which seeks God only for the worldly boons he can give or as a refuge in sorrow and suffering, and not the Divine for its own sake? Do not egoism, weakness, desire reign in such an adoration and does it not belong to the lower nature? Moreover, where there is not know-
ledge, the devotee does not approach the Divine in his integral all-embracing truth, *vasudevah sarvam iti*, but constructs imperfect names and images of the Godhead which are only reflections of his own need, temperament and nature, and he worships them to help or appease his natural longings. He constructs for the Godhead the name and form of Indra or Agni, of Vishnu or Shiva, of a divinised Christ or Buddha, or else some composite of natural qualities, an indulgent God of love and mercy, or a severe God of righteousness and justice, or an awe-inspiring God of wrath and terror and flaming punishments, or some amalgam of any of these, and to that he raises his altars without and in his heart and mind and falls down before it to demand from it worldly good and joy or healing of his wounds or a sectarian sanction for an erring, dogmatic, intellectual, intolerant knowledge. All this up to a certain point is true enough. Very rare is the great soul who knows that Vasudevah the omnipresent Being is all that is, *vasudevah sarvam iti sa mahatma sudurlabhabh*. Men are led away by various outer desires which take from them the working of the inner knowledge, *kamais tais lair hritajnanah*; they resort to other godheads, imperfect forms of the deity which correspond to their desire, *prapadyante 'nyadevatah*, and they set up this or that rule and cult, *tam tam niyamam asthdya*, which satisfies the need of their own nature; for in all this it is the compelling determination of their own nature that they are following. The Godhead in these forms gives them their desires if their faith is whole, but these fruits and gratifications are temporary and it is a petty intelligence and unformed reason which makes the pursuit of them its principle of religion and life. And so far as there is a spiritual attainment by this way, it is only to the gods; it is only the Divine in formations of mutable Nature and as the giver of her results that they realise. But those who adore the transcendent and integral Godhead embrace
all this, but go beyond to that Godhead himself and real-
ise and attain to him. Devān deva-yajo yānti mad-bhaktā
yānti mãm api.

Still the Divine does not at all reject these devotees
because of their imperfect vision. For the Divine in his
supreme transcendent being, unborn, imminuable and su-
perior to all these partial manifestations, cannot be easily
known to man. He is self-enveloped in this immense cloak
of Maya, that Maya of his Yoga, by which he is one
with the world and yet beyond it, immanent but hidden,
seated in all hearts, but not revealed to any and every
being. Man in Nature thinks that these manifestations in
Nature are all the Divine, when they are only his works
and his powers and his veils. He knows all past and all
present and future existences, but him none yet knoweth.
If then after thus bewildering them with his workings in
Nature, he were not to meet them in these at all, there
would be no divine hope for man. Therefore according
to their nature, as they approach her, so he accepts their
bhakti and answers to it with the reply of divine love. These
forms are after all a certain kind of manifestation through
which the imperfect human intelligence can touch him;
these desires are first means by which they turn towards
him; nor is any devotion worthless or ineffective, what-
ever its limitations. It has the one grand necessity, faith.
"Whatever form of me any devotee with faith desires to
worship, I make that faith of his firm and undeviating."
By the force of that faith in his cult and worship he gets
his desire and the spiritual realisation for which he is at
the moment fit. By seeking all his good from the Divi-
ne, he shall come in the end to seek in the Divine all his
good; by depending for his joys on the Divine, learn to
fix in the Divine all his joy; by knowing the Divine in
his forms and qualities, come to know him as the All and
the Transcendent who is the source of all.

So by spiritual development devotion becomes one
with knowledge. The Jiva comes to delight in the Divine known as all being and consciousness and delight and as all things and beings and happenings, known in Nature, known in the self, known for that which exceeds self and Nature. He is ever in constant union with him, nityayuktā; his whole life and being are then an eternal Yoga with the Transcendent than whom there is nothing higher, with the Universal besides whom there is none else and nothing else. On him is concentrated all his bhakti, ekabhaktih, not on any partial godhead, rule or cult; for this devotion is his whole law of living and he has gone beyond all creeds of religious belief, rules of conduct, personal aims of life. He has no griefs to be healed, for he is in possession of the All-blissful; no desires to hunger after, for he possesses the highest and the All; no doubts or baffled seekings left, for all knowledge streams from the Light in which he lives. He loves perfectly the Divine and is his beloved, for as he takes joy in the Divine, so too the Divine takes joy in him. This is the Godlover who has the knowledge, jnāni bhakta. And this knower, says the Godhead in the Gita, is my self; for the others seize only motives and aspects in Nature, but he the very self-being and all-being of the Purushottama with which he is in union. His too is the divine birth in the supreme Nature integral in being, completed in will, perfected in knowledge, absolute in love. In him the Jiva's cosmic existence is justified because it has exceeded itself and so found its own whole and highest truth of being.
The Synthesis of Yoga

CHAPTER XLVI
THE DELIGHT OF THE DIVINE

This then is the way of devotion and this its justification to the highest and the widest, the most integral knowledge, and we can now perceive what form and place it will take in an integral Yoga. Yoga is in essence the union of the soul with the immortal being and consciousness and delight of the Divine, effected through the human nature with a result of development into the divine nature of being, whatever that may be, so far as we can conceive it in mind and realise it in spiritual activity. Whatever we see of this Divine and fix our concentrated effort upon it, that we can become or grow into some kind of unity with it or at the lowest into tune and harmony with it. The old Upanishad put it trenchantly in its highest terms, "Whoever envisages it as the Existence becomes that existence and whoever envisages it as the Non-existence, becomes that non-existence;" so too it is with all else that we see of the Divine,—that, we may say, is at once the essential and the pragmatic truth of the Godhead. It is something beyond us which is indeed already within us, but which we as yet are not or are only initially in our human existence; but whatever of it we see, we can create or reveal in our conscious nature and being and can grow into it, and so to create or reveal in ourselves individually the Godhead and grow into its universality and transcendence is our spiritual destiny. Or if this seem too high for the weakness of our nature, then at least to approach,
reflect and be in secure communion with it is a near and possible consummation.

The aim of this synthetic or integral Yoga which we are considering, is union with the being, consciousness and delight of the Divine through every part of our human nature separately or simultaneously, but all in the long end harmonised and unified, so that the whole may be transformed into a divine nature of being. Nothing less than this can satisfy the integral seer, because what he sees must be that which he strives to possess spiritually and, so far as may be, become. Not with the knower in him alone, nor with the will alone, nor with the heart alone, but with all these equally and also with the whole mental and vital being in him he aspires to the Godhead and labours to convert their nature into its divine equivalents. And since God meets us in many ways of his being and in all tempts us to him even while he seems to elude us,—and to see divine possibility and overcome its play of obstacles constitutes the whole mystery and greatness of human existence,—therefore in each of these ways at its highest or in the union of all, if we can find the key of their oneness, we shall aspire to track out and find and possess him. Since he withdraws into impersonality, we follow after his impersonal being and delight, but since he meets us also in our personality and through personal relations of the Divine with the human, that too we shall not deny ourselves; we shall admit both the play of the love and the delight and its ineffable union.

By knowledge we seek unity with the Divine in his conscious being: by works we seek also unity with the Divine in his conscious being, not statically, but dynamically, through conscious union with the divine Will; but by love we seek unity with him in all the delight of his being. For that reason the way of love, however narrow it may seem in some of its first movements, is in the end more imperatively all-embracing than any other motive.
of Yoga. The way of knowledge tends easily towards the impersonal and the absolute, may very soon become exclusive. It is true that it need not do so; since the conscious being of the Divine is universal and individual as well as transcendent and absolute, here too there may be and should be a tendency to integral realisation of unity and we can arrive by it at a spiritual oneness with God in man and God in the universe not less complete than any transcendent union. But still this is not quite imperative. For we may plead that there is a higher and a lower knowledge, a higher self-awareness and a lower self-awareness, and that here the apex of knowledge is to be pursued to the exclusion of the mass of knowledge, the way of exclusion preferred to the integral way. Or we may discover a theory of illusion to justify our rejection of all connection with our fellow-men and with the cosmic action. The way of works leads us to the Transcendent whose power of being manifests itself as a will in the world one in us and all, by identity with which we come, owing to the conditions of that identity, into union with him as the one self in all and as the universal self and Lord in the cosmos. And this might seem to impose a certain comprehensiveness in our realisation of the unity. But still this too is not quite imperative. For this motive also may lean towards an entire impersonality and, even if it leads to a continued participation in the activities of the universal Godhead, may be entirely detached and passive in its principle. It is only when delight intervenes that the motive of integral union becomes quite imperative.

This delight which is so entirely imperative, is the delight in the Divine for his own sake and for nothing else, for no cause or gain whatever beyond itself. It does not seek God for anything that he can give us or for any particular quality in him, but simply and purely because he is our self and our whole being and our all. It embra-
ences the delight of the transcendence, not for the sake of transcendence, but because he is the transcendent; the delight of the universal, not for the sake of universality, but because he is the universal; the delight of the individual not for the sake of individual satisfaction, but because he is the individual. It goes behind all distinctions and appearances and makes no calculations of more or less in his being, but embraces him wherever he is and therefore everywhere, embraces him utterly in the seeming less as in the seeming more, in the apparent limitation as in the revelation of the illimitable; it has the intuition and the experience of his oneness and completeness everywhere. To seek after him for the sake of his absolute being alone is really to drive at our own individual gain, the gain of absolute peace. To possess him absolutely indeed is necessarily the aim of this delight in his being, but this comes when we possess him utterly and are utterly possessed by him and need be limited to no particular status or condition. To seek after him in some heaven of bliss is to seek him not for himself, but for the bliss of heaven; when we have all the true delight of his being, then heaven is within ourselves, and wherever he is and we are, there we have the joy of his kingdom. So too to seek him only in ourselves and for ourselves, is to limit both ourselves and our joy in him. The integral delight embraces him not only within our own individual being, but equally in all men and in all beings. And because in him we are one with all, it seeks him not only for ourselves, but for all our fellows. A perfect and complete delight in the Divine, perfect because pure and self-existent, complete because all-embracing as well as all-absorbing, is the meaning of the way of Bhakti for the seeker of the integral Yoga.

Once it is active in us, all other ways of Yoga convert themselves, as it were, to its law and find by it their own richest significance. This integral devotion of our
being to God does not turn away from knowledge; the bhakta of this path is the God-lover who is also the God-knower, because by knowledge of his being comes the whole delight of his being; but it is in delight that knowledge fulfils itself, the knowledge of the transcendent in the delight of the Transcendent, the knowledge of the universal in the delight of the universal Godhead, the knowledge of the individual manifestation in the delight of God in the individual, the knowledge of the impersonal in the pure delight of his impersonal being, the knowledge of the personal in the full delight of his personality, the knowledge of his qualities and their play in the delight of the manifestation, the knowledge of the quality-less in the delight of his colourless existence and non-manifestation.

So too this God-lover will be the divine worker, not for the sake of works or for a self-regarding pleasure in action, but because in this way God expends the power of his being and in his powers and their signs we find him, because the divine Will in works is the outflowing of the Godhead in the delight of its power, of divine Being in the delight of divine Force. He will feel perfect joy in the works and acts of the Beloved, because in them too he finds the Beloved; he will himself all do works because through those works too the Lord of his being expresses his divine joy in him: when he works, he feels that he is expressing in act and power his oneness with that which he loves and adores; he feels the rapture of the will which he obeys and with which all the force of his being is blissfully identified. So too, again, this God-lover will seek after perfection, because perfection is the nature of the Divine and the more he grows into perfection, the more he feels the Beloved manifest in his natural being. Or he will simply grow in perfection like the blossoming of a flower because the Divine is in him and the joy of the Divine, and as that joy expands in him, soul and
mind and life too expand naturally into their godhead. At the same time, because he feels the Divine in all, perfect within every limiting appearance, he will not have the sorrow of his imperfection.

Nor will the seeking of the Divine through life and the meeting of him in all the activities of his being and of the universal being be absent from the scope of his worship. All Nature and all life will be to him at once a revelation and a fine trysting-place. Intellectual and aesthetic and dynamic activities, science and philosophy and life, thought and art and action will assume for him a diviner sanction and a greater meaning. He will seek them because of his clear sight of the Divine through them and because of the delight of the Divine in them. He will not be indeed attached to their appearances, for attachment is an obstacle to the Ananda; but because he possesses that pure, powerful and perfect Ananda which obtains everything but is dependent on nothing, and because he finds in them the ways and acts and signs, the becomings and the symbols and images of the Beloved, he draws from them a rapture which the normal mind that pursues them for themselves cannot attain or even dream. All this and more becomes part of the integral way and its consummation.

The general power of Delight is love and the special mould which the joy of love takes is the vision of beauty. The God-lover is the universal lover and he embraces the All-blissful and All-beautiful. When universal love has seized on his heart, it is the decisive sign that the Divine has taken possession of him; and when he has the vision of the All-beautiful everywhere and can feel at all times the bliss of his embrace, that is the decisive sign that he has taken possession of the Divine. Union is the consummation of love, but it is this mutual possession that gives it at once the acme and the largest reach of its intensity. It is the foundation of oneness in ecstasy.
Self-Determination

A new phrase has recently been cast out from the blood-stained yeast of war into the shifty language of politics,—that strange language full of Maya and falsities, of self-illusion and deliberate delusion of others, which almost immediately turns all true and vivid phrases into a jargon, so that men may fight in a cloud of words without any clear sense of the thing they are battling for,—it is the luminous description of liberty as the just power, the freely exercised right of self-determination. The word is in itself a happy discovery, a thought-sign of real usefulness. For it helps to make definite and manageable what was apt till now to be splendidly vague and nebulous. Its invention is a sign at once of a growing clarity of conception about this great good which man has been striving to achieve for himself through the centuries, as yet without any satisfying success to boast of anywhere, and of the increasing subjectivity of our ideas about life. This clarity and this subjectivity must indeed go together; for we can only get good hold of the right end of the great ideas which should govern our ways of living when we begin to understand that their healthful process is from within outward, and that the opposite method, the mechanical, ends always by turning living realities into formal conventions. No doubt, to man the animal the mechanical alone seems to be rea;
but to man the soul, man the thinker through whom we arrive at our inner manhood, only that is true which he can feel as a truth within him and feel without as his external self-expression. All else is a deceptive charlatanry, an acceptance of shows for truths, of external appearances for realities, which are so many devices to keep him in bondage.

Liberty in one shape or another ranks among the most ancient and certainly among the most difficult aspirations of our race: it arises from a radical instinct of our being and is yet opposed to all our circumstances; it is our eternal good and our condition of perfection, but our temporal being has failed to find its key. That perhaps is because true freedom is only possible if we live in the infinite, live, as the Vedanta bids us, in and from our self-existent being; but our natural and temporal energies seek for it at first not in ourselves, but in our external conditions. This great indefinable thing, liberty, is in its highest and ultimate sense a state of being; it is self-living in itself and determining by its own energy what it shall be inwardly and, eventually, by the growth of a divine spiritual power within determining too what it shall make of its external circumstances and environment; that is the largest and freest sense of self-determination. But when we start from the natural and temporal life, what we practically come to mean by liberty is a convenient elbow-room for our natural energies to satisfy themselves without being too much impinged upon by the self-assertiveness of others. And that is a difficult problem to solve, because the liberty of one, immediately it begins to act, knocks up fatally against the liberty of another; the free running of many in the same field means a free chaos of collisions. That was at one time glorified under the name of the competitive system, and dissatisfaction with its results has led to the opposite idea of State socialism, which supposes that the negation of
individual liberty in the collective being of the State can be made to amount by some mechanical process to a positive sum of liberty nicely distributable to all in a carefully guarded equality. The individual gives up his freedom of action and possession to the State which in return doles out to him a regulated liberty, let us say, a sufficient elbow-room so parcelled out that he shall not at all butt into the ribs of his neighbour. It is admirable in theory, logically quite unexceptionable, but in practice, one suspects, it would amount to a very oppressive, because a very mechanical slavery of the individual to the community, or rather to something indefinite that calls itself the community.

Experience has so far shown us that the human attempt to arrive at a mechanical freedom has only resulted in a very relative liberty and even that has been enjoyed for the most part by some at the expense of others. It has amounted usually to the rule of the majority by a minority, and many strange things have been done in its name. Ancient liberty and democracy meant in Greece the self-rule—variegated by periodical orgies of mutual throat-cutting—of a smaller number of freemen of all ranks who lived by the labour of a great mass of slaves. In recent times liberty and democracy have been, and still are, a cant assertion which veils under a skilfully moderated plutocratic system the rule of an organised successful bourgeoisie over a proletariat at first submissive, afterwards increasingly dissatisfied and combined for recalcitrant self-assertion. The earliest use of liberty and democracy by the emancipated proletariat has been the crude forceful tyranny of an ill-organised labour oligarchy over a quite disorganised peasantry and an impotently recalcitrant bourgeoisie. And just as the glorious possession of liberty by the community has been held to be consistent with the oppression of four fifths or three fifths of the population by the remaining fraction, so it has till lately
been held to be quite consistent with the complete sub-
jection of one half of mankind, the woman half, to the
physically stronger male. The series continues through a
whole volume of anomalies, including of course the glo-
riously beneficent and profitable exploitation of subject
peoples by emancipated nations who, it seems, are enti-
tled to that domination by their priesthood of the sacred
cult of freedom. They mean no doubt to extend it to the
exploited at some distant date, but take care meanwhile to
pay themselves the full price of their holy office before they
deliver the article. Even the best machinery of this me-
chanical freedom yet discovered amounts to the unmodi-

died will of a bare majority, or rather to its selection of a
body of rulers who coerce in its name all minorities and
lead it to issues of which it has itself no clear perception.

These anomalies,—anomalies of many kinds are in-
separable from the mechanical method,—are a sign that
the real meaning of liberty has not yet been understood.
Nevertheless the aspiration and the effort itself towards
the realisation of a great idea cannot fail to bear some
fruit, and modern liberty and democracy, however im-
perfect and relative, have had this result that for the
communities which have followed them, they have removed
the pressure of the more obvious, outward and aggres-
sive forms of oppression and domination which were
inherent in the systems of the past. They have made life
a little more tolerable for the mass, and if they have not
yet made life free, they have at least given more liberty
to thought and to the effort to embody a freer thought in
a more adequate form of life. This larger space for the
thought in man and its workings was the necessary con-
dition for a growing clarity which must enlighten in the
end the crude conceptions with which the race has start-
ed and refine the crude methods and forms in which it
has embodied them. The attempt to govern life by an
increasing light of thought rather than allow the rough
and imperfect actualities of life to govern and to limit the mind is a distinct sign of advance in human progress. But the true turning-point will come with the farther step which initiates the attempt to govern life by that of which thought itself is only a sign and an instrument, the soul, the inner being, and to make our ways of living a freer opportunity for the growing height and breadth of its need of self-fulfilment. That is the real, the profounder sense which we shall have to attach to the idea of self-determination as the effective principle of liberty.

The principle of self-determination really means this that within every living human creature, man, woman and child, and equally within every distinct human collectivity growing or grown, half developed or adult there is a self, a being, which has the right to grow in its own way, to find itself, to make its life a full and a satisfied instrument and image of its being. This is the first principle which must contain and overtop all others; the rest is a question of conditions, means, expedients, accommodations, opportunities, capacities, limitations, none of which must be allowed to abrogate the sovereignty of the first essential principle. But it can only prevail if it is understood with a right idea of this self and its needs and claims. The first danger to the principle of self-determination, as of all others, is that it may be interpreted, like most of the ideals of our human existence in the past, in the light of the ego, its interests and its will towards self-satisfaction. So interpreted it will carry us no farther than before; we shall arrive at a point where our principle is brought up short, fails us, turns into a false or a half-true assertion of the mind and a convention of form which covers realities that are quite the opposite of itself.

For the ego has inalienably the instinct of a double self-assertion, its self-assertion against other egos and its self-assertion by means of other egos; in all its expansion it is impelled to subordinate their need to its own, to use
them for its own purpose and for that purpose to establish some kind of control or domination or property in what it uses, whether by force or by dexterity, openly or covertly, by absorption or by some skilful turn of exploitation. Human lives cannot run upon free parallels; for they are compelled by Nature continually to meet, impinge on each other, intermix, and in the ego life that means always a clash. The first idea of our reason suggests that our human relations may be subjected to a mechanical accommodation of interests which will get rid of the clash and the strife; but this can only be done up to a certain point: at best we diminish some of the violence and crude obviousness of the clashing and the friction and give them a more subtle and less grossly perceptible form. Within that subtler form the principle of strife and exploitation continues; for always the egoistic instinct must be to use the accommodations to which it is obliged or induced to assent, as far as possible for its own advantage, and it is only limited in this impulse by the limits of its strength and capacity, by the sense of expediency and consequence, by the perception of some necessity for respecting other egoisms in order that its own egoism too may be respected. But these considerations can only tone down or hedge in the desire of a gross or a subtle domination and exploitation of others; they do not abrogate it.

The human mind has resorted to ethics as a corrective; but the first laws of ethical conduct also succeed at best in checking only the egoistic rule of life and do not overcome it. Therefore the ethical idea has pushed itself forward into the other and opposite principle of altruism. The main general results have been a clearer perception of collective egoisms and their claim on the individual egoism and, secondly, a quite uncertain and indefinable mixture, strife and balancing of egoistic and altruistic motive in our conduct. Often enough altruism is there chiefly in profession or at best a quite superficial will
which does not belong to the centre of our action; it becomes then either a deliberate or else a half-conscious camouflage by which egoism masks itself and gets at its object without being suspected. But even a sincere altruism hides within itself the ego, and to be able to discover the amount of it hidden up in our most benevolent or even self-sacrificing actions is the acid test of sincere self-introspection, nor can anyone really quite know himself who has not made ruthlessly this often painful analysis. It could not be otherwise; for the law of life cannot be self-immolation; self-sacrifice can only be a step in self-fulfilment. Nor can life be in its nature a one-sided self-giving; all giving must contain in itself some measure of receiving to have any fruitful value or significance. Altruism itself is more important even by the good it does to ourselves than by the good it does to others; for the latter is often problematical, but the former is certain, and its good consists in the growth of self, in an inner self-heightening and self-expansion. Not then any general law of altruism, but rather a self-recognition based upon mutual recognition must be the broad rule of our human relations. Life is self-fulfilment which moves upon a ground of mutuality; it involves a mutual use of one by the other, in the end of all by all. The whole question is whether this shall be done on the lower basis of the ego, attended by strife, friction and collision with whatever checks and controls, or whether it cannot be done by a higher law of our being which shall discover a means of reconciliation, free reciprocity and unity.

A right idea of the rule of self-determination may help to set us on the way to the discovery of this higher law. For we may note that this phrase self-determination reconciles and brings together in one complex notion the idea of liberty and the idea of law. These two powers of being tend in our first conceptions, as in the first appearances of life itself, to be opposed to each other as rivals or
enemies; we find therefore ranged against each other the champions of law and order and the defenders of liberty. There is the ideal which sets order first and liberty either nowhere or in an inferior category, because it is willing to accept any coercion of liberty which will maintain the mechanical stability of order; and there is the ideal which on the contrary sets liberty first and regards law either as a hostile compression or a temporarily necessary evil or at best a means of securing liberty by guarding against any violent and aggressive interference with it as between man and man. This use of law as a means of liberty may be advocated only in a minimum reducible to the just quantity necessary for its purpose, the individualistic idea of the matter, or raised to a maximum as in the socialistic idea that the largest sum of regulation will total up to or at least lead up to or secure the largest sum of freedom. We have continually too the most curious mixing up of the two ideas, as in the old-time claim of the capitalist to prevent the freedom of labour to organise so that the liberty of contract might be preserved, or in the singular sophistical contention of the Indian defenders of orthodox caste rigidity on its economical side that coercion of a man to follow his ancestral profession in disregard not only of his inclinations, but of his natural tendencies and aptitudes is a securing to the individual of his natural right, his freedom to follow his hereditary nature. We see a similar confusion of ideas in the claim of European statesmen to train Asiatic or African peoples to liberty, which means in fact to teach them in the beginning liberty in the school of subjection and afterwards to compel them at each stage in the progress of a mechanical self-government to satisfy the tests and notions imposed on them by an alien being and consciousness instead of developing freely a type and law of their own. The right idea of self-determination makes a clean sweep of these confusions. It makes it clear that liberty should proceed by the de-
development of the law of one's own being determined from within, evolving out of oneself and not determined from outside by the idea and will of another. There remains the problem of relations, of the individual and the collective self-determination and of the interaction of the self-determination of one on the self-determination of another. That cannot be finally settled by any mechanical solution, but only by the discovery of some meeting-place of the law of our self-determination with the common law of mutuality, where they begin to become one. It signifies in fact the discovery of an inner and larger self other than the mere ego, in which our individual self-fulfilment no longer separates us from others but at each step of our growth calls for an increasing unity.

But it is from the self-determination of the free individual within the free collectivity in which he lives that we have to start, because so only can we be sure of a healthy growth of freedom and because too the unity to be arrived at is that of individuals growing freely towards perfection and not of human machines working in regulated unison or of souls suppressed, mutilated and cut into one or more fixed geometrical patterns. The moment we sincerely accept this idea, we have to travel altogether away from the old notion of the right of property of man in man which still lurks in the human mind where it does not possess it. The trail of this notion is all over our past, the right of property of the father over the child, of the man over the woman, of the ruler or the ruling class or power over the ruled, of the State over the individual. The child was in the ancient patriarchal idea the live property of the father; he was his creation, his production, his own reproduction of himself; the father, rather than God or the universal Life or in place of God, stood as the author of the child's being; and the creator has every right over his creation, the producer over his manufacture. He had the right to make of him what he willed, and not what the being of the child really
was within, to train and shape and cut him according to the parental ideas and not rear him according to his own nature's deepest needs, to bind him to the paternal career or the career chosen by the parent and not that to which his nature and capacity and inclination pointed, to fix for him all the critical turning-points of his life even after he had reached maturity. In education the child was regarded not as a soul meant to grow, but as brute psychological stuff to be shaped into a fixed mould by the teacher. We have travelled to another conception of the child as a soul with a being, a nature and capacities of his own who must be helped to find them, to find himself, to grow into their maturity, into a fullness of physical and vital energy and the utmost breadth, depth, and height of his emotional, his intellectual and his spiritual being. So too the subjection of woman, the property of the man over the woman, was once an axiom of social life and has only in recent times been effectively challenged. So strong was or had become the instinct of this domination in the male animal man, that even religion and philosophy have had to sanction it, very much in that formula in which Milton expresses the height of masculine egoism, "He for God only, she for God in him,"—if not actually indeed for him in the place of God. This idea too is crumbling into the dust, though its remnants still cling to life by many strong tentacles of old legislation, continued instinct, persistence of traditional ideas; the fiat has gone out against it in the claim of woman to be regarded, she too, as a free individual being. The right of property of the rulers in the ruled has perished by the advance of liberty and democracy; in the form of national imperialism it still indeed persists, though more now by commercial greed than by the instinct of political domination; intellectually this form too of possessional egoism has received its death-blow, vitally it still endures. The right of property of the State in the individual which threatened to take the place
of all these, has now had its real spiritual consequence thrown into relief by the lurid light of the war, and we may hope that its menace to human liberty will be diminished by this clearer knowledge. We are at least advancing to a point at which it may be possible to make the principle of self-determination a present and pressing, if not yet an altogether dominant force in the whole shaping of human life.

Self-determination viewed from this subjective standpoint carries us back at once towards the old spiritual idea of the Being within, whose action, once known and self-revealed, is not an obedience to external and mechanical impulses, but proceeds in each from the powers of the soul, an action self-determined by the essential quality and principle of which all our becoming is the apparent movement, swabhāva-niyatām karma. But it is only as we rise higher and higher in ourselves and find out our true self and its true powers that we can get at the full truth of this swabhāva. Our present existence is at the most a growth towards it and therefore an imperfection, and its chief imperfection is the individual's egoistic idea of self which reappears enlarged in the collective egoism. Therefore an egoistic self-determination or a modified individualism, is not the true solution; if that were all, we could never get beyond a balance and, in progress, a zigzag of conflict and accommodation. The ego is not the true circle of the self; the law of mutuality which meets it at every turn and which it misuses, arises from the truth that there is a secret unity between our self and the self of others and therefore between own lives and the lives of others. The law of our self-determination has to wed itself to the self-determination of others and to find the way to enact a real union through this mutuality. But its basis can only be found within and not through any mechanical adjustment. It lies in the discovery within by the being in the course of its self-expansion and self-ful-
filment that these things at every turn depend on the self-expansion and self-fulfilment of those around us, because we are secretly one being with them and one life. It is in philosophical language the recognition of the one self in all who fulfils himself variously in each; it is the finding of the law of the divine being in each unifying itself with the law of the divine being in all. At once the key of the problem is shifted from without to within, from the visible externalities of social and political adjustment to the spiritual life and truth which can alone provide its key.

Not that the outer life has to be neglected; on the contrary the pursual of the principle in one field or on one level, provided we do not limit or fix ourselves in it, helps its disclosure in other fields and upon other levels. Still if we have not the unity within, it is in vain that we shall try to enforce it from without by law and compulsion or by any assertion in outward forms. Intellectual assertion too, like the mechanical, is insufficient; only the spiritual can give it, because it alone has the secure power of realisation. The ancient truth of the self is the eternal truth; we have to go back upon it in order to carry it out in newer and fuller ways for which a past humanity was not ready. The recognition and fulfilment of the divine being in oneself and in man, the kingdom of God within and in the race is the basis on which man must come in the end to the possession of himself as a free self-determining being and of mankind too in a mutually possessing self-expansion as a harmoniously self-determining united existence.
The Future Poetry

The Course of English Poetry

(2)

Beautiful as are many of its productions, powerful as it is in the mass, if we look at it not in detail, not merely revelling in beauty of line and phrase and image, in snatches of song and outbursts of poetic richness and power, but as a whole, as definite artistic creation, this wealthiest age of English poetry bears a certain stamp of defect and failure. It cannot be placed for a moment as a supreme force of excellence in literary culture by the side of the great ages of Greek and Roman poetry, but, besides that, it falls short too in aesthetic effect and virtue in comparison with other poetic periods less essentially vigorous than itself; it has an inferior burden of meaning and, if a coursing of richer life-blood, no settled fullness of spirit and a less adequate body of forms. The great magician, Shakespeare, by his marvellous poetic rendering of life and the spell his poetry casts upon us, conceals this general inadequacy; the whole age which he embodies is magnified by his presence and the adjacent paler figures catch something of the light and kinship of his glory and appear in it more splendid than they are. Shakespeare is an exception, a miracle of poetic force; he survives untouched all adverse criticism, not because there are not plenty of fairly
large spots in this sun, but because in any complete view of him they disappear in the greatness of his light. Spenser and Marlowe are poets of a high order, great in spite of an eventual failure. But the rest owe their stature to an uplifting power in the age and not chiefly to their own intrinsic height of genius; and that power had many vices, flaws and serious limitations which their work exaggerates wilfully rather than avoids. The gold of this golden age of English poetry is often very beautifully and richly wrought, but it is seldom worked into a perfect artistic whole; it disappears continually in masses of alloy, and there is on the whole more of a surface gold-dust than of the deeper yield of the human spirit.

The defect of this Elizabethan work is most characteristic and prominent in that part of it which has been vaunted as its chief title to greatness, its drama. Shakespeare and Marlowe may be considered separately; but the rest of Elizabethan dramatic work is powerful in effort rather than sound and noble in performance. All its vigorous presentation of life has not been able to keep it alive; it is dead or keeps only, to use Mr. Cousins' phrase, the dusty immortality of the libraries, and this in spite of the attention drawn to it in quite recent times by scholars and critics and the hyperbolic eulogies two or three eminent writers have bestowed on it. This is not to say that it has not merits and, in a way, very striking merits. The Elizabethan playwrights were men of a confident robust talent, some of them of real genius; they had the use of the language of an age in which the power of literary speech was a common possession and men were using language as a quite new and rich instrument, lavishly, curiously, exulting in its novel capacities of expression; the first elements of the dramatic form, the temper and some of the primary faculties which go to make dramatic creation possible were there in the literary spirit of the age, and all of them in more or less degree possessed these things
and could use them. They have a certain force of vital creation, the faculty of producing very freely a mass of incident and movement, much power of exuberant dialogue, a knack of expression both in verse and prose and of putting the language of the passions into the mouth of cleverly constructed human figures which walk actively about the stage, if not in quite a natural manner, yet with enough of it to give for the time the illusion of living creatures; and they had eminently a vigorous turn for the half romantic, half realistic reproduction of life and manners. Especially, it was a time in which there was a fresh and vivid interest in life and man and action, in the adventure and wonder and appeal of the mere vital phenomenon of living and feeling and thinking, and their work is full of this freshness and interest. All this, it might be thought, is quite enough to create a great dramatic poetry; and certainly if we require no more than this we shall give a prominent place to the Elizabethan drama, higher perhaps than to the Greek or any other. But these things are enough only to produce plays which will live their time on the stage and in the library; they are not, by themselves, sufficient for great dramatic creation. Something else is needed for that, which we get in Shakespeare, in Racine, Corneille and Molière, in Calderon, in the great Greeks, in the Sanskrit dramatists; but these other Elizabethans are rather powerful writers and playwrights than inspired dramatic poets and creators.

Dramatic poetry cannot live by the mere presentation of life and action and the passions, however truly they may be portrayed or however vigorously and abundantly. Its object is something greater and its conditions of success much more onerous. It must have, to begin with, as the fount of its creation or in its heart an interpretative vision and in that vision an explicit or implicit idea of life and the human being; and the vital presentation which is its outward instrument, must arise out of that
harmoniously, whether by a spontaneous creation, as in Shakespeare, or by the compulsion of an intuitive artistic will, as with the Greeks. This interpretative vision and idea have in the presentation to seem to arise out of the inner life of vital types of the human soul or individual representatives of it through an evolution of speech leading to an evolution of action,—speech being the first important instrument, because through it the poet reveals the action of the soul, and outward action and event only the second, important, but less essential, reducible even to a minimum, because by that he makes visible and concrete to us the result of the inner action. In all very great drama the true movement and result is really psychological and the outward action, even when it is considerable, and the consummating event, even though loud and violent, are only either its symbol or else its condition of culmination. Finally, all this has to be cast into a close dramatic form, a successful weaving of interdependent relations, relations of soul to soul, of speech to speech, of action to action, the more close and inevitable the better, because so the truth of the whole evolution comes home to us. And if it is asked what in a word is the essential purpose of all this creation, I think we might possible say that drama is the poet's vision of some part of the world-act in the life of the human soul, it is in a way his vision of Karma, in an extended and very flexible sense of the word; and at its highest point it becomes a poetic rendering or illustration of the Aeschylean drasanti pathein, "the doer shall feel the effect of his act," in an inner as well as an outer, a happy no less than an austere significance, whether that effect be represented as psychological or vital, whether it comes to its own through sorrow and calamity, ends in a judgment by laughter or finds an escape into beauty and joy, whether the presentation be tragic or comic or tragi-comic or idyllic. To satisfy these conditions is extremely difficult and for that reason the great dramatists are so few in their num-
ber,—the entire literature of the world has hardly given us more than a dozen. The difficult evolution of dramatic poetry is always more hard to lead than the lyric which is poetry’s native expression, or than the narrative which is its simpler expansion.

The greatness of a period of dramatic poetry can be measured by the extent to which these complex conditions were understood in it or were intuitively practised. But in the mass of the Elizabethan drama the understanding is quite absent and the practice comes, if at all, only rarely, imperfectly and by a sort of accident. Shakespeare himself seems to have divined these conditions or contained them in the shaping flame of his genius rather than perceived them by the artistic intelligence. The rest have ordinarily no light of interpretative vision, no dramatic idea. Their tragedy and comedy are both oppressively external; this drama presents, but does not at all interpret; it is an outward presentation of manners and passions and lives by vigour of action and a quite outward-going speech; it means absolutely nothing. The tragedy is irrational, the comedy has neither largeness nor subtlety of idea; they are mixed together too without any artistic connection such as Shakespeare manages to give to them so as to justify thoroughly their coexistence. The characters are not living beings working out their mutual Karma, but external figures of humanity jostling each other on a crowded stage, mere tossing drift of the waves of life. The form of the drama too is little more than a succession of speech and incident, as in a story, with a culminating violent or happy ending, which comes not because psychologically it must, but because a story has to have a release of ending, or, if tragic, its point of loud detonation. To make up for their essential defects

*Ben Jonson is an exception. He has the idea of construction, but his execution is heavy and uninspired, the work of a robustly conscientious craftsman rather than a creative artist.*
these poets have to heap up incident and situation and assail us with vehement and often grossly exaggerated speech and passion, frequently tearing the passion into glaringly coloured tatters, almost always overstraining or in some way making too much of it. They wish to pile on us the interest of life in whose presentation their strength lies, to accumulate in a mass, so as to carry us away, things attracting, things amusing, things striking, things horrible; they will get at us through the nerves and the lower emotional being,—and in this they succeed eminently,—since they cannot get at us through a higher intellectual and imaginative appeal. The evolution of the action is rather theatrically effective than poetic, the spirit and the psychology melodramatic rather than dramatic. Nor are these radical dramatic defects atoned for by any great wealth of poetry, for their verse has more often some formal merit and a great air of poetry than its essence,—though there are exceptions as in lines and passages of Peele and Webster. The presentation of life with some poetic touch but without any transforming vision or strongly suffusing power in the poetic temperament is the general character of their work. It is necessary to emphasize these defects because indiscriminate praise of these poets helps to falsify or quite exclude the just artistic view of the aim of sound dramatic creation, and imitation of the catching falsities of this model has been the real root of the inefficacy of subsequent attempts in the dramatic form even by poets of great gifts. It explains the failure of even a mind which had the true dramatic turn, a creator like Browning, to achieve drama of the first excellence.

Marlowe alone of the lesser Elizabethan dramatists stands apart from his fellows, not solely by his strong and magnificent vein of poetry, but because he knows what he is about; he alone has some clearly grasped dramatic idea. And not only is he conscious of his artistic aim, but it is a sound aim on the higher levels of the dramatic
art. He knows that the human soul in action is his subject and Karma the power of the theme, and he attempts to create a drama of the human will throwing itself on life, the will egoistic and Asuric, conquering only to succumb to the great adversary Death or breaking itself against the forces its violence has brought into hostile play. This is certainly a high and fit subject for tragic creation and his highly coloured and strongly cut style and rhythm are well-suited for its expression. Unhappily, Marlowe had the conception, but not any real power of dramatic execution. He is unable to give the last awakening breath of life to his figures; in the external manner so common in English poetry and fiction he rather constructs than evolves, portrays than throws out into life, paints up or sculptures from outside than creates from within, which is yet the sole true method of poetic or at least of dramatic creation. He has not, either, the indispensable art of construction; only in one of his tragedies does he vitally relate together his characters and their action throughout, and even that though a strong work falls far short of the greatness of a masterpiece. He had too, writing for the Elizabethan stage, to adopt a model which was too complex for the strong simplicity of his theme and the narrow intensity of his genius, and he had, working for that semi-barbarous public, to minister to tastes which were quite incongruous with his purpose and which he had not flexibility enough to bring within its scope or to elevate towards its level. In fact, Marlowe was not a born dramatist; his true genius was lyrical, narrative and epic. Limited by his inborn characteristics, he succeeds in bringing out his poetic motive only in strong detached scenes and passages or in great culminating moments in which the lyrical cry and the epic touch break out through the form of drama.

Shakespeare stands out alone, both in his own age when so many were drawn to the form and circumstances were favourable to this kind of genius, and in all English
literature, as the one great and genuine dramatic poet, but this one is indeed equal to a host. He stands out too as quite unique in his spirit, method and quality. For his contemporaries resemble him only in externals; they have the same outward form and crude materials, but not the inner dramatic method by which he transformed and gave them a quite other meaning and value; and later romantic drama, though it has tried hard to imitate the Shakespearian motive and touch, has been governed by another kind of poetic mind and its intrinsic as distinguished from its external method has been really different. It takes hold of life, strings together its unusual effects and labours to make it out of the way, brilliant, coloured, conspicuous. Shakespeare does not do that, except rarely, in early imitative work or when he is uninspired. He does not need to lay violent hands on life and turn it into romantic pyrotechnics; for life itself has taken hold of him in order to recreate itself in his image, and he sits within himself at its heart and pours out from its impulse a throng of beings, as real in the world he creates as men are in this other world from which he takes his hints, a multitude, a riot of living images carried on a many-coloured sea of revealing speech and a never failing surge of movement. His dramatic method seems indeed to have usually no other intellectual purpose, aesthetic motive or spiritual secret; ordinarily it labours simply for the joy of a multiple poetic vision of life and vital creation with no centre except the life-power itself, no coordination except that thrown out spontaneously by the unseizable workings of its energy, no unity but the one unity of man and the life-spirit in Nature working in him and before his eyes. It is this sheer creative ananda of the life-spirit which is Shakespeare; abroad everywhere in that age it incarnates itself in him for the pleasure of poetic self-vision.

All Shakespeare’s powers and limitations,—for it is now permissible to speak of his limitations,—arise from
this character of the force that moved him to poetic utterance. He is not primarily an artist, a poetical thinker or anything else of the kind, but a great vital creator and intensely, though within marked limits, a seer of life. His art itself is life—arranging its forms in its own surge and excitement, not in any kind of symmetry,—for symmetry here there is none,—nor in fine harmonies, but still in its own way supremely and with a certain intimately metric arrangement of its many loose movements, in mobile perspectives, a succession of crowded but successful and satisfying vistas. While he has given a wonderful language to poetic thought, he yet does not think for the sake of thought, but for the sake of life; his way indeed is not so much the poet himself thinking about life, as life thinking itself out in him through many mouths, in many moods and moments, with a rich throng of fine thought-effects, but not for any clear sum of intellectual vision or to any high power of either ideal or spiritual result. His development of human character has a sovereign force within its bounds, but it is the soul of the human being as seen through outward character, passion, action, the life-soul, and not either the thought-soul or the deeper psychic being or the profounder truth of the human spirit. Something of these things we may get, but only in shadow or as a partial reflection in a coloured glass, not in their own action. In his vision and therefore in his poetic motive Shakespeare never really either rises up above life or gets behind it; he neither sees what it reaches out to nor the great unseen powers that are active within it. At one time, in two or three of his tragedies, he seems to have been striving to do this, but all that he does see then is the action of certain tremendous life-forces which he either sets in a living symbol or indicates behind the human action, as in Macbeth, or embodies, as in King Lear, in a tragically uncontrollable possession of his human characters. Nevertheless, his is not a drama of mere externalised action, for it lives from with-
in and more deeply than our external life. This is not Virat, the seer and creator of gross forms, but Hiranyakarbhha, the luminous mind of dreams, looking through those forms to see his own images behind them. More than any other poet Shakespeare has accomplished mentally the legendary feat of the impetuous sage Viswamitra; his power of vision has created a Shakespearean world of his own, and it is, in spite of its realistic elements, a romantic world in a very true sense of the word, a world of the wonder and free power of life and not of its mere external realities, where what is here dulled and hampered finds a greater enlarged and intense breath of living, an ultra-natural play of beauty, curiosity and amplitude.

It is needful in any view of the evolution of poetry to note the limits within which Shakespeare did his work, so that we may fix the point reached; but still within the work itself his limitations do not matter. And even his positive defects and lapses can not lower him, because there is an unfailing divinity of power in his touch which makes them negligible. He has, however much toned down, his share of the Elizabethan crudities, violences, extravagances, but they are upborne on a stream of power and end by falling in into the general greatness of his scheme. He has deviations into stretches of half prosaic verse and vagaries of tortured and bad poetic expression, sometimes atrociously bad; but they are yet always very evidently not failures of power, but the wilful errors of a great poet, more careful of dramatic truth and carried on by his force of expression than bound to verbal perfection. We feel obliged to accept his defects, which in another poet our critical sense would be swift to condemn or reject, because they are part of his force, just as we accept the vigorous errors of a great personality. His limitations are very largely the condition of his powers. Certainly, he is no universal revealer, as his idolators would have him be,—for even in the life-soul of man there are things beyond him,—but to have
given a form so wonderful, so varied, so immortally alive, in so great a surge of the intensest poetical expression, to a life-vision of this kind and this power, is a unique achievement of poetical genius. The future may find for us a higher and profounder, even a more deeply and finely vital aim for the dramatic form than any Shakespeare ever conceived, but until that has been done with an equal power, grasp and fullness of vision and an equal intensity of revealing speech, he keeps his sovereign station. The claim made for him that he is the greatest of poets may very well be challenged,—he is not quite that,—but that he is first among dramatic poets cannot well be questioned.

So far then the English poetic spirit had got in the drama, and it has never got any farther. And this is principally because it has allowed itself to be obsessed by the Elizabethan formula; for it has clung not merely to the Shakespearian form,—which might after due modification still be used for certain purposes, especially for a deeper life-thought expressing itself through the strong colours of a romantic interpretation,—but to the whole crude inartistic error of that age. Great poets, poets of noble subjective power, delicate artists, fine thinkers and singers, all directly they turn to the dramatic form, begin to externalise fatally; they become violent, they gesticulate, they press to the action and forget to have an informing thought, hold themselves bound to the idea of drama as a robust presentation of life and incident and passion. And because this is not a true idea and, in any case, it is quite inconsistent with the turn of their own genius, they fail inevitably. Dryden stumbling heavily through his rhymed plays, Wordsworth of all people, the least Elizabethan of poets, penning with a conscientious dullness his Borderers, Byron diffusing his elemental energy in bad blank verse and worse dramatic construction, Keats turning from his unfinished Hyperion to wild schoolboy imitations of the worst
Elizabethan type, Shelley even, forgetting his discovery of a new and fine literary form for dramatic poetry to give us the Elizabethan violences of the Cenci, Tennyson, Swinburne, even after Atalanta, following the same ignis fatuus, a very flame of fatuity and futility, are all victims of the same hypnotism. Recently a new turn is visible; but as yet it is doubtful whether the right conditions for a renovation of the dramatic form and a true use of the dramatic motive have all come into being. At any rate the predestined creator, if he is to come, is not yet among us.
The Renaissance in India

The process which has led up to the renaissance now inevitable, may be analysed, both historically and logically, into three steps by which a transition is being managed, a complex breaking, reshaping and new building, with the final result yet distant in prospect,—though here and there the first bases may have been already laid,—a new age of an old culture transformed, not an affiliation of a newborn civilisation to one that is old and dead, but a true rebirth, a renascence. The first step was the reception of the European contact, a radical reconsideration of many of the prominent elements and some revolutionary denial of the very principles of the old culture. The second was a reaction of the Indian spirit upon the European influence, sometimes with a total denial of what it offered and a stressing both of the essential and the strict letter of the national past, which yet masked a movement of assimilation. The third, only now beginning or recently begun, is rather a process of new creation in which the spiritual power of the Indian mind remains supreme, recovers its truths, accepts whatever it finds sound or true, useful or inevitable of the modern idea and form, but so transmutes and indianises it, so absorbs and so transforms it entirely into itself that its foreign character disappears and it becomes another harmonious element in the characteristic working of the ancient goddess, the Shakti of India mastering and taking possession of the modern influence, no longer possessed or overcome by it.

Nothing in the many processes of Nature, whether she deals with men or with things, comes by chance or accident or is really at the mercy of external causes. What things are inwardly, determines the course of even their most considerable changes; and timeless India being what she is, the complexity of this transition was predestined and unavoidable. It was impossible that she should take a rapid wholesale imprint of western motives and their forms
and leave the ruling motives of her own past to accommodate themselves to the foreign change as best they could afterwards. A swift transformation scene like that which brought into being a new modernised Japan, would have been out of the question for her, even if the external circumstances had been equally favourable. For Japan lives centrally in her temperament and in her aesthetic sense, and therefore she has always been rapidly assimilative; her strong temperamental persistence has been enough to preserve her national stamp and her artistic vision a sufficient power to keep her soul alive. But India lives centrally in the spirit, with less buoyancy and vivacity and therefore with a less ready adaptiveness of creation, but a greater, intenser, more brooding depth; her processes are apt to be deliberate, uncertain and long because she has to take things into that depth and from its profoundest inwardness to modify or remould the more outward parts of her life. And until that has been done, the absorption completed, the powers of the remoulding determined, she cannot yet move forward with an easier step on the new way she is taking. From the complexity of the movement arises all the difficulty of the problems she has to face, and the rather chaotic confusion of the opinions, standpoints and tendencies that have got entangled in the process, which prevents any easy, clear and decided development, so that we seem to be advancing under a confused pressure of circumstance or in a series of shifting waves of impulsion, this ebbing for that to arise, rather than with any clear idea of our future direction. But here too lies the assurance that once the inner direction has found its way and its implications come to the surface, the result will be no mere Asiatic modification of western modernism, but some great, new and original thing of the first importance to the future of human civilisation.

This was not the idea of the earliest generation of intellectuals, few in number but powerful by their talent and originative vigour, who arose as the first results of western
education in India. Theirs was the impatient hope of a transformation such as took place afterwards with so striking a velocity in Japan; they saw in welcome prospect a new India modernised wholesale and radically in mind, spirit and life. Intensely patriotic in motive, they were yet denationalised in their mental attitude. They admitted practically, if not in set opinion, the occidental view of our past culture as only a half-civilisation and their governing ideals were borrowed from the west or at least centrally inspired by the purely western spirit and type of their education. From mediaeval India they drew away in revolt and inclined to discredit and destroy whatever it had created; if they took anything from it, it was as poetic symbols to which they gave a superficial and modern significance. To ancient India they looked back on the contrary with a sentiment of pride, at least in certain directions, and were willing to take from it whatever material they could subdue to their new standpoint, but they could not quite grasp anything of it in its original sense and spirit and strove to rid it of all that would not square with their westernised intellectuality. They sought for a bare, simplified and rationalised religion, created a literature which imported very eagerly the forms, ideas and whole spirit of their English models,—the value of the other arts was almost entirely ignored,—put their political faith and hope in a wholesale assimilation or rather an exact imitation of the middle-class pseudo-democracy of nineteenth-century England, would have revolutionised Indian society by introducing into it all the social ideas and main features of the European form. Whatever value for the future there may be in the things they grasped at with this eager conviction, their method was, as we now recognise, a false method,—an anglicised India is a thing we can no longer view as either possible or desirable,—and it could only, if pursued to the end, have made us painful copyists, clumsy followers always stumbling in the wake of European evolution and always
fifty years behind it. This movement of thought did not and could not endure; something of it still continues, but its engrossing power has passed away beyond any chance of vigorous revival.

Nevertheless, this earliest period of crude reception left behind it results that were of value and indeed indispensable to a powerful renaissance. We may single out three of them as of the first order of importance. It reawakened a free activity of the intellect which, though at first confined within very narrow bounds and derivative in its ideas, is now spreading to all subjects of human and national interest and is applying itself with an increasing curiosity and a growing originality to every field it seizes. This is bringing back to the Indian mind its old unresting thirst for all kinds of knowledge and must restore to it before long the width of its range and the depth and flexible power of its action; and it has opened to it the full scope of the critical faculty of the human mind, its passion for exhaustive observation and emancipated judgment which, in older times exercised only by a few and within limits, has now become an essential equipment of the intellect. These things the imitative period did not itself carry very far, but it cast the germ which we now see beginning to fructify more richly. Secondly, it threw definitely the ferment of modern ideas into the old culture and fixed them before our view in such a way that we are obliged to reckon and deal with them in far other sort than would have been possible if we had simply proceeded from our old fixed traditions without some such momentary violent break in our customary view of things. Finally, it made us turn our look upon all that our past contains with new eyes which have not only enabled us to recover something of their ancient sense and spirit, long embedded and lost in the unintelligent practice of received forms, but to bring out of them a new light which gives to the old truths fresh aspects and therefore novel
potentialities of creation and evolution. That in this first period we misunderstood our ancient culture, does not matter; the enforcement of a reconsideration, which even orthodox thought has been obliged to accept, is the fact of capital importance.

The second period of reaction of the Indian mind upon the new elements, its movement towards a recovery of the national poise, has helped us to direct these powers and tendencies into sounder and much more fruitful lines of action. For the anglicising impulse was very soon met by the old national spirit and began to be heavily suffused by its influence. It is now a very small and always dwindling number of our present-day intellectuals who still remain obstinately westernised in their outlook; and even these have given up the attitude of blatant and uncompromising depreciation of the past which was at one time a common poise. A larger number have proceeded by a constantly increasing suffusion of their modernism with much of ancient motive and sentiment, a better insight into the meaning of Indian things and their characteristics, a free acceptance more of their spirit than of their forms and an attempt at new interpretation. At first the central idea still remained very plainly of the modern type and betrayed everywhere the western inspiration, but it drew to itself willingly the ancient ideas and it coloured itself more and more with their essential spirit; and latterly this suffusing element has overflooded, has tended more and more to take up and subdue the original motives until the thought and spirit, turn and tinge are now characteristically Indian. The work of Bunkim Chandra Chatterji and Tagore, the two minds of the most distinctive and original genius in our recent literature, illustrate the stages of this transition.

Side by side with this movement and more characteristic and powerful there has been flowing an opposite current. This first started on its way by an integral reaction, a vindication and reacceptance of everything Indian
as it stood and because it was Indian. We have still waves of this impulse and many of its influences continuing among us; for its work is not yet completed. But in reality the reaction marks the beginning of a more subtle assimilation and fusing; for in vindicating ancient things it has been obliged to do so in a way that will at once meet and satisfy the old mentality and the new, the traditional and the critical mind. This in itself involves no mere return, but consciously or unconsciously hastens a restatement. And the riper form of the return has taken as its principle a synthetical restatement; it has sought to arrive at the spirit of the ancient culture and, while respecting its forms and often preserving them to revivify, has yet not hesitated also to remould, to reject the outworn and to admit whatever new motive seemed assimilable to the old spirituality or apt to widen the channel of its larger evolution. Of this freer dealing with past and present, this preservation by reconstruction Vivekananda was in his life-time the leading exemplar and the most powerful exponent.

But this too could not be the end; of itself it leads towards a principle of new creation. Otherwise the upshot of the double current of thought and tendency might be an incongruous assimilation, something in the mental sphere like the strangely assorted half European, half Indian dress which we now put upon our bodies. India has to get back entirely to the native power of her spirit at its very deepest and to turn all the needed strengths and aims of her present and future life into materials for that spirit to work upon. Of such vital and original creation we may cite the new Indian art as a striking example. The beginning of this process of original creation in every sphere of her national activity will be the sign of the integral self-finding of her renaissance.
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CONTENTS

THE LIFE DIVINE.................. Aurobindo Ghose
Ch. L. Four Theories of Existence

ESSAYS ON THE GITA................ A. G.
The Supreme Divine

THE SYNTHESIS OF YOGA............ A. G.
Ch. XLVII. The Ananda Brahman

THE RENAISSANCE IN INDIA (3)

THE FUTURE POETRY
The Course of English Poetry (3)

MATERIALISM
The Life Divine

CHAPTER L

FOUR THEORIES OF EXISTENCE

If we accept this metaphysical basis, this view of the fundamental truth of the universe and the meaning of existence, our whole conception of life and attitude to it must necessarily be modified and its aim determined in the sense of its results. Metaphysical philosophy is an attempt to fix the fundamental realities and principles of being as distinct from its processes and the phenomena which result from those processes. But it is on the fundamental realities that the processes depend; and our own process of life, its aim and method, must be in accordance with the truth of being that we see; otherwise we are false to the truth we have intellectually accepted. The highest meaning of life to us must be also the meaning, of our own living, our aim, our ideal. There are, roughly, four main theories, attitudes, ideals which we may take, in accordance with four different conceptions of truth of existence; and we may call them for the sake of convenience the supracosmic or the illusionist, the cosmic and terrestrial, the supraterrrestrial or religious, and the theory,—which we have ourselves adopted and developed,—of a divine evolution with man for its terrestrial nodus and turning point of release towards a higher perfection.

In the illusionist view human existence has no real meaning; it is a mistake of the soul or a delirium of the
will to live, an error or ignorance which has somehow found its way into the Absolute. The only true truth is the supracosmic, the Absolute, the Parabrahman. If so, the one thing to be done, the one thing wise and needful is to get away from all living, whether terrestrial or celestial, as soon as possible. True, the illusion is real to itself, and its laws and facts—they are only facts and not truths, that is to say, empirical and not real realities,—are binding on us so long as we rest in the error. But from any standpoint of real knowledge, in any view of the true truth of things, they are little better than the laws of a cosmic madhouse; so long as we are mad and have to remain in the madhouse, we are perforce subject to its rules and we must make, according to our temperament, the best or the worst of them; but always our proper aim is to get cured of our insanity and depart into freedom. The true law of living then is whatever rule can help us soonest to get rid of life and lead by the most direct road to nirvana, to an extinction of the individual and the universal, to self-annulment in the Absolute. This ideal of self-extinction which is boldly and clearly proclaimed by the Buddhists, is represented in Vedantic illusionism rather as a self-finding: but it is not in any way the self-finding of the individual by his growth into his true being in the Absolute,—that would only be possible if both are realities,—but the self-finding of the Absolute in the unreal individual by the self-annulment of the personal being and by the destruction of all individual and cosmic existence for that individual consciousness, however much these errors may go on, helplessly inevitable, in the general ignorance of the Absolute, in his universal, eternal and indestructible Avidya. But whatever the logic we use or the method adopted, the practical effect is the same,—human existence loses all value, or else its sole value is that it allows in its end something that has lapsed into the cosmic being to escape out of it into some
kind of Nirvana.

The terrestrial view considers the cosmic existence as real, considers it even as the only reality. God, if God exists, is a vast eternal becoming; or if God does not exist, then Nature,—whatever view we may take of Nature, whether we regard it as a play of Force with Matter or a great cosmic Life or even admit a universal impersonal Mind in life and matter,—is that vast perennial becoming. Earth is one of its temporary fields, man is one of its temporary forms. Man individually is altogether mortal; mankind also exists only for a certain short period of the earth's existence; earth itself bears life only for a rather longer period of its duration in the solar system; that system must itself one day cease to exist or at least cease to be an active or productive factor in the becoming. The universal Becoming alone is eternal. In these circumstances, plainly, the one best course for man,—unless indeed he is satisfied with somehow living his life until it passes out of him,—is to study the laws of the Becoming and take the best advantage of them to realise rationally or intuitionally its possibilities, to make the most of such as exist and to seize on or to advance towards the highest that are in the making. Only mankind as a whole can do this with entire effect, by the mass of individual action and in the process of time; but the individual man can help towards it in his own smaller limits, can do all these things for himself to a certain extent in the brief space of life allotted to him; but especially he can make his thought and action a contribution towards the present intellectual, moral and vital well-being and the future progress of the race. He is capable of a certain nobility of being; an acceptance of his inevitable and early individual annihilation does not preclude him from making a high individual use of the will and thought which have been developed in him or from directing them to great ends which shall or may be worked out by humanity. Even
the temporary character of the being of humanity does not so very much matter,—except in the most materialist view of existence; for so long as the universal Becoming takes the form of human body and mind, the thought, the will it has developed in the human being will work itself out and to follow that intelligently is the natural law and best rule of human life. Humanity and its well-being and progress during its persistence on earth are the limits of the terrestrial aim of our being and they determine the scope of its ideals.

The supraterrestrial view admits the reality of the material cosmos and it accepts the temporary duration of earth and human life as the first fact we have to start from; but it adds to it a perception of other worlds or planes of existence which have an eternal or at least a more permanent duration and perceives too behind the mortality of the bodily life of man the immortality of the soul within him. A belief in the immortality, the eternal persistence of the individual human spirit is the key of this conception of life. That of itself necessitates its other belief in higher planes of existence than the material or terrestrial, since for a disembodied spirit there can be no abiding place in a world whose every operation depends upon some play of force, whether spiritual, mental, vital or material, in and with the forms of matter. It readily brings with it also the idea that the true home of man is beyond and that the earth life is in some way or other only an episode of his immortality or a deviation from a celestial and spiritual into a material existence. But what then is the character, the origin and the end of this deviation? We have first the idea of certain religions that man is a being primarily created as a material living body upon earth into which a newly born divine soul is breathed from the breath or else with which it is associated by the fiat of an almighty Creator; a solitary episode, this life is his one opportunity from which he departs to a world
of eternal bliss or to a world of eternal misery either according as the general or preponderant balance of his acts is good or evil or according as he accepts or rejects, knows or ignores a particular creed, mode of worship, divine mediator, or else according to the arbitrary predestining caprice of his Creator. But that is the supratherrestrial theory of life in its least rational form. Taking the idea of the creation of a soul by the physical birth as our starting-point, we may still suppose that by a natural law, common to all, the rest of his existence has to be pursued beyond in a supratherrestrial plane, when the soul has shaken off from it its original matrix of matter, as the butterfly escaped from the chrysalis disports itself in the air on its light and coloured wings. Or we may suppose rather a preterrestrial existence of the soul, a fall or descent into matter and a reascent into its celestial being. The material universe, or earth especially, will then be a sumptuously appointed field created by a divine power, wisdom or caprice for the enacting of this singular interlude. We shall see in it, according to the view we choose to take of the matter, a place of ordeal, a field of heavenward development or a scene of spiritual fall and exile. There is too the Indian view of the matter which regards the world as a garden of the divine Lila, a play of the divine Being with the conditions of cosmic existence in this world of an inferior Nature, in which the soul of man takes part through a protracted series of births but is destined to reascend at last into the proper plane of the divine Being and there enjoy an eternal communion and proximity. In any case, there are always three essential characteristics in all these varying statements of the common principle;—first, the individual immortality of the human spirit; secondly, as a necessary consequence, the idea of the earth life as a temporary adulteration of or a departure from its highest eternal nature and of a heaven beyond which is its proper habitation; thirdly deve-
lopment of the ethical and spiritual being as his means of ascension and therefore as the one proper business of life.

Practically, it is impossible for man taken as a race whatever a few individuals may succeed in doing, to guide his life permanently by any one of these three attitudes uniquely to the exclusion of all the others. An amalgam of two or more of them, a conflict or division of his life motives between them or some attempt at synthesis is his way of dealing with the various impulses of his nature and intuitions of his mind to which they appeal. Almost all men normally devote the major part of their energies to the life of man on earth, to the terrestrial needs, interests, desires, ideals of the individual and the race. It could not be otherwise; for the care of the body, the sufficient development of the vital and mental being, the pursuit of high individual and large collective ideals which start from the idea of an attainable human perfection or nearer approach to perfection through his normal development, are imposed upon us by the very nature of our own being, they are part of its law, its natural impulse and rule, its condition of growth; without these things man could not grow to his full manhood. Any view of our being which neglects, unduly belittles or intolerantly condemns them, is therefore by that very fact, whatever its other good or merit or utility, or whatever its suitability to individuals of a certain temperament or in a certain stage of spiritual evolution, unfit to be the general and complete rule of human living. Nature takes good care that the race shall not neglect these things which are a necessary part of the divine plan in us.

But also she has implanted in us a sense that there is something in our composition which goes beyond this first terrestrial nature of humanity. Therefore also the race cannot follow for a very long time any view of being which ignores this higher and subtler sense and labours to confine us entirely to a purely terrestrial way of living.
The intuition of a beyond, the idea and feeling of a soul and spirit in us which is other than the mind, life and body or at least is greater, not limited by their formula, returns upon us and ends by resuming possession. The ordinary man satisfies this sense easily enough by devoting to it his exceptional moments or the latter part of his life when age shall have blunted the zest of his earthly nature, or by recognising it as something behind or above his normal action to which he can more or less imperfectly direct his natural being; the exceptional man turns to the supraterrestrial as the one aim and law of living and diminishes or mortifies as much as possible his earthly in the hope of developing his celestial nature. There are ages in which the supraterrestrial view gains a very powerful hold and men in general vacillate between an imperfect human living which cannot take its large natural expansion and a sick ascetic longing for the celestial life which also does not acquire in them its best pure and happy movement,—a sure sign that they have created some false war in their living and missed the reconciling equation which must exist somewhere in a divine dispensation of our nature.

Finally, there opens to us as our mental life deepens and subtler knowledge develops, the perception that the terrestrial and the supraterrestrial are not the only terms of being; there is something which is supracosmic and the highest remote origin of our existence. This perception is easily associated by spiritual enthusiasm, by the intolerance of our intellect, by the eagerness of our will or by a sick disgust in our vital being discouraged by the difficulties or disappointed by the results of life,—by any or all of these impulses,—with a sense of the entire vanity and unreality of all else than this remote Supreme, the vanity of human life, the unreality of cosmic existence, the bitter ugliness and cruelty of earth, the insufficiency of heaven. Here again the ordinary man cannot really live with these ideas, they only give at most a greyness and
restless dissatisfaction to the life he must still continue to follow; but the exceptional man abandons all to follow the truth he has seen. Periods there have been at least in certain countries, in which this view of being has become very powerful; with the result that a considerable part of the race swerved aside to the life of the ascetic,—not always with any real call to it,—the rest followed the normal life but with an unnerving belief in its unreality, an increasing littleness of motive, a missing of God’s joy in cosmic existence and a failure of the great progressive human idealism by which he spurs us to a collective self-development and a noble embrace of the battle and the labour. Here again there is a sign of some error and false opposition and a missing of the divine equation.

That equation can only be found by recognising the purport of our whole complex human nature and being in its right place in the cosmic movement, by giving its full legitimate value to each part of our composite nature and aspiration and by finding out the key of its unity. The finding must be by a synthesis and, since development is clearly the law of the human soul, by an evolutionary synthesis. Such a synthesis was attempted in the ancient Indian culture. It accepted four legitimate motives of human living, man’s vital interests and needs, his desires, his ethical and religious aspiration, his ultimate spiritual aims,—in other words, the claims of his vital, physical and emotional being, the claims of his ethical and religious being governed by a knowledge of the law of God and Nature and man, and the claims of his spiritual longing for the beyond and an ultimate release from living. It provided for a period of education and preparation based on this idea of life, a period of normal living to satisfy human desires and interests under the moderating rule of the ethical and religious being in us, a period of withdrawal and spiritual preparation, and a last period of renunciation of life and release. Evidently, if
applied as a universal rule, this norm of living would miss the fact that it is impossible for all to trace out this circle of development in a single short lifetime; but it was modified by the theory of a complete evolution pursued through a long succession of rebirths. This synthesis did much to raise the tone of human life; but eventually it collapsed. Its place was occupied by an exaggeration of the impulse of renunciation which destroyed the symmetry of its system and left standing only the two extreme movements of life in opposition to each other, the normal life of interests and desires with at most an ethical and religious colouring and the abnormal life of renunciation. The old synthesis in fact contained in itself the seed of this exaggeration and could not but lapse into it; for if we regard the escape from life as our desirable end, the impatience of the human intellect and will must end by driving at a short cut and getting rid as much as possible of more tedious and dilatory processes. To see the best, yet to postpone it and toil on patiently at the second best may be imposed on them by weakness of the nature, but cannot be made normally the rule of their ideal aspiration.

Our theory of a divine evolution of which man on earth is made the central instrument and human life at its highest offers the critical turning-point, takes into account the total nature of man and recognizes the legitimacy of his triple attraction, but on this basis that the lower cannot arrive at its full meaning until it is taken up, restated, transformed by the light and power and joy of the higher, nor does the higher stand in its right relation to the lower by rejection, but rather precisely by this taking up of it, this restatement and transformation. The terrestrial ideal, which has been so powerful in the modern mind, restored man and his life on earth and the collective hope of the race to their place; this is the great good it has accomplished. But on the other hand it undu-
ly limits man's scope, it ignores that which is the highest and in the end the largest thing in his nature, and by this limitation it misses the full pursuit of its own object. If mind is the highest thing in man and Nature, then indeed this will not happen, but if mind is only a quite partial unfolding of consciousness and there are powers beyond of which Nature in our race is capable, then not only does our hope upon earth, let alone beyond, depend upon their development, but this becomes the one proper road of our evolution, and mind and life themselves cannot grow into their fullness except by the opening up of the larger and greater consciousness mind only approaches. Such a larger and greater consciousness is the spiritual, rightly understood; for the spiritual consciousness is not only higher than the rest, but more embracing,—universal as well as transcendent, it can take up mind and life into its light and give them their utmost realisation of all for which they are seeking. It has a greater instrumentality of knowledge, a fountain of deeper power and will, an unlimited reach and intensity of joy. These are the things for which our mind, life and body are seeking, knowledge, power and joy, and to reject that by which all these arrive at their utmost plenitude, is to shut them out from their own highest consummation. On the other hand illusionism by seeking only some colourless purity of spiritual being condemns the whole action of the spirit, excludes from it all that it manifests in its being, makes the consummation of the evolution the cutting off of all that has been evolved rather than its fulfilment and deprives life and cosmic being of all sense and meaning. The intermediary, the supraterrestrial aspiration limits existence above by not proceeding to the highest oneness, below by not giving its proper amplitude of meaning to our life on earth.

Our being receives its right, its full sense and lives in the light of its integral truth when these things are taken in some large relation of unity and not in a mutual
exclusion. The supracosmic truth we accept; to realise it is the highest reach of our consciousness; but it is that very supracosmic existence which is also all the cosmic being, the cosmic consciousness, the cosmic will and life and has put these things forth, not outside itself or as an opposite principle or huge falsehood, but in its own being as its self-unfolding and self-expression. Cosmic being is not a meaningless jest or a stupid and stumbling error, but has a divine sense and truth; and the self-expression of the spirit is its high sense and the key of its enigma. Therefore the perfect self-expression of the spirit in the type of man must be the object of our human existence; this cannot be properly done without the supracosmic realisation, but neither can it be done by following that alone to the exclusion of its cosmic contents. The unity of the transcendent, the universal and the individual is the sole possible condition of the fullness of the self-expressing spirit; anything short of that can be only an imperfect and preparatory form, anything which excludes either of these three terms can only be at the most an aspectual realisation, not the disclosing of the integral truth of our being which is essential to a perfect spiritual self-unfolding.

The supra-terrestrial truth also we accept; the material is not the only plane of our existence, there are others to which we can attain, and not to reach up to whatever higher planes are open to us, not to have the experience of them and know and manifest their law in ourselves is to fall short of the height and fullness of our being. But the heavens are not the sole scene and therefore not the whole sense of the self-expression of spirit in the cosmos; this world and this earth and this human life are also part of it and they have their spiritual possibility; they too are a part of the unfolding, and they are not merely a foul lapse into the mire of something undivine, cruel, miserable and vain, offered by the spirit to itself or to its souls as a
thing to be suffered and then cast away. The unfolding of the spirit, its light and power and its joy and oneness, in man upon the earth, is an essential part of the divine plan and the obvious purport of the terrestrial and human creation. Therefore we accept the whole truth also of our terrestrial being and its scope; but to limit ourselves to that in only its first appearances is to exclude our divine potentiality and to miss the wider meaning of our human life and the much more that we secretly are. Our mortality is only justified in the light of our immortality; earth knows all herself only by opening to the heavens; the individual sees himself aright and uses his world divinely only when he has seen the light and lived in the power of the Divine.

A complete involution of all that the Spirit is, is an evident possible preliminary of its evolutionary self-expression in cosmos; for if there is a possibility of self-expression by luminous deployment of the being, there is also a possibility of self-expression by self-finding, a deployment which takes the form and goes through the progression of a self-recovery. This possibility is the intention of the spirit in the material universe and explains all its anomalies; an involution in the Inconscience, an evolution through the Ignorance which is a play with possibilities through a partial knowledge, a consummation of essential self-knowledge with a deployment depending on its self-formulation in all the infinity of light, power joy of the being are the three stages which the terms of this cycle of self-expression demand. It is the last movement which is what we have called the divine Life. Man has to find and establish in himself its conditions, to grow into it, and then to extend himself in them, to grow in it. This is his individual salvation which he pursues through the long succession of his rebirths, but by the law of his oneness with others an individual salvation by itself cannot be his sufficient aim; his freedom and perfection are a condition of the advance to freedom and perfection
of his race. His individual cycle is not a solitary curve, but part of the cycle of the universal Being which fulfils itself in the figure of man. Therefore that life alone is perfectly divine which, having found its own highest potentialities, becomes a power for the divine potentialities of the Spirit in humanity. Otherwise it misses something that the Divine eternally keeps, its power of all-embracing unity.
Essays on the Gita

THE SUPREME DIVINE

We have already now, by what has been said in the seventh chapter, the starting-point of our new and fuller position fixed with sufficient precision. Substantially it comes to this that we are to move towards a supreme existence not by a total exclusion of our cosmic nature, but by a higher and a spiritual fulfilment of it; there is to be a change from our mortal imperfection to a divine perfection of being. The first idea on which this possibility is founded, is the conception of the individual soul in man as in its eternal essence and its original power a ray of the supreme soul and Godhead and here a manifestation of him, being of his being, nature of his nature, but in the mental and physical consciousness self-forgetful of its source and reality. The second idea, we have seen, is that of the double nature of the Soul in manifestation, the original nature in which it is one with its own true spiritual being, the derived nature in which it is subject to the confusions of egoism and ignorance. The latter has to be cast away and the spiritual nature of our being has to be inwardly recovered and fulfilled. By that inner self-fulfilment we return to the nature of the spirit and Godhead from whom we have descended into this mortal figure of being.

Gita VII. 29, 30, VIII.
There is here at once a departure from the general contemporary mind of Indian thought; in place of its idea of a self-annulment in Nature we get the glimpse of an ampler idea of a self-fulfilment in divine Nature, and there is at least a foreshadowing of the later developments of the religions of Bhakti. Our first experience of what is beyond the normal, the egoistic being in which we live, is still for the Gita the calm of a pervading impersonal immutable self in whose equality and oneness we lose our egoistic personality and cast off in its tranquil purity all our motives of desire and passion; but our second completer vision reveals to us a divine Being from whom all that we are proceeds and to which all that we are belongs, self and nature, world and spirit. One with him in self and spirit, we do not lose but rather recover ourselves in him by an integral self-finding through works founded in his and our spiritual nature, by an integral self-becoming through knowledge of the Divine in whom all exists and who is all, most sovereignly and decisively by an integral self-giving through love and devotion of our whole being to this All and this Supreme, attracted to the Master of our works, to the Inhabitant of our hearts, to the continent of all our conscious existence. To him who is the source of all that we are, we give all that we are, turn into knowledge of him all our knowing and into light of his power all our action. The passion of love in our self-giving carries us up to him; that completes the triple cord of the sacrifice, perfects the triune key of the highest secret, uttamam rahasyam.

An integral knowledge in our self-giving is the first condition of its effective force; and therefore first of all we have to know him in all the powers and principles of his divine existence, tattwatalah, in the whole harmony of it. But to the ancient thought the value of this knowledge, tattvajñāna, lay in its power for release out of our mortal birth into immortality. The Gita therefore pro-
ceeds next to show how this liberation too in its highest degree is a final outcome of its own movement of spiritual self-fulfilment. The knowledge of the Purushottama, it says in effect, is the perfect knowledge of the Brahman. "They who have resort to Me,—as their refuge, caranam, acritya, their divine light and deliverer and receiver of their souls,—in their spiritual effort towards release from age and death, from the mortal being and its limitations, come to know, says Krishna, that Brahman, and to know all the integrality of the spiritual nature and Karma in its entirety; because they know Me and know at the same time the material and the divine nature of being and the truth of the Master of sacrifice, they keep knowledge of Me also in the critical moment of their departure from physical existence and have at that moment their whole consciousness in union with Me. Therefore they attain to Me" and are no longer bound to the mortal existence, they reach the very highest status of the Divine quite as effectively as those who lose their separate personality in the impersonal and immutable Brahman. So the Gita closes this important and decisive seventh chapter.

Here we have certain expressions which give us in their brief sum the chief essential truths of the manifestation of the supreme Divine, all the originative and effective aspects of it which concern the soul in its return to integral self-knowledge. First, that Brahman, tad brahma; adhyatma, second, the principle of the self in Nature; adhibhuta and adhidaiva next, the objective phenomenon and subjective phenomenon of being; adhityajna last, the secret of the cosmic principle of works and sacrifice. I, the Purushottama (mam viduh), says Krishna in effect, who am above all these things, must yet be sought and known through all together and by means of their relations by the human consciousness which is seeking its way back to Me. But these terms in themselves are not at first quite clear or at least they are open to different interpretations, they
have to be made precise in their connotation, and Arjuna the disciple at once asks for their elucidation. Krishna answers very briefly,—nowhere does the Gita linger very long upon any purely metaphysical explanation, but gives only so much and in such a way as will make their truth just seizable for the soul to proceed on to experience. By that Brahman, a phrase which in the Upanishad is more than once used for the self-existent Being as opposed to the phenomenal being, the Gita intends, it appears, the immutable self-existence which is the highest self-expression of the Divine, and on whose unalterable eternity all the rest, all that moves and evolves, is founded, aksharam paramam. By Adhyatma it means swabhava, the being of the soul in the supreme Nature. Karma, it says, is the name given to the creative impulse and energy, visarga, which looses out things from this first essential self-becoming and effects, makes, works out the cosmic becoming of existences in Prakriti. By adhibhūta is to be understood all the result of mutable becoming, ksharo bhavah. By adhidaiva is expressed the Purusha, the soul in Nature, the subjective being who observes and enjoys as the object of his consciousness all that is becoming of his essential being as it is worked out by karma in Nature. By adhiyajna, the Lord of works and sacrifice, I mean, says Krishna, myself, the Divine, the Godhead, the Purushottama here secret in the body of all these embodied existences, All that is, therefore, falls within this formula.

The Gita immediately proceeds from this brief statement to work out the idea of the final release by knowledge which it has suggested in the last verse of the preceding chapter. It will return indeed upon its thought hereafter to give such farther light as is needed for action and inner realisation, and we may wait till then for a fuller knowledge of all that these terms indicate. But before proceeding it is necessary to bring out the connection between these things which this passage itself and what
has gone before justify us in understanding. It gives us the Gita's idea of the process of the cosmos. First there is the Brahman, the highest immutable self-existent being which all beings are behind the play of cosmic Nature in time and space and causality; for by that alone time and space and causality are able to exist, without that support omnipresent, yet indivisible, they could not proceed to their divisions and measures and results. But of itself the immutable Brahman does nothing, causes nothing, determines nothing; it is impartial, equal, all-supporting. What then originates, determines, gives the divine impulsion of the Supreme? what is it that governs Karma, actively unravels the becoming out of the being? It is Swabhava. The Supreme, the Godhead, the Purushottama is there and supports on his eternal immutability the action of his higher spiritual nature, displays the divine Being, Consciousness, Will or Power; the self-awareness of the Spirit perceives in the light of self-knowledge the idea of what is in his being, and expresses in the spiritual nature of the Jiva the inherent truth and principle of the self of each, that which works itself out, the essential divine nature in all which remains constant behind all conversions, perversions, reversions. All that is loosed out into cosmic Nature for her to do what she can with it under the inner eye of the Purushottama; out of the constant swabhava, essential nature and self-principle of the being of each, she creates the varied mutations by which she strives to express it, unravels all her changes in name and form, in time and space and the successions of condition developed out of each other in time and space which we call causality.

All this bringing out and continual change from state to state is Karma, action of Nature, the energy of Prakriti, the worker, the goddess of processes. It is first this loosing forth of the swabhava into its creative action, visargah; and the creation is of existences in the
becoming, bhūta-karah, and of all that they become, bhāva-karah; all taken together, it is a constant birth of things in Time, ńdbhava, of which the creative energy of Karma is the principle. All this mutable becoming emerges by a combination of the powers and energies of Nature, adhi-bhūta, which is the object of the soul's consciousness. In it all the soul is the enjoying and observing godhead, and the divine powers of mind and will and sense and all conscious being by which it reflects this working of Prakriti, are its godheads, adhidaiva. This soul in Nature is therefore the kshara purusha, it is the mutable soul; the same soul in the Brahman is the akṣara purusha, the immutable self. But in the form and body of the mutable being inhabits the supreme Godhead. Possessing at once the calm of the immutable existence and the enjoyment of the mutable action there dwells in man the Purushottama. He is not only remote from us in some supreme status beyond, but he is here in the body of every being, in the heart of man and in Nature, receiving the works of Nature as a sacrifice and awaiting the conscious self-giving of the human soul, but always even in the human creature's ignorance and egoism the Lord of his swabhava and the Master of all his works, who presides over the law of Prakriti and Karma. From him the soul came forth into the play of Nature's mutations; to him the soul returns through immutable self-existence to the highest status of the Divine, paraṁ dhama.

Man born into the world, revolves between world and world in the action of Prakriti and Karma; what the soul in him thinks, contemplates and acts, that always he becomes. All that he had been, determined his present birth; and all that he is, thinks, does in this life up to the moment of his death, determines what he will become in the worlds beyond and in lives yet to be. If birth is a becoming, death also is a becoming, not by any means a cessation. The body is abandoned, but the soul goes
on its way, tyaktvā kalacakram. Much then depends on
what he is at the critical moment of his departure; what-
ever form of becoming his consciousness is fixed on at
the time of death and has been full of that always in its
mind and thought before death, to that form he must
attain, since the Prakriti by Karma works out the soul’s
thoughts and energies and that is in real fact her whole
business. Therefore, if the returning soul of the human
being desires to attain to the status of the Purushottama,
there are two necessities, two conditions which must be
satisfied. He must have moulded towards that the whole
inner life of his being in his earthly living; and he must be
faithful to his aspiration and will in his departing. "Who-
ever leaves his body and departs" says Krishna "remin-
bering me at his time of end, comes to my bhāva," my
status of being; he becomes united with the being of the
Divine beyond, which is the ultimate becoming of the
soul, the last result of Karma in its return upon itself.
The soul which has followed the play of cosmic Nature
veiling its essential spiritual nature, its original form of
becoming, sva-bhāva, and passed through all these other
ways of becoming of its consciousness, tam tam bhāvam,
which are only its phenomena, returns to that essential
nature and, finding through this return its true self, comes
to the original status of being which is from the point of
view of the return a highest becoming, mād-bhāvam. In
a certain sense we may say that it becomes God, since it
unites itself with the Divine in a last transformation of
its nature and being.

The Gita here lays a great stress on the thought and
state of mind at the time of death, a stress which will
with difficulty be understood if we do not recognise what
may be called the self-creative power of the conscious-
ness. What the thought, the inner regard, the faith, çra-
ddhiḥ, settles itself upon, into that our inner being tends
to change; and this becomes a decisive force when we go
to those higher spiritual self-evolved experiences which are less dependent on external things than is our ordinary psychology. There we can see ourselves becoming that on which we keep our minds fixed and to which we constantly aspire; therefore there any lapse of the thought, any infidelity of the memory to it means always a retardation of the change or some lapse in its process and a going back towards what we were before, so long as we have not substantially and irrevocably fixed our new becoming; but when we have done that, the memory of it remains self-existently because that now is the form of our consciousness. In the critical moment of passing from the mortal plane of living, the importance of our then state of consciousness becomes evident. But it is not a death-bed remembrance at variance with or insufficiently prepared by the whole tenour of our life and our past subjectivity which can have any saving power. The thought of the Gita here is not on a par with the indulgences and facilities of popular religion which make the absolution and lastunction of the priest, an edifying "Christian" death after an unedifying profane life or the precaution or accident of a death in sacred Banaras or holy Ganges a sufficient machinery of salvation. The divine subjective becoming on which the mind has to be fixed firmly in the moment of the physical death, *vam smaran bhāvam tyajati ante kulevaram*, must have been that into which the soul was at each moment growing inwardly during the physical life, *saddā tad-bhāva-bhāvitaḥ*. "Therefore," says the divine Teacher, "at all times remember me and fight; for if thy mind and thy understanding are always fixed on and given up to Me, *mayi arūta-manu-buddhiḥ*, to Me thou shalt surely come. For by thinking always of him with a consciousness united with him in an undeviating Yoga of constant practice, one goes to the divine, the supreme Purusha."

We here arrive at the first description of this supreme Purusha, he who is more even than the Immutable and to
whom the Gita gives subsequently the name of Purushottama. Yet he too in his eternal being is immutable and beyond all this manifestation in which there dawn on us only faint glimpses of his being though many varied symbols and disguises, avyakto aksharah. Still he is not merely a featureless or indiscernible existence, anirdecyam; or he is indiscernible only because he is subtler than the last subtlety of which the mind is aware and because the form of the Divine is beyond our thought, anor aniyavan sam achintya-rupam. This supreme Soul and Self is the seer, the Ancient of Days, in his eternal self-vision and wisdom the Master and Ruler of all existence, who sets in its place in his being all that is, kavim puranan anucaitaram sarvasya dhatalaram. This supreme soul is the immutable self-existent Brahman of whom the Veda-knowers speak, and this is that into which the doers of askesis enter when they have passed beyond the affections of the mind of mortality and for the desire of which they practise the control of the bodily passions. That eternal reality is the highest status of being (padam), therefore is it the supreme goal of the soul's movement in Time, itself no movement but a status original, sempiternal, supreme, paramam sthanam adyam.

The Gita describes the last state of the mind of the Yogi in which he passes to this supreme divine being. A motionless mind, a soul armed with the strength of Yoga, a union with God in bhakti,—the union by love is not here superseded by the featureless unification through knowledge, it remains to the end a part of the supreme force of the Yoga,—and the life-force entirely drawn up and set between the brows in the seat of mystic vision. All the doors of the sense are closed, the mind is shut in into the heart, the life-force taken up out of its diffused movement into the head, the intelligence concentrated in the utterance of the sacred syllable OM and its con-

* The language here is taken bodily from the Upanishads.
ceptive thought in the remembrance of the supreme Godhead, mām anusmaran. That is the established Yogic way of going, a last offering up of the whole being to the Eternal, the Transcendent. But still that is only a process; the essential condition is the constant undeviating memory of the Divine in life, even in action and battle,—mām anusmara yudhiya cha,—and the turning of the whole act of living into an uninterrupted Yoga, nitya-yoga. Whoever does that, finds Me easy to attain, says the Godhead; he is the great soul who reaches the supreme perfection.

The condition to which the soul comes when it thus departs from life, is supracosmic. The highest heavens of the cosmic plan are subject to a return to rebirth; but there is no rebirth imposed on the soul that departs to the Purushottama; therefore whatever fruit can be had from the aspiration of knowledge to the indefinable Brahman is acquired also by this other and comprehensive aspiration through knowledge, works and love to the self-existent Divine who is the Master of works and the Friend of mankind and of all beings. To know him so and so to seek him does not bind to rebirth or to the chain of Karma; the soul can satisfy its desire to escape permanently from the transient and painful condition of mortality. And the Gita here, in order to explain this circling round of births and the escape from it, adopts the ancient theory of the cosmic cycles which became a fixed part of Indian cosmological notions. There is an eternal cycle of alternating periods of cosmic manifestation and nonmanifestation, each period called respectively a day and a night of the creator Brahma, each of equal length in Time, the long aeon of his working which endures for a thousand ages, the long aeon of his sleep of another thousand silent ages. At the coming of the day all manifestations are born into being out of the unmanifest, at the coming of the Night all vanish or are dissolved into it. Thus all these existences alternate helplessly in the cycle of becoming and non-becoming; they come into the becom-
ing again and again, bhūtvā bhūtvā, and they go back constantly into the unmanifest. But this unmanifest is not the original divinity of the Being; there is another status of his existence, bhāvo 'ṇyo, a supracosmic unmanifest beyond this cosmic non-manifestation, which is eternally self-seated and does not, like this cosmic status of manifestation, perish with the perishing of all these existences. "He is called the unmanifest immutable, him they speak of as the supreme soul and status, and those who attain to him, return not; that is my supreme place of being, pāramam dhāma." For the soul attaining to it has escaped out of the cycle of cosmic manifestation and non-manifestation.

Whether we entertain or we dismiss this cosmological notion,—which depends on the value we are inclined to assign to the knowledge of "the knowers of day and night,"—the important thing is the turn the Gita gives to it. One might easily imagine that this eternally unmanifested Being whose status seems to have nothing to do with the manifestation or the non-manifestation, must be the ever undefined and indefinable Absolute, and the proper way to reach him is to get rid of all that we have become in the manifestation, not to carry up to it our whole inner consciousness in a combined concentration of the mind's knowledge, the heart's love, the Yogic will, the vital life-force. Especially, bhakti seems inapplicable to the Absolute who is void of every relation, avyavahārya. But the Gita insists. "But" it says,—although this condition is supracosmic and although it is eternally unmanifest,—still "that supreme Purusha has to be won by a bhakti which turns to him alone, him in whom all beings exist and by whom all this world has been extended in space." In other words, the supreme Purusha is not an entirely relationless Absolute aloof from our illusions, but he is the Seer, Creator and Ruler of the worlds, kavin anuçāsitāram, dhātāram, and it is by knowing and by loving Him as the One and the All, vāsudevah sarvam iti, that we ought by a union with him
of our whole conscious being to seek the supreme consummation.

Then there comes a more curious thought which the Gita has adopted from the mystics of the early Vedanta. It gives the different times at which the Yogin has to leave his body according as he wills to seek rebirth or to avoid it. Fire and light and smoke or mist, the day and the night, the bright fortnight of the lunar month and the dark, the northern solstice and the southern, these are the opposites. By the first in each pair the knowsers of the Brahman go to the Brahman; but by the second the Yogin reaches the "lunar light" and returns subsequently to human birth. These are the bright and the dark paths, called the path of the gods and the path of the fathers in the Upanishads, and the Yogin who knows them is not misled into any error. Whatever psycho-physical fact or else symbolism there may be behind this notion,—it comes down from the age of the mystics who saw in every physical thing an effective symbol of the psychological and who traced everywhere an interaction and a sort of identity of the outward with the inward, light and knowledge, the fiery principle and the spiritual energy,—we need observe only the turn by which the Gita closes the passage; "Therefore at all times be in Yoga."

For that is after all the one essential, to make the whole being one with the Divine, so one as to be constantly fixed in union, and thus to make all living, not only thought and meditation, but action, labour, battle a remembering of God. "Remember me and fight," means not to lose the ever-present thought of the Eternal for one single moment in the clash of the temporal which absorbs normally our minds, and that seems sufficiently difficult, almost impossible. It is entirely possible indeed only if the other conditions are satisfied. If we have become in our consciousness one self with all, one self which is always to our thought the Divine, and even our eyes and senses see and sense the
Divine everywhere so that it is impossible for us at any time at all to think of anything as that merely which the unenlightened sense perceives, but only as the Divine concealed and manifested in that form, if our will is one in consciousness with a supreme will and every act of will, of mind, of body is felt to come from it, be its movement, then what the Gita demands can be integrally done. The remembrance of the Divine becomes no longer an intermittent act of the mind, but the natural condition and in a way the very substance of the consciousness. The Jiva has become possessed of its right and natural, its spiritual relation to the Purushottama and all our life is a Yoga, an accomplished and yet an eternally self-accomplishing oneness.
The Synthesis of Yoga

CHAPTER XLVII

THE ANANDA BRAHMAN

The way of devotion in the integral synthetic Yoga will take the form of a seeking after the Divine through love and delight and a seizing with joy on all the ways of his being. It will find its acme in a perfect union of love and a perfect enjoyment of all the ways of the soul's intimacy with God. It may start from knowledge or it may start from works, but it will then turn knowledge into a joy of luminous union with the being of the Beloved and turn works into a joy of the active union of our being with the will and the power of being of the Beloved. Or it may start directly from love and delight; it will then take both these other things into itself and will develop them as part of the complete joy of oneness.

The beginning of the heart's attraction to the Divine may be impersonal, the touch of an impersonal joy in something universal or transcendent that has revealed itself directly or indirectly to our emotional or our aesthetic being or to our capacity of spiritual felicity. That which we thus grow aware of is the Ananda Brahman, the bliss existence. There is an adoration of an impersonal Delight and Beauty, of a pure and an infinite perfection to which we can give no name or form, a moved attraction of the
soul to some ideal and infinite Presence, Power, existence in the world or beyond it, which in some way becomes psychologically or spiritually sensible to us and then more and more intimate and real. That is the call, the touch of the bliss existence upon us. Then to have always the joy and nearness of its presence, to know what it is, so as to satisfy the intellect and the intuitional mind of its constant reality, to put our passive and, so far as we can manage it, our active, our inner immortal and even our outer mortal being into perfect harmony with it, grow into a necessity of our living. And to open ourselves to it is what we feel to be the one true happiness, to live into it the sole real perfection.

A transcendent Bliss, unimaginable and inexpressible by the mind and speech, is the nature of the Ineffable. That broods immanent and secret in the whole universe and in everything in the universe. Its presence is described as a secret ether of the bliss of being, of which the Scripture says that, if this were not, none could for a moment breathe or live. And this spiritual bliss is here also in our hearts. It is hidden in from the toil of the surface mind which catches only at weak and flawed translations of it into various mental, vital and physical forms of the joy of existence. But if the mind has once grown sufficiently subtle and pure in its receptions and not limited by the grosser nature of our outward responses to existence, we can take a reflection of it which will wear perhaps wholly or predominantly the hue of whatever is strongest in our nature. It may present itself first as a yearning for some universal Beauty which we feel in Nature and man and in all that is around us; or we may have the intuition of some transcendent Beauty of which all apparent beauty here is only a symbol. That is how it may come to those in whom the aesthetic being is developed and insistent and the instincts which, when they find form of expression, make the poet and artist, are predominant,
Or it may be the sense of a divine spirit of love or else a helpful and compassionate infinite Presence in the universe or behind or beyond it which responds to us when we turn the need of our spirit towards it. So it may first show itself when the emotional being is intensely developed. It may come near to us in other ways, but always as a Power or Presence of delight, beauty, love or peace which touches the mind, but is beyond the forms these things take ordinarily in the mind.

For all joy, beauty, love, peace, delight are outflowings from the Ananda Brahman,—all delight of the spirit, the intellect, the imagination, aesthetic sense, ethical aspiration and satisfaction, action, life, the body. And through all ways of our being the Divine can touch us and make use of them to awaken and liberate the spirit. But to reach the Ananda Brahman in itself the mental reception of it must be subtilised, spiritualised, universalised, discharged of every thing that is turbid and limiting. For when we draw quite near or enter into it, it is by an awakened spiritual sense of a transcendent and a universal Delight which exists within and yet behind and beyond the contradictions of the world and to which we can unite ourselves through a growing universal and spiritual or a transcendental ecstasy.

Ordinarily, the mind is satisfied with reflecting this Infinity we perceive or with feeling the sense of it within and without us, as an experience which, however frequent, yet remains exceptional. It seems in itself so satisfying and wonderful when it comes and our ordinary mind and the active life which we have to lead may seem to us so incompatible with it, that we may think it excessive to expect any thing more. But the very spirit of Yoga is this, to make the exceptional normal, and to turn that which is above us and greater than our normal selves into our own constant consciousness. Therefore we should not hesitate to open ourselves more steadily to whatever experience of the In-
finite we have, to purify and intensify it, to make it our object of constant thought and contemplation, till it becomes the originating power that acts in us, the Godhead we adore and embrace, our whole being is put into tune with it and it is made the very self of our being.

Our experience of it has to be purified of any mental alloy in it, otherwise it departs, we cannot hold it. And part of this purification is that it shall cease to be dependent on any cause or exciting condition of mind; it must become its own cause and self-existent, source of all other delight, which will exist only by it, and not attached to any cosmic or other image or symbol through which we first came into contact with it. Our experience of it has to be constantly intensified and made more concentrated; otherwise we shall only reflect it in the mirror of the imperfect mind and not reach that point of uplifting and transfiguration by which we are carried beyond the mind into the ineffable bliss. Object of our constant thought and contemplation, it will turn all that is into itself, reveal itself as the universal Ananda Brahman and make all existence its outpouring. If we wait upon it for the inspiration of all our inner and our outer acts, it will become the joy of the Divine pouring itself through us in light and love and power on life and all that lives. Sought by the adoration and love of the soul, it reveals itself as the Godhead, we see in it the face of God and know the bliss of our Lover. Tuning our whole being to it, we grow into a happy perfection of likeness to it, a human rendering of the divine nature. And when it becomes in every way the self of our self, we are fulfilled in being and we bear the plenitude.

Brahman always reveals himself to us in three ways, within ourselves, above our plane, around us in the universe. Within us, there are two centres of the Purusha, the inner Soul through which he touches us to our awakening; there is the Purusha in the lotus of the heart which opens
upward all our powers and the Purusha in the thousand-petalled lotus whence descend through the thought and will, opening the third eye in us, the lightnings of vision and the fire of the divine energy. The bliss existence may come to us through either one of these centres. When the lotus of the heart breaks open, we feel a divine joy, love and peace expanding in us like a flower of light which irradiates the whole being. They can then unite themselves with their secret source, the Divine in our hearts, and adore him as in a temple; they can flow upwards to take possession of the thought and the will and break out upward towards the Transcendent; they stream out in thought and feeling and act towards all that is around us. But so long as our normal being offers any obstacle or is not wholly moulded into a response to this divine influence or an instrument of this divine possession, the experience will be intermittent and we may fall back constantly into our old mortal heart; but by repetition, abhyasa, or by the force of our desire and adoration of the Divine, it will be progressively remodelled until this abnormal experience becomes our natural consciousness.

When the other upper lotus opens, the whole mind becomes full of a divine light, joy and power, behind which is the Divine, the Lord of our being on his throne with our soul beside him or drawn inward into his rays; all the thought and will become then a luminosity, power and ecstasy; in communication with the Transcendent, this can pour down towards our mortal members and flow by them outwards on the world. In this dawn too there are, as the Vedic mystics knew, our alternations of its day and night, our exiles from the light; but as we grow in the power to hold this new existence, we become able to look long on the sun from which this irradiation proceeds and in our inner being we can grow one body with it. Sometimes the rapidity of this change depends on the strength of our longing for the Divine thus revealed, and on the intensity
of our force of seeking; but at others it proceeds rather by a passive surrender to the rhythms of his all-wise working which acts always by its own at first inscrutable method. But the latter becomes the foundation when our love and trust are complete and our whole being lies in the clasp of a Power that is perfect love and wisdom.

The Divine reveals himself in the world around us when we look upon that with a spiritual desire or delight that seeks him in all things. There is often a sudden opening by which the veil of forms is itself turned into a revelation. A universal spiritual Presence, a universal peace, a universal infinite Delight has manifested, immanent, embracing, all-penetrating. This presence by our love of it, our delight in it, our constant thought of it returns and grows upon us; it becomes the thing that we see and all else is only its habitation, form and symbol. Even all that is most outward, the body, the form, the sound, whatever our senses seize, are seen as this Presence; they cease to be physical and are changed into a substance of spirit. This transformation means a transformation of our own inner consciousness; we are taken by the surrounding Presence into itself and we become part of it. Our own mind, life, body become to us only its habitation and temple, a form of its working and an instrument of its self-expression. All is only soul and body of this delight.

This is the Divine seen around us and on our own physical plane. But he may reveal himself above. We see or feel him as a high-uplifted Presence, a great infinite of Ananda above us,—or in it, our Father in heaven,—and do not feel or see him in ourselves or around us. So long as we keep this vision, the mortality in us is quelled by that Immortality; it feels the light, power and joy and responds to it according to its capacity; or it feels the descent of the spirit and it is then for a time transformed or else uplifted into some lustre of reflection of the light and power; it becomes a vessel of the Ananda. But at
other times it lapses into the old mortality and exists or works dully or pettily in the ruck of its earthly habits. The complete redemption comes by the descent of the divine Power into the human mind and body and the remoulding of their inner life into the divine image,—what the Vedic seers called the birth of the Son by the sacrifice. It is in fact by a continual sacrifice or offering, a sacrifice of adoration and aspiration, of works, of thought and knowledge, of the mounting flame of the Godward will that we build ourselves into the being of this Infinite.

When we possess firmly this consciousness of the Ananda Brahman in all of these three manifestations, above, within, around, we have the full oneness of it and embrace all existences in its delight, peace, joy and love; then all the worlds become the body of this self. But we have not the richest knowledge of this. Ananda if it is only an impersonal presence, largeness or immanence that we feel, if our adoration has not been intimate enough for this Being to reveal to us out of its wide-extended joy the face and body and make us feel the hands of the Friend and Lover. Its impersonality is the blissful greatness of the Brahman, but from that can look out upon us the sweetness and intimate control of the divine Personality. For Ananda is the presence of the Self and Master of our being and the stream of its outflowing can be the pure joy of his Lila.
The Renaissance in India

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To attempt to penetrate through the indeterminate confusion of present tendencies and first efforts in order to foresee what exact forms the new creation will take, would be an effort of very doubtful utility. One might as well try to forecast a harmony from the sounds made by the tuning of the instrument. In one direction or another we may just detect certain decisive indications, but even these are only first indications and we may be quite sure that much lies behind them that will go far beyond anything that they yet suggest. This is true whether in religion and spirituality or thought and science, poetry and art or society and politics. Everywhere there is, at most, only a beginning of beginnings.

One thing seems at any rate certain, that the spiritual motive will be in the future of India, as in her past, the real originative and dominating strain. By spirituality we do not mean a remote metaphysical mind or the tendency to dream rather than to act. That was not the great India of old in her splendid days of vigour,—whatever certain European critics or interpreters of her culture may say,—and it will not be the India of the future. Metaphysical thinking will always no doubt be a strong element in her mentality, and it is to be hoped that she will never lose her great, her sovereign powers in that direction; but Indian
metaphysics are as far removed from the brilliant or the profound idea-spinning of the French or the German mind as from the broad intellectual generalising on the basis of the facts of physical science which for some time did duty for philosophy in modern Europe. It has always been in its essential parts an intellectual approach to spiritual realisation. Though in later times it led too much away from life, yet that was not its original character whether in its early vedantic intuional forms or in those later developments of it, such as the Gita, which belong to the period of its most vigorous intellectual originality and creation. Buddhism itself, the philosophy which first really threw doubt on the value of life, did so only in its intellectual tendency; in its dynamic parts, by its ethical system and spiritual method, it gave a new set of values, a severe vigour, yet a gentler idealism to human living and was therefore powerfully creative both in the arts which interpret life and in society and politics. To realise intimately truth of spirit and to quicken and to remould life by it is the native tendency of the Indian mind, and to that it must always return in all its periods of health, greatness and vigour.

All great movements of life in India have begun with a new spiritual thought and usually a new religious activity. What more striking and significant fact can there be than this that even the new European influence, which was an influence intellectual, rationalistic, so often antireligious and which drew so much of its idealism from the increasingly cosmopolitan, mundane and secularist thought of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, precipitated in India from the very first an attempt at religious reformation and led actually to the creation of new religions? The instinct of the Indian mind was that, if a reconstruction of ideas and of society was to be attempted, it must start from a spiritual basis and take from the first a religious motive and form. The Brahma Somaj
had in its inception a large cosmopolitan idea, it was even
almost eclectic in the choice of the materials for the synthe-
sis it attempted; it combined a Vedantic first inspiration,
outward forms akin to those of English Unitarianism and
something of its temper, a modicum of Christian influ-
ence, a strong dose of religious rationalism and intellec-
tualism. It is noteworthy, however, that it did start from
an endeavour to restate the Vedanta, and it is curiously
significant of the way in which even what might be well
called a protestant movement follows the curve of the
national tradition and temper, that the three stages of its
growth, marked by the three churches or congregations
into which it split, correspond to the three eternal motives
of the Indian religious mind, Jnana, Bhakti and Karma,
the contemplative and philosophical, the emotional and
fervently devotional and the actively and practically dy-
namic spiritual mentality. The Arya Somaj in the Punjab
founded itself on a fresh interpretation of the truth of the
Veda and an attempt to apply old Vedic principles of
life to modern conditions. The movement associated with
the great names of Ramakrishna and Vivekananda has
been a very wide synthesis of past religious motives and
spiritual experience topped by a reaffirmation of the old
asceticism and monasticism, but with new living strands
in it and combined with a strong humanitarianism and zeal
of missionary expansion. There has been too the move-
ment of orthodox Hindu revivalism, more vigorous two
or three decades ago than it is now. The rest of India
has either felt vibrations of some of these great regional
movements or been touched with smaller ones of their
own making. In Bengal a strong Neo-Vaishnavic tendency
is the most recent development of its religious mind and
shows that the preparatory creative activity has not yet
finished its workings. Throughout India the old religious
sects and disciplines are becoming strongly revitalised,
vocal, active, moved to a fresh self-affirmation. Islam has
recently shared in the general stirring and attempts to return vitally to the original Islamic ideals or to strike out fresh developments have preceded or accompanied the awakening to life of the long torpid Musulman mass in India.

Perhaps none of these forms, nor all the sum of them may be definitive, they may constitute only the preparatory self-finding of the Indian spiritual mind recovering its past and turning towards its future. India is the meeting-place of the religions and among these Hinduism alone is by itself a vast and complex thing, not so much a religion as a great diversified and yet subtly unified mass of spiritual thought, realisation and aspiration. What will finally come out of all this stir and ferment, lies yet in the future. There has been an introduction of fresh fruitful impulses to activity: there has been much revival of the vitality of old forms, a new study, rehabilitation, resort to old disciplines and old authorities and scriptures,—we may note that Vedanta, Veda, Purana, Yoga, and recently the same thing is being initiated with regard to the Tantra, have each in their turn been brought back into understanding, if not always yet to a perfect understanding, to practice, to some efficacy on thought and on life; there has been an evolution of enlarging truth and novel forms out of ancient ideas and renewed experience. Whatever the last upshot may be, this spiritual and religious ferment and activity stand out as the most prominent feature of the new India; and it may be observed that while in other fields the tendency has been, until quite recently, more critical than constructive, here every impulse has been throughout powerfully creative. Especially, we see everywhere the tendency towards the return of the spirit upon life; the reassertion of a spiritual living as a foundation for a new life of the nation has been a recognizable impulse. Even asceticism and monasticism are rapidly becoming, no longer merely contemplative, self-centred
or aloof, but missionary, educative, humanitarian. And recently in the utterances of the leaders of thought the insistence on life has been growing marked, self-conscious and positive. This is at present the most significant immediate sign of the future. Probably, here lies the key of the Indian renaissance, in a return from forms to the depths of a released spirituality which will show itself again in a pervading return of spirituality upon life.

But what are likely to be the great constructive ideas and the great decisive instruments which this spirituality will take to deal with and govern life, is as yet obscure, because the thought of this new India is still inchoate and indeterminative. Religions, creeds and forms are only a characteristic outward sign of the spiritual impulsion and religion itself is the intensive action by which it tries to find its inward force. Its expansive movement comes in the thought which it throws out on life, the ideals which open up new horizons and which the intellect accepts and life labours to assimilate. Philosophy in India has been the intellectual canaliser of spiritual knowledge and experience, but the philosophical intellect has not as yet decidedly begun the work of new creation; it has been rather busy with the restatement of its past gains than with any new statement which would visibly and rapidly enlarge the boundaries of its thought and aspiration. The contact of European philosophy has not been fruitful of any creative reaction; first because the past philosophies of Europe have very little that could be of any utility in this direction, nothing of the first importance in fact which India has not already stated in forms better suited to her own spiritual temper and genius, and though the thought of Nietzsche, of Bergson and of James has recently touched more vitally just a few minds here and there, their drift is much too externally pragmatic and vitalistic to be genuinely assimilable by the Indian spirit. But, principally, a real Indian philosophy can only be evolved out of
spiritual experience and as the fruit of the spiritual seeking which all the religious movements of the past century have helped to generalise. It cannot spring, as in Europe, out of the critical intellect solely or as the fruit of scientific thought and knowledge. Nor has there been very much preparing force of original critical thought in nineteenth century India. The more original intellects have either turned towards pure literature or else been busy assimilating and at most Indianising modern ideas. And though a stronger thought tendency is now beginning, all is yet uncertain flux or brilliantly vague foreshadowing.

In poetry, literature, art, science there have, on the contrary, been definite beginnings. Bengal in these, as in many other directions, has been recently the chief testing crucible or the first workshop of the Shakti of India; it is there she has chosen to cast in the greatest vivacity of new influences and develop her initial forms and inspirations. In the rest of India there is often much activity of production and one hears here and there of a solitary poet or prose-writer of genius or notable talent; but Bengal has already a considerable literature of importance, with a distinct spirit and form, well-based and always developing; she has now a great body of art original, inspired, full of delicate beauty and vision; she has not only two renowned scientists, one of the two world-famous for a central and far-reaching discovery, but a young school of research which promises to count for something in the world’s science. It is here therefore that we can observe the trend of the Indian mind and the direction in which it is turning. Especially the art of the Bengal panters is very significant, more so even than the prose of Bunkim or the poetry of Tagore. Bengali poetry has had to feel its way and does not seem yet quite definitively to have found it, but Bengal art has found its way at once at the first step, by a sort of immediate intuition.

Partly, this is because the new literature began in the
period of foreign influence and of an indecisive groping, while art in India was quite silent,—except for the preposterous Ravi Varma interlude which was doomed to sterility by its absurdly barren incompetence,—began in a moment of self-recovery and could profit by a clearer possibility of light. But besides, plastic art is in itself by its very limitation, by the narrower and intense range of its forms and motives, often more decisively indicative than the more fluid and variable turns of literary thought and expression. Now the whole power of the Bengal artists springs from their deliberate choice of the spirit and hidden meaning in things rather than their form and surface meaning as the object to be expressed. It is intuitive and its forms are the very rhythm of its intuition, they have little to do with the metric formalities devised by the observing intellect; it leans over the finite to discover its suggestions of the infinite and inexpressible; it turns to outward life and nature to found upon it lines and colours, rhythms and embodiments which will be significant of the other life and other nature than the physical which all that is merely outward conceals. This is the eternal motive of Indian art, but applied in a new way less largely idealised, mythological and symbolical, with a more delicately suggestive attempt at a near, subtle, direct embodiment. This art is a true new creation, and we may expect that the artistic mind of the rest of India will follow through the gate thus opened, but we may expect it too to take on there other characteristics and find other ways of expression; for the peculiar turn and tone given by the Calcutta painters is intimate to the temperament of Bengal. But India is great by the unity of her national coupled with the rich diversity of her regional mind. That we may expect to see reflected in the resurgence of her artistic creativeness.

Poetry and literature in Bengal have gone through two distinct stages and seem to be preparing for a third of which one cannot quite foresee the character. It be-
gan with a European and mostly an English influence, a taking in of fresh poetical and prose forms, literary ideas, artistic canons. It was a period of copious and buoyant creation which produced a number of poets and poetsesses, one or two of great genius, others of a fine poetic capacity, much work of beauty and distinction, a real opening of the floodgates of Saraswati. Its work was not at all crudely imitative; the foreign influences are everywhere visible, but they are assimilated, not merely obeyed or aped. The quality of the Bengali temperament and its native aesthetic turn took hold of them and poured them into a mould of speech suitable to its own spirit. But still the substance was not quite native to the soul and therefore one feels a certain void in it. The form and expression have the peculiar grace and the delicate plastic beauty which Bengali poetical expression achieved from its beginning, but the thing expressed does not in the end amount to very much. As is inevitable when one does not think or create freely but is principally assimilating thought and form, it is thin and falls short of the greatness which we would expect from the natural power of the poet.

That period is long over, it has lived its time and its work has taken its place in the past of the literature. Two of its creators, one, the sovereign initiator of its prose expression, supreme by combination of original mentality with a flawless artistic gift, the other born into its last glow of productive brilliance, but outliving it to develop another strain and a profounder voice of poetry, released the real soul of Bengal into expression. The work of Bankim Chandra is now of the past, because it has entered already into the new mind of Bengal which it did more than any other literary influence to form; the work of Robindranath still largely holds the present, but it has opened ways for the future which promise to go beyond it. Both show an increasing return to the Indian spirit
in fresh forms; both are voices of the dawn, seek more than they find, suggest and are calling for more than they actually evoke. At present we see a fresh preparation, on one side evolving and promising to broaden out from the influence of Tagore, on the other in revolt against it and insisting on a more distinctively national type of inspiration and creation; but what will come out of it, is not yet clear. On the whole it appears that the movement is turning in the same direction as that of the new art, though with the more flexible utterance and varied motive natural to the spoken thought and expressive word. No utterance of the highest genius, such as would give the decisive turn, has yet made itself heard. But some faint promise of a great imaginative and intuitive literature of a new Indian type is already discernible in these uncertain voices.

In the things of the mind we have then within however limited an are a certain beginnings, preparatory or even initially definitive. But in the outward life of the nation we are still in a stage of much uncertainty and confusion. Very largely this is due to the political conditions which have ceased in spirit to be those of the past, but are not yet in fact those of the future. The fever and the strain born from the alternation of waves of aspiration with the reflux of non-fulfilment are not favourable to the strong formulation of a new birth in the national life. All that is as yet clear is that the first period of a superficial assimilation and aping of European political ideas and methods is over. Another political spirit has awakened in the people under the shock of the movement of the last decade which, vehemently national in its motive, proclaimed a religion of Indian patriotism, applied the notions of the ancient religion and philosophy to politics, expressed the cult of the country as mother and Shakti and attempted to base the idea of democracy firmly on the spiritual thought and impulses native to the Indian mind. Crude often and uncertain in its self-expression, organising its
effort for revolt against past and present conditions but not immediately successful in carrying forward its methods of constructive development, it still effectively aroused the people and gave a definite turn to its political thought and life, the outcome of which can only appear when the nation has found completely the will and gained sufficiently the power to determine its own evolution.

Indian society is in a still more chaotic stage; for the old forms are crumbling away under the pressure of the environment, their spirit and reality are more and more passing out of them, but the façade persists by the force of inertia of thought and will and the remaining attachment of a long association, while the new is still powerless to be born. There is much of slow and often hardly perceptible destruction, a dull preservation effective only by immobility, no possibility yet of sound reconstruction. We have had a loud proclaiming,—only where supported by religion, as in the reforming Somajes, any strong effec-
tuation,—of a movement of social change, appealing sometimes crudely to Western exemplars and ideals, sometimes to the genius of the pattern of ancient times; but it has quite failed to carry the people, because it could not get at their spirit and itself lacked, with the exceptions noted, in robust sincerity. We have had too a revival of orthodox conservatism, more academic and sentimental than profound in its impulse or in touch with the great facts and forces of life. We have now in emergence an increasing sense of the necessity of a renovation of social ideas and expressive forms by the spirit of the nation awaking to the deeper yet unexpressed implications of its own culture, but as yet no sufficient will or means of execution. It is probable that only with the beginning of a freer national life will the powers of the renaissance take effective hold of the social mind and action of the awakened people.
The Future Poetry

THE COURSE OF ENGLISH POETRY

The Elizabethan drama is an expression of the stir of the life-spirit; at its best it is a great or strong, buoyant or rich or beautiful, passionately excessive or gloomily tenebrous force of vital poetry. The rest of the utterance of the time is full of the lyric joy, sweetness or emotion or moved and coloured self-description of the same spirit. There is much in it of curious and delighted thinking, but little of a high and firm intellectual value. Culture is still in its imaginative childhood and the thinking mind rather works for the curiosity and beauty of thought and even more for the curiosity and beauty of the mere expression of thought than for its light and its vision. The poetry which comes out of this mood is likely to have great charm and imaginative, emotional or descriptive appeal, but may very well miss that depth of profounder substance and that self-possessing plenitude of form which are the other characteristics of a rounded artistic creation. Beauty of poetical expression abounds in an unstinted measure, but for the music of a deeper spirit or higher significance we have to wait; the attempt at it we get, but not often all the success of its presence.

Spenser, the poet of second magnitude of the time, gives us in his work this beauty in its fullest abundance
but also the limited measure of this deeper but not quite successful endeavour. The *Faerie Queene* is indeed a poem of unfailing imaginative charm and its two opening cantos are exquisite in execution; a stream of liquid harmony, of curiously opulent, yet finely tempered description, of fluid poetical phrase and minutely seen image,—for these are Spenser's constant gifts, the native form of his genius which displays more of descriptive vision than of the larger creative power or narrative force,—they work out an inspired idea, a little too much lost in detail and in the diffusion of a wealthy prolixity but still holding well together its rather difficult and entangling burden of symbols and forms and achieving in the end some accomplished totality of fine poetic effect. But if we look at the poem as a whole, the effect intended fails, not because it happened to be left unfinished, nor even because the power in it is not equally sustained and is too evidently running thinner and thinner as it proceeds, but because it could not have come to a successful completion. Kalidasa's *Birth of the War-God* was left unfinished, or finished by a very inferior hand, yet even in the fragment there is already a masterly totality of effect; there is the sense of a great and admirable design. Vergil's *Aeneid*, though in a way finished, did not receive those last touches which sometimes make all the difference between perfection and the approach to it, and we feel too, not a failure of art,—for that is a defect which could never be alleged against Vergil,—but a relative thinning of the supporting power and inspiration. Still the consummate artistic intelligence of the poet has been so steadily at work, so complete from the very inception, it has so thought out and harmonised its idea from the beginning that a fine and firm total effect is still given. But here there is a defect of the artistic intellect, a vice or insufficiency in its original power of harmonising construction, characteristic of the Elizabethan, almost of the English mind.
Spenser's intention seems to have been to combine in his own way the success of Ariosto with the success of Dante. His work was to have been a rich and beautiful romance and at the same time a great interpretation by image and symbol, not here of the spiritual but of the ethical meaning of human life. A faery-tale and an ethical symbol in one is his conception of his artistic task. That is a kind of combination difficult enough to execute, but capable of a great and beautiful effect in a master hand; it had been achieved with supreme success by Homer and Valmiki. But the Elizabethan intellectual direction runs always towards conceit and curious complication and it is unable to follow an idea for the sake of what is essential in it, but tangles it up in all sorts of turns and accessories; seizing on all manner of disparities it tends to throw them together without any real fusion. Spenser in his idea and its execution fell a victim to all these defects of the intelligence. He has taken his intellectual scheme from his Hellenism, the virtues to be figured in typical human beings, but dressed it up with the obvious mediaeval ingenuity of the allegory. Nor is he satisfied with a simple combination; the turn of the allegory must be at once ethical, ecclesiastical and political in one fell complexity, his witch of Faery-land represents Falsehood, the Roman Catholic Church and Mary Queen of Scots in an irritating jumble. The subject of a poem of this kind has to be the struggle of the powers of good and evil, but the human figures through whom it works out to its issues, cannot be merely the good or the evil, this or that virtue or vice, but must stand for them as their expressive opportunity of life, not as their allegorical body. That is how Homer and Valmiki work out their idea. Spenser, a great poet, is not blind to this elementary condition, but his tangled skein of allegory continually hampers the sounder conception and the interpretative narration works itself through the maze of its distractions which we are obliged to accept,
not for their own interest or living force and appeal, but for the beauty of the poetic expression and description to which they give occasion.

Besides this fault of the initial conception, there are defects in the execution. After a time at least the virtues and vices altogether lose their way in faery-land or they become mistily vague and negligible which is, but considering the idea of the poem ought not to be, a great relief to the reader. We are content to read the poem or, still better, each canto apart as a romance and leave the meaning to take care of itself,—what was intended as a great ethical interpretative poem of the human soul, as a series of romantic descriptions and incidents. We see where the defect is when we make a comparison with the two other greater poems which had a similar intention. The Odyssey is a battle of human will and character supported by divine power against evil men and wrathful gods and adverse circumstance and the deaf opposition of the elements, whose scenes move with an easy inevitability between the lands of romance and the romance of actual human life, losing nowhere in the wealth of incident and description either the harmonising aesthetic colour or the simple central idea. The Ramayana too is made up of first materials which belong to the world of faery romance, but, transformed into an epic greatness, they support easily a grandiose picture of the struggle of incarnate God and Titan, of a human culture expressing the highest order and range of ethical values with a reign of embattled anarchic force, egoistic violence and domination and lawless self-assertion. The whole is of a piece and even in its enormous length and protracted detail there is a victorious simplicity, largeness and unity. The English poet loses himself in the outward, in romantic incident and description pursued by his imagination for their own sake. His idea is often too much and too visibly expressed, yet in the end finds no successful ex-
pression. Instead of relying upon the force of his deeper poetic idea to sustain him, he depends on intellectual device and parades his machinery. The thread of connection is wandering and confused. He achieves a diffuse and richly confused perplexity, not a unity.

These are the natural limitations of the Elizabethan age, and we have to note them with what may seem at first a disproportionate emphasis, because they are the key to the immediately following reaction of English poetry with its turn in Milton towards a severe and serious intellectual effort and discipline and its fall in Dryden and Pope to a manner which got away from the most prominent defects of the Elizabethan mind at the price of a loss of all its great powers. English poetry before Milton had not passed through any training of the poetic and artistic intelligence; it had abounding energy and power, but no self-discipline of the idea. Except in Shakespeare it fails to construct; it at once loses and finds itself in a luxurious indulgence of its power, follows with a loose sweetness or a vehement buoyancy all its impulses good, bad or indifferent. Still what it does achieve, is unique and often superlative in its kind. It achieves an unsurpassed splendour of imaginative vitality, vision of the life spirit, and also an unsurpassed intensity of poetical expression, life venting itself in speech, pouring its lyric emotion, its intimate and intuitive description of itself in passionate detail, thinking aloud in a native utterance of poetry packed with expressive image or felicitous in directness. There is no other poetry which has in at all the same degree this achievement.

This poetry is then great in achievement within the limits of its method and substance; but that substance and method belong to the second step of the psychological gradations by which poetry becomes a more and more profound and subtle instrument of the self-expression of the spirit in man. English poetry, I have remarked,
follows the grades of this ascension with a singular fidelity of sequence. At first it was satisfied with only a primary superficial response to the most external appearances of life, its visible figures, incidents, primary feelings and characteristics; to mirror these things clearly, justly, with a certain harmony of selection and a just sufficient transmutation in the personality and aesthetic temperament is enough for this earlier type of poetry, all the more easily satisfied because everything is fresh, interesting, stimulating, and the liveliness of the poetic impression replaces the necessity of subtlety or depth. Great poetry can be written in early times with this as its substantial method, but not afterwards when the race mind has begun to make an intenser and more inward response to life. It then becomes the resort of a secondary inspiration which is unable to rise to the full heights of poetic possibility; or else this external method still persists as part of the outward manner of a more subjective creation, but with a demand for more heightened effects and a more penetrating expression.

This is what has happened in the Elizabethan age. The external tendency still persists, but it is no longer sufficient. Where it is most preserved, it still demands a more vehement response, strong colours, violent passions, exaggerated figures, out-of-the-way or crowding events. Life is still the Muse of its poetry, but it is a Life which demands to feel itself more and is knocking at the gates of the deeper subjective being. And in all the best work of the time it has already got there, not very deep, but still enough to be initially subjective. Whatever Shakespeare may suggest,—a poet's critical theories are not always a just clue to his inspiration,—it is not the holding up of a mirror to life and Nature, but a moved and excited reception and evocation. Life throws its impressions, but what seizes upon them is a greater and deeper life-power in the poet which is not satisfied with mirroring or just beauti-
fully responding, but begins to throw up at once around them its own rich matter of being and so creates something new, more personal, intimate, fuller of an inner vision, emotion, passion of self-expression. This is the source of the new intensity; it is this impulse towards an utterance of the creative life-power within which drives towards the dramatic form and acts with such unexampled power in Shakespeare; at another extremity of the Elizabethan mind, in Spenser, it gets farther away from the actuality of life and takes its impressions as hints only for a purely imaginative creation which has an aim at things symbolic, otherwise revelatory, deeper down in the soul itself, and shadows them out through the magic of romance if it cannot yet intimately seize and express them. Still even there the method of the utterance, if not altogether its aim, is the voice of Life lifting itself out into waves of word and colour and image and sheer beauty of sound. Imagination, thought, vision work with the emotional life-mind as their instrument or rather in it as a medium, accepted as the form and force of their being.

Great poetry is the result, but there are other powers of the human mind which have not yet been mastered, and to get at these is the next immediate step of English poetry. The way it follows is to bring forward the intellect as its chief instrument, the thought-mind no longer carried along in the wave of life, but detaching itself from it to observe and reflect upon it. We have at first an intermediate manner, that of Milton's early work and of the Carolean poets, in which the Elizabethan impulse prolongs itself but is fading away under the stress of an increasing intellectuality. This rises on one side into the ripened classical perfection of Milton, falls away on the other through Waller into the reaction in Dryden and Pope.

A. G.
Materialism

Many hard things have been said about materialism by those who preferred to look at life from above rather than below or who claim to live in the more luminous atmosphere of the idealistic mind or ether of the spiritual existence. Materialism has been credited with the creation of great evils, viewed even as the archimage of a detestable transformation or the misleader guiding mankind to an appalling catastrophe. Those whose temperament and imagination daily lovingly with an idealised past, accuse it for the cultural, social, political changes which they abhor, regarding them as a disturbance, happily, they believe, temporary, of eternal moral values and divinely ordained hierarchies. Those, more numerous, who look beyond to the hope of a larger idealism and higher spirituality, proclaim in its decline and passing away a fortunate deliverance for the human spirit. World-wide strife and competition have been, it is said, its fruits, war and the holocaust of terrible sacrifice in which mankind has been squandering its strength, blood, treasure,—though these are no new calamities, nor would it be safe to hope that they are the last of their kind,—are pointed to as its nemesis or regarded as a funeral pyre it has lighted for itself in whose cruel flame the errors and impurities it brought into existence are being burned to ashes. Science has been declared suspect as a guide or instructor of man...
kind and bidden to remain parked within her proper limits, because she was for long the ally of the material view of existence, suggester of atheism and agnosticism, victory-bringer of materialism and scepticism, the throne of their reign or pillar of their stability. Reason has been challenged because rationalism and freethought were appropriated as synonyms of materialistic thinking.

All this wealth of accusation may have and much of it has its truth. But most things that the human mind thus alternately trumpets and bans, are a double skein. They come to us with opposite faces, their good side and their bad, a dark aspect of error and a bright of truth; and it is as we look upon one or the other visage that we swing to our extremes of opinion or else oscillate between them. Materialism may not be quite as dead as most would declare it to be; still held by a considerable number of scientific workers, perhaps a majority,—and scientific opinion is always a force both by its power of well-ascertained truth and its continued service to humanity,—it constitutes even now the larger part of the real temper of action and life even where it is rejected as a set opinion. The strong impressions of the past are not so easily erased out of our human mentality. But it is a fast receding force; other ideas and standpoints are crowding in and thrust it out from its remaining points of vantage. It will be useful before we say farewell to it, and can now be done with safety, to see what it was that gave to it its strength, what it has left permanently behind it, and to adjust our new view-points to whatever stuff of truth may have lain within it and lent it its force of applicability. Even we can look at it with an impartial sympathy, though only as a primary but lesser truth of our actual being,—for it is all that, but no more than that,—and try to admit and fix its just claims and values. We can now see too how it was bound to escape from itself by the widening of the very frame of knowledge it has itself constructed.
Admit,—for it is true,—that this age of which materialism was the portentous offspring and in which it had figured first as petulant rebel and aggressive thinker, then as a grave and strenuous preceptor of mankind, has been by no means a period of mere error, calamity and degeneration, but rather a most powerful creative epoch of humanity. Examine impartially its results. Not only has it immensely widened and filled in the knowledge of the race and accustomed it to a great patience of research, scrupulosity, accuracy,—if it has done that only in one large sphere of inquiry, it has still prepared for the extension of the same curiosity, intellectual rectitude, power for knowledge to other and higher fields,—not only has it with an unexampled force and richness of invention brought and put into our hands, for much evil, but also for much good, discoveries, instruments, practical powers, conquests, conveniences which, however we may declare their insufficiency for our highest interests, yet few of us would care to relinquish, but it has also, paradoxical as that might at first seem, strengthened man's idealism. On the whole, it has given him a kindlier hope and humanised his nature. Tolerance is greater, liberty has increased, charity is more a matter of course, peace, if not yet practicable, is growing at least imaginable. Latterly the thought of the eighteenth century which promulgated secularism has been much scouted and belittled, that of the nineteenth which developed it, riddled with adverse criticism and overpassed. Still they worshipped no mean godheads. Reason, science, progress, freedom, humanity were their ideals, and which of these idols, if idols they are, would we like or ought we, if we are wise, to cast down into the mire or leave as poor unworshipped relics on the wayside? If there are other and yet greater godheads or if the visible forms adored were only clay or stone images or the rites void of the inmost knowledge, yet has their cult been for us a preliminary initiation and
the long material sacrifice prepared us for a greater religion.

Reason is not the supreme light, but yet is it always a necessary light-bringer and until it has been given its rights and allowed to judge and purify our first infra-rational instincts, impulses, rash fervours, crude beliefs, and blind prejudgments, we are not altogether ready for the full unveiling of a greater inner luminary. Science is a right knowledge, in the end only of processes, but still the knowledge of processes too is part of a total wisdom and essential to a wide and a clear approach towards deeper Truth behind. If it has laboured mainly in the physical field, if it has limited itself and bordered or overshadowed its light with a certain cloud of wilful ignorance, still one had to begin this method somewhere and the physical field is the first, the nearest, the easiest for the kind and manner of inquiry undertaken. Ignorance of one side of Truth or the choice of a partial ignorance or ignoring for better concentration on another side is often a necessity of our imperfect mental nature. It is unfortunate if ignorance becomes dogmatic and denies what it has refused to examine, but still no permanent harm need have been done if this willed self-limitation is compelled to disappear when the occasion of its utility is exhausted. Now that we have founded rigorously our knowledge of the physical, we can go forward with a much firmer step to a more open, secure and luminous repossess of mental and psychic knowledge. Even spiritual truths are likely to gain from it, not a loftier or more penetrating,—that is with difficulty possible,—but an ampler light and a fuller self-expression.

Progress is the very heart of the significance of human life, for it means our evolution into greater and richer being; and these ages by insisting on it, by forcing us to recognize it as our aim and our necessity, by making impossible hereafter the attempt to subsist in the dullness.
or the gross beatitude of a stationary self-content, have done a priceless service to the earth-life and cleared the ways of heaven. Outward progress was the greater part of its aim and the inward is the more essential? but the inward too is not complete if the outward is left out of account. Even if the insistence of our progress fall for a time too exclusively on growth in one field, still all movement forward is helpful and must end by giving a greater force and a larger meaning to our need of growth in deeper and higher provinces of our being. Freedom is a godhead whose greatness only the narrowly limited mind, the State-worshipper or the crank of reaction can now deny. No doubt, again, the essential is an inner freedom; but if without the inner realisation, the outer attempt at liberty may prove at last a vain thing, yet to pursue an inner liberty and perpetuate an outer slavery or to rejoice in an isolated release and leave mankind to its chains was also an anomaly that had to be exploded, a confined and too self-centred ideal. Humanity is not the highest godhead; God is more than humanity; but in humanity too we have to find and to serve him. The cult of humanity means an increasing kindliness, tolerance, charity, helpfulness, solidarity, universality, unity, fullness of individual and collective growth, and towards these things we are advancing much more rapidly than was possible in any previous age, if still with sadly stumbling footsteps and some fierce relapses. The cult of our other human selves within the cult of the Divine comes closer to us as our large ideal. To have brought even one of these things a step nearer, to have helped to settle them with whatever imperfect expression and formula in our minds, to have accelerated our movement towards them are strong achievements, noble services.

Objection can at once be made that all these great things have no connection with materialism. The impulse towards them was of old standing and long active in the
human mind; the very principle of the humanitarianism which has been one of the striking developments of modern sentiment, was first brought out from our nature and made prominent by religion, compassion and the love of man intimately and powerfully enforced by Christianity and Buddhism; if they have now a little developed, it is the natural expanding from seeds that had long been sown. Materialism was rather calculated to encourage opposite instincts; and the good it favoured, it limited, made arid, mechanised. If all these nobler things have grown and are breaking the bounds set to them, it is because man is fortunately inconsistent and after a certain stage of our development cannot be really and wholly materialistic; he needs ideals, ethical expansion, a closer emotional fulfilment, and these needs he has tacked on to his development of materialistic opinion and corrected its natural results by them. But the ideals themselves were taken from an anterior opinion and culture.

This is the truth, but not the whole truth. The old religious cultures were often admirable in the ensemble and always in some of their parts, but if they had not been defective, they could neither have been so easily breached, nor would there have been the need of a secularist age to bring out the results the religions had sown. Their faults were those of a certain narrowness and exclusive vision. Concentrated, intense in their ideal and intensive in their effect, their expansive influence on the human mind was small. They isolated too much their action in the individual, limited too narrowly the working of their ideals in the social order, tolerated for instance, and even utilised for the ends of church and creed, an immense amount of cruelty and barbarism which were contrary to the spirit and truth from which they had started. What they discouraged in the soul of the individual, they yet maintained in the action and the frame of society, seemed hardly to conceive of a human order delivered from these blots. The
depth and fervour of their aspiration had for its shadow a want of intellectual clarity, an obscurity which confused their working and baulked the expansion of their spiritual elements. They nourished too a core of asceticism and hardly cared to believe in the definite amelioration of the earth life, despised by them as a downfall or a dolorous descent or imperfection of the human spirit, or whatever earthly hope they admitted, saw itself postponed to the millennial end of things. A belief in the vanity of human life or of existence itself suited better the preoccupation with an aim beyond earth. Perfection, ethical growth, liberation became individual ideals and figured too much as an isolated preparation of the soul for the beyond. The social effect of the religious temperament, however potentially considerable, was cramped by excessive other-worldliness and distrust in the intellect accentuated to obscurantism.

The secularist centuries weighed the balance down very much in the opposite direction. They turned the mind of the race wholly earthwards and manwards, but by insisting on intellectual clarity, reason, justice, freedom, tolerance, humanity, by putting these forward and putting the progress of the race and its perfectibility as an immediate rule for the earthly life to be constantly pressed towards and not shunting off the social ideal to doomsday to be miraculously effected by some last divine intervention and judgment, they cleared the way for a collective advance. For they made these nobler possibilities of mankind more imperative to the practical intelligence. If they lost sight of heaven or missed the spiritual sense of the ideals they took over from earlier ages, yet by this rational and practical insistence on them they drove them home to the thinking mind. Even their too mechanical turn developed from a legitimate desire to find some means for making the effective working of these ideals a condition of the very structure of society. Mater-
rialism was only the extreme intellectual result of this earthward and human turn of the race mind. It was an intellectual machinery used by the Time-spirit to secure for a good space the firm fixing of that exclusive turn of thought and endeavour, a strong rivet of opinion to hold the mind of man to it for as long as it might be needed. Man does need to develop firmly in all his earthly parts, to fortify and perfect his body, his life, his outward-going mind, to take full possession of the earth his dwelling-place, to know and utilise physical Nature, enrich his environment and satisfy by the aid of a generalised intelligence his evolving mental, vital and physical being. That is not all his need, but it is a great and initial part of it and of human perfection. Its full meaning appears afterwards; for only in the beginning and in the appearance an impulse of his life, in the end and really it will be seen to have been a need of his soul, a preparing of fit instruments and the creating of a fit environment for a diviner life. He has been set here to serve God's ways upon earth and fulfil the Godhead in man and he must not despise earth or reject the basis given for the first powers and potentialities of the Godhead. When his thought and aim have persisted too far in that direction, he need not complain if is he swung back for a time towards the other extreme, to a negative or a positive, a covert or an open materialism. It is Nature's violent way of setting right her own excesses in him.

But the intellectual force of materialism comes from its response to a universal truth of existence. Our dominant opinions have always two forces behind them, a need of our nature and a truth of universal existence from which the need arises. We have the material and vital need because life in Matter is our actual basis, the earthward turn of our minds because earth is and was intended to be the foundation here for the workings of the Spirit. When indeed we scan with a scrupulous intelligence the face that
universal existence presents to us or study where we are one with it or what in it all seems most universal and permanent, the first answer we get is not spiritual but material. The seers of the Upanishads saw this with their penetrating vision: and when they gave this expression of our first apparently complete, eventually insufficient view of Being, "Matter is the Brahman, from Matter all things are born, by Matter they exist, to Matter they return," they fixed the formula of universal truth of which all materialistic thought and physical science are a recognition, an investigation, a filling in of its significant details, elucidations, justifying phenomena and revelatory processes, the large universal comment of Nature upon a single text.

Mark that it is the first fact of experience from which we start and up to a certain point an undeniable universal truth of being. Matter surely is here our basis, the one thing that is and persists, while life, mind, soul and all else appear in it as a secondary phenomenon, seem somehow to arise out of it, subsist by feeding upon it,—therefore the word used in the Upanishads for Matter is an-nam, food,—and collapse from our view where it disappears. Apparently the existence of Matter is necessary to them, their existence does not appear to be one whit necessary to Matter. The Being does present himself at first with this face, inexorably, as if claiming to be that and nothing else, insisting that his material base and its need shall first be satisfied and, until that is done, grimly persistent with little or with no regard for our idealistic susceptibilities and caring nothing if he breaks through the delicate net of our moral, our aesthetic and our other finer perceptions. They have the hope of their reign, but meanwhile this is the first visage of universal existence and we have not to hide our face from it any more than could Arjuna from the terrible figure of the Divine on the battlefield of Kurukshetra, or attempt to escape and evade it as Shiva, when there rose around him the many stupendous
forms of the original Energy, fled from the vision of it to this and that quarter, forgetful of his own godhead. We must look existence in the face in whatever aspect it confronts us and be strong to find within as well as behind it the Divine.

Materialistic science had the courage to look at this universal truth with level eyes, to accept it calmly as a starting-point and to enquire whether it was not after all the whole formula of universal being. Physical science must necessarily to its own first view be materialistic, because so long as it deals with the physical, it has for its own truth's sake to be physical both in its standpoint and method; it must interpret the material universe first in the language of the material Brahman, because these are its primary and its general terms and all others come second, subsequently, are a special syllabary. To follow a self-indulgent course from the beginning would lead at once towards fancies and falsities. Initially, science is justified in resenting any call on it to indulge in another kind of imagination and intuition. Anything that draws it out of the circle of the phenomena of objects, as they are represented to the senses and their instrumental prolongations, and away from the dealings of the reason with them by a rigorous testing of experience and experimentation, must distract it from its task and is inadmissible. It cannot allow the bringing in of the human view of things; it has to interpret man in the terms of the cosmos, not the cosmos in the terms of man. The too facile conclusion of the idealist that since things only exist as known to consciousness, they can exist only by consciousness and must be creations of the mind, has no meaning for it; it first has to inquire what consciousness is, whether it is not a result rather than a cause of Matter, coming into being, as it seems to do, only in the frame of a material inconstant universe and apparently able to exist only on the condition that that has been previously established,
Starting from Matter, science has to be at least hypothetically materialistic.

When the action of the material principle, the first to organise itself, has been to some extent well understood, then can this science go on to consider what claim to be quite other terms of our being, life and mind. But first it is forced to ask itself whether both mind and life are not, as they seem to be, special consequences of the material evolution, themselves powers and movements of Matter. After and if this explanation has failed to cover and to elucidate the facts, it can be more freely investigated whether they are not quite other principles of being. Many philosophical questions arise, as, whether they have entered into Matter and whence or were always in it, and if so, whether they are for ever less and subordinate in action or are in their essential power greater, whether contained in it only or really containing it, whether subsequent and dependent on its previous appearance or only that in their apparent organisation here but in real being and power anterior to it and Matter itself dependent on the essential preexistence of life and mind. A greater question comes, whether mind itself is the last term or there is something beyond, whether soul is only an apparent result and phenomenon of the interaction of mind, life and body or we have here an independent term of our being and of all being, greater, anterior, ultimate, all matter containing and contained in a secret spiritual consciousness, spirit the first, last and eternal, the Alpha and the Omega, the OM. For experiential philosophy either Matter, Mind, Life or Spirit may be the Being, but none of these higher principles can be made securely the basis of our thought against all intellectual questioning until the materialistic hypothesis has first been given a chance and tested. That may in the end turn out to have been the use of the materialistic investigation of the universe and its inquiry the greatest possible service to the finality of the spiritual ex-
planation of the universe. In any case materialistic science and philosophy have been after all a great and austere attempt to know dispassionately and to see impersonally. They have denied much that is being reaffirmed, but the denial was the condition of a severer effort of knowledge and it may be said of them, as the Upanishad says of Bhrigu the son of Varuna, sa tapas taptwad annam brahmeti vyajāṇāt. "He having practised austerity discovered that Matter was the Brahman."

The gates of escape by which a knowledge starting from materialism can get away from its self-immuring limitations, can only be casually indicated. I shall take another occasion to show how the possibility becomes in eventual fact a necessity. Physical science has before its eye two eternal factors of existence, Matter and Energy, and no others at all are needed in the account of its operations. Mind dealing with the facts and relations of Matter and Energy as they are arranged to the senses in experience and continuative experiment and are analysed by the reason, would be a sufficient definition of physical science. Its first regard is on Matter as the one principle of being and energy only a phenomenon of Matter; but in the end one questions whether it is not the other way round, all things the action of Energy and matter only the field, body and instrument of its workings. The first view is quantitative and purely mechanical, the second lets in a qualitative and a more spiritual element. We do not at once leap out of the materialistic circle, but we see an opening in it which may widen into an outlet when, stirred by this suggestion, we look at life and mind not merely as phenomenon in Matter, but as energies, and see that they are other energies than the material with peculiar qualities, powers and workings. If indeed all action of life and mind could be reduced, as it was once hoped, to none but material, quantitative and mechanical, to mathematical, physiological and chemical terms, the opening would cease
to be an outlet; it would be choked. That attempt has failed and there is no sign of its ever being successful. Only a limited range of the phenomena of life and mind could be satisfied by a purely bio-physical, psycho-physical or bio-psychical explanation, and even if more could be dealt with by these data, still they would only have been accounted for on one side of their mystery, the lower end. Life and Mind, like the Vedic Agni, have their two extremities hidden in a secrecy, and we should by this way only have hold of the tail-end, the head would still be mystic and secret. To know more we must have studied not only the actual or possible action of body and matter on mind and life, but explored all the possible action of mind too on body and life; and that opens undreamed vistas. And there is always the vast field of the action of mind in itself and on itself, which needs for its elucidation another, a mental, a psychic science.

Having examined and explained Matter by physical methods and in the language of the material Brahman,—it is not really explained, but let that pass,—having failed to carry that way of knowledge into other fields beyond a narrow limit, we must then consent to scrutinise life and mind by methods appropriate to them and explain their facts in the language of the vital and mental Brahman. We may discover then where and how these tongues of the one existence render the same truth and throw light on each other’s phrases, and discover too perhaps another, high, brilliant and revealing speech which may shine out as its definitive all-explaining word. That can only be if we pursue these other sciences too in the same spirit as the physical, with a scrutiny not only of their obvious actual phenomena, but of all the countless untested potentialities of mental and psychic energy and with a free unlimited experimentation. We shall find out that their ranges of the unknown are immense. We shall perceive that until the possibilities of mind and spirit are better explored and
their truths better known, we cannot yet pronounce the last all-ensphering formula of universal existence. Very early in this process the materialistic circle will be seen opening up on all its sides until it rapidly breaks up and disappears. Adhering still to the essential rigorous method of science, though not to its purely physical instrumentation, scrutinising, experimenting, holding nothing for established which cannot be scrupulously and universally verified, we shall still arrive at supraphysical certitudes. There are other means, there are greater approaches, but this line of access too can lead to the one universal truth.

Three things will remain from the labour of the secularist centuries; truth of the physical world and its importance, the scientific method of knowledge,—which is to induce Nature and Being to reveal their own way of being and proceeding, not hastening to put upon them our own impositions of idea and imagination, adhyātma,—and last though very far from least, the truth and importance of the earth life and the human endeavour, its evolutionary meaning. They will remain, but turn to another sense and disclose great issues. Surer of our hope and our labour, we shall see them all transformed into light of a vaster and more intimate world-knowledge and self-knowledge.
A PHILOSOPHICAL REVIEW

15th November 1918.

CONTENTS

THE LIFE DIVINE....................... Aurobindo Ghose
   Ch. LI. The Necessity of the
   Gnostic Being

ESSAYS ON THE GITA................... A. G.
   The Secret of Secrets

THE SYNTHESIS OF YOGA.............. A. G.
   Ch. XLVIII. The Mystery of
   Love

THE RENAISSANCE IN INDIA (4)
THE FEAST OF YOUTH
THE KNOWLEDGE OF BRAHMAN
SENTENCES OF BHARTRIHARI
THE FUTURE POETRY
   The Course of English Poetry (4)
A PHILOSOPHICAL REVIEW

CONTENTS

1. The First Order
2. The Second Order
3. The Third Order
4. The Fourth Order
5. The Fifth Order
6. The Sixth Order
7. The Seventh Order
8. The Eighth Order
9. The Ninth Order
10. The Tenth Order

The Contents of the Second Part
The Life Divine

CHAPTER LI

THE NECESSITY OF THE GNOSTIC BEING

To express the power of the spirit in man is the highest aim of our living; it is on one side an evolution of that which our apparent being contains in potentiality within itself, on the other a revelation of a real self which is always there within us, self-aware within, but not yet manifest to our outward self-awareness. It is at once a self-exceeding and a self-becoming or self-finding. From the evolutionary point of view it is the growth of the human being to a divine supermanhood; for supermanhood means the exceeding of the very limited humanity which we now are. From the higher spiritual point of view it is the Divine from whom we proceed and in whom we secretly live, taking us up into union with its being and its nature, revealing himself to our consciousness in ourselves and the world and above so that we shall grow into likeness with him and oneness with him and become in every way possible to man spirit of his spirit, light of his light, power of his power, will of his will, mind of his mind, life of his life, substance of his substance. Life becomes flower and sap of the Godhead from the bulb of terrestrial Nature and in the stalk of humanity. Even if we suppose a supracosmic end of existence, this at least is the high-
est cosmic meaning, goal and ideal of the human way of being. Till it is accomplished, a haste to depart from life and birth in the worlds is a premature cutting short of the thread of the divine purpose in man.

Once this significance of our being is determined and its consequences are accepted by our intellect and will, another enquiry begins as to the conditions which the actualities of life impose on our effort, the potentialities of life and the spirit which open to it and the way in which present actualities may be used and overpassed and yet unrealised potentialities progressively realised; but that investigation lies outside of our present purpose. Our aim has been to disentangle the metaphysical truths of our being and of the world-existence, so that we might see whether this possibility did not arise from them and whether it was not the real intention of life in us. To go farther we should have to pursue no longer a metaphysical, but a psychological inquiry. God, Nature and man would have to be known in their relations to each other under the conditions of our human existence, the laws and powers which govern the interactions of their relations, the especial power by which our present human ego can be transcended and a greater self of man assumed, and if that power be the supermind or gnosis, then the psychological nature of supermind in itself, its own proper way of expressing the spiritual consciousness and its powers, its action, once the veil between it and mind was lifted, and the loosening of the knot of mind, life and body by which their workings could be transformed into their proper functioning as illumined sub-processes of supermind and spirit. Finally, we should have to regard the practical outward effect of this inward change, find the formula of a divine supermanhood in the life of the race. Certain large notions which arise directly from the metaphysical truths we have tried to disengage, are all that can at present be noted.
Sachchidananda is the one truth of existence; an infinite existence, consciousness, bliss is the eternal nature of the divine Being who continually manifests and maintains the universe of space and time in his sempiternal reality. All that is becomes the mould and form of this manifestation; it exists only by this existence, is instinct with this secret consciousness and maintained by its force and will and by its delight of being. But here all is involved in an initial term which seems its opposite; existence starts from a condition which comes as near as it can to an appearance of non-existence; consciousness is hidden in the womb of a great inconscient, the universal conscient will is veiled by a phenomenon of huge inconscient and mechanical force; delight of being seems plunged in a neutral sleep of unfeeling, of non-sentient ununderstood action and reception. Out of this womb of mechanical energy and formulation life and sentience and consciousness emerge as a universal life and mind and spirit marking its progression by a higher and higher status of the individual life, mind and spirit which reveal it through its multiplicities of being. All these formulations in the individual have the appearance of a partial, limited and divided existence, awareness, force, action, sentience which, being partial, are imperfect and give rise to a phenomenon of opposites against a neutral background.

Delight of being searches for itself in terms of pain, pleasure and neutral non-reception or indifference; it is confined, limited and gropingly selective in its self-realisations; its best statements of itself seem not to be the real delight, but a lower term and misrepresentation or half-representation. Consciousness seeks for itself in limited forms of vital, sentient or mental action and reaction against a background of subconsciousness; it is inconscient of the greater part of its own submerged activities; its best actual statements of itself are limited and inferior terms and its own true height and largeness of
reality are superconscious to its present self-formulation. Its will and force have the same character, irregularly manifested by attained capacities, failures of effectuation, neutral incapacities, and its best statements of itself seem a series of lower terms which point to a power beyond it has not attained hidden in that superconscience now beyond its reach. All the relations it has developed are relations of a seeking and striving, an attraction and a repulsion, a mass of discords and a tuning of concords, which presuppose but do not find some large power of reconciliation and satisfaction. The existence now accomplished is not the real existence which it aims at and which its whole labour suggests and presupposes. There is a unity which it is seeking through its divisions, there is an infinity which it is figuring through its finite appearances and yet disfiguring; yet the unity and infinity are there, and it is evident that in them all this moves and by them it is upheld and draws from them its powers. All seeks, first indeed to affirm itself, but also to enlarge and heighten, to embrace still more and more of existence, consciousness, power, delight of being, to possess in one way or another more and more of its potential self and of all that is around it. The universal and individual exist very evidently by each other, yet seem at variance, effect some kind of harmony, yet do not seem to realise, possess and enjoy it, nor is the harmony final and satisfying; the secret both of their possession of the partial harmony now effected and of that which is still uneffected lies in the awakening to something transcendent in which both shall be at one. Man is a form of being in which all this first becomes here aware of itself and develops a consciousness and a will which seek knowingly to exceed and transcend their limitations and become possessed of that greater and reconciling secret of their existence.

First, we have to see that the Being in the world has a double motive in our existence; it has the delight
of what it is in its imperfect manifestation and also the
delight of its movement towards a greater manifestation
to come. Each step of the evolution bears evidence to this
double motive and pleasure; there is an insistence upon
and a temporal maintenance of what has been accom-
plished; there is an intention of a higher form of being
which is already preparing and even secretly presupposed
in what is, and whenever that comes, there is a taking up
of as much as is essential or convertible in what has
already been realised and a giving to it of new values and
a greater significance in the light of the new power of
consciousness and will and experience which develops.
Our ascension has to follow this law, to proceed from
what we are to what we can be, partly by the power of
what we have become, but more still by the power of
what we seek to be, that taking up as much as is essential
and convertible of our past being and restating it. But in
fact the greater power is already there imperfectly figured
and secretly present in the inferior power; the actual con-
tains the secret of a much greater potential perfection, hides
most of what it suggests, yet adumbrates and hints what
is thus hidden. Matter always contained in it the hint of life
and all that comes out by life; life ever contained in it the
hidden power of mind and of all that comes out by mind;
mind contains in it the power of supermind and spirit
and at every point betrays gleams and hints of the things
it conceals and of which it is itself an erring and baffled
formulation. Life takes up the material existence, mind
takes up life and material being, and to what it takes up
each gives new powers and values, but by exceeding it
and by developing things that are beyond it. Spirit and
supermind too as they manifest will similarly take up our
formulations of mind, life and material being, and will
surpass and transform them; but for reasons which will
be obvious if once we consider the nature and relation of
those highest powers of our being to these lower terms
the transformation is bound to be much more radical and
the self-exceeding a more decisive change of position and
outlook as well as of vastness of view and altitude.

The divine universal being embraces all this con-
stant change of existence, accepts this partial self-affirma-
tion and subsequent self-exceeding with an equal delight
in it all by which it is sustained; it has all the delight of
the beginnings, all the delight of the way and the tarrying-
places on the way, and all the delight of the passing on to
the goal. It has simultaneously the delight of its transcen-
dence which originates and governs all this that was, is and
shall be, the delight of its graded universalities which con-
tain and deploy every circumstance of its temporal mani-
festation, the delight of the individualised being which is the
multiple centre-point of the manifestation and bears the
varied stress of its circumstances, holds and possesses new
circumstance within and proceeds by a progressive unfolding
to realise and possess it outwardly. Within each being
as in the world dwell this transcendent, this graded universal-
ity, this individuality; for whatsoever is present in the
All, is present also in each individual nodus of soul-being.
Within us is the transcendent spirit who in our spiritual
being exceeds and embraces the universal, a universal spirit
or self by whom we are inwardly and also in our real cosmic
nature one with all that exists, an individual soul or spirit which possesses the relations of the universe these
two support by an experience which is at once dependent
on the universal self-experience and relates all to the in-
dividual soul-centre. Being ever in this triple reality of its
self-awareness enjoys both that in itself and the process of
its being in the cosmos.

But the universality in Nature manifests itself in a
gradation, and the individual soul also shapes itself to ex-
perience in these gradations. The universal spirit con-
tains and views all these gradations simultaneously, and
the individual also inwardly has the same power of be-
ing; it is, that is to say, at once an infinite spiritual being of existence, consciousness and bliss, a soul dealing with the separations of life, mind and body, and a supramental being linking these two apparent oppositions of existence by the experience at once of oneness and diversity. But this is inwardly; in the outward Nature of its superficial action it descends and ascends from one grade to another, goes through the process of birth into and out of one or another plane of being and in its outward mind supposes itself to exist on that plane of being alone. Yet when it descends on earth, the rest of its being is there above superconscious to the outward mind; and even in its earthly poise it has all the possibilities of it, partly involved, partly ready, in the subconscious part of its existence which is the larger secret basis of its earthly experience and growth. All our psychology depends upon these fundamental facts,—the unity and relations of the transcendent, the universal and the individual, the interaction of the inward being and the outward nature, the triple fact of our supraconscience, subconscious and waking consciousness.

Our outward consciousness gives the limit of our evolutionary attainment, and it is there that we have to go beyond, there that we have to bring out what we secretly are all the time within ourselves and above our present poise of natural existence, all that lies in possibility even in the lowest subconscious status to which we give the name of inconscience. In this outward consciousness we appear to ourselves as a mental, vital and physical separateness related to a conscious ego; but this ego is only a mask of the spiritual person, the individual divinity. As the ego, we think that we are born and die; but in reality the soul of man is neither born nor dies, but only assumes the natural form of an earthly body or life and dissolves it and again assumes a fresh formulation of it. It appears to move between heaven and earth and other worlds,
but this is only a change of its poise of outward consciousness. In reality it is only with a part of ourselves that we live on earth; for the other worlds are there within us all the time, they are not elsewhere but in ourselves. In outward Nature we seem to be in the world and in this or that world; but in our soul-being the universe is within us, is only a fact or a phenomenon of our consciousness; for that is what it is to the Spirit, to Sachchidananda who has manifested it in his own being. If we can know this not only with the intellect but in spirit, if we can live in this knowledge, our whole psychological attitude will be revolutionised; life changes its apparent meaning, it loses its falsity or partial truth of appearance and assumes its real sense. Then we shall have begun to live in our soul-being and from that we can act upon our natural being and enlarge and rectify progressively all the values of its symbolism and make the full and right use of its appearances and varying poises.

Self-knowledge which leads to right knowledge is therefore the key, and for that reason the ancient wisdom represented our progress as a growing out of ignorance into knowledge. Ego is the knot of our continued status in the ignorance; it is that to which we refer all the circumstances of our being so long as we do not make that critical turn upon ourselves which is the decisive step of our ascension. The spirit within takes, we have said, an equal delight in its inward being and the circumstances of its outward nature; it has the inward and secret joy even of the struggle of the mind in the ignorance. But so long as our outward mind lives in the ego, it does not share except very dimly and relatively in the delight of the spirit; it is limited by the outward circumstance and appearance and has all the pain of the seeking and the effort and only a precarious and imperfect pleasure in its own progression. Moreover this pleasure and the progression itself are circumscribed within the limits of the
present formulation of the imperfect mental being, the way and the tarrying on the way; but the next real step of self-exceeding cannot come except by the outgrowing of the ego. There must be a cessation of our identification with the existing poise of a separate ego shut up in the screen-walls of the life, mind and body. Therefore an egoistic supermanhood is in reality a contradiction in terms; for it does not really exceed our present limited humanity, but at most only heightens and aggrandises its existing values. That may be worth doing, but it is not the decisive self-exceeding and self-becoming.

Moreover, the ascension cannot fully come except by exceeding the whole poise of the mental being, or at any rate it cannot become fully dynamic. It is quite possible to realise our spiritual being and lose ego on the level of mind, to become aware there of an infinite being, consciousness and bliss which we essentially are or in which we exist; but this can only be some reflection of spirit in mind or else at most a growing absorption of mind into spirit, which deprives us in the end of our centre of action. For since mind is separative, its centre of action must also be separative; the Divine acts in us through our ego. Therefore, if we follow this way, it can only be for cessation of our cosmic becoming, for a sleep in some static immobility of spirit and perhaps through that a return to supracosmic existence: the individual involves himself into the supracosmic status and his enjoyment is as the enjoyment of deep sleep, sushupti. He associates himself with and apparently loses himself in Sachchidananda's supernal being, dissociates himself from all the transcendent Sachchidananda's joy of manifestation which yet still continues and never comes to any final cessation; for the Divine is not limited by his transcendence, has not any sorrow of the becoming or any aversion from it, does not need to take refuge from it, as would the mentalised individual, in the release of cessation. If then we would be even as the Divine, free in
essential non-becoming, immortal in becoming,—as the Upanishad might put it, *asambhūtyā nrityum tīrthā sam-
bhūtyā amritam acnute,*—we must discover a new centre of will and consciousness and delight of existence, a centre in which the transcendent, universal and individual possess naturally both their oneness and the relations of a diversity in oneness. That cannot be possessed perfectly even upon the gnostic plane of the mental existence and consciousness,—for there is such a plane,—but must be sought in the supermind. We have to evolve the mental into the gnostic being.
Essays on the Gita

THE SECRET OF SECRETS

All the truth that has been developing itself at this length step by step, bringing forward at each point a fresh aspect of the integral knowledge and founding on it some result of spiritual state and action, has now to take a turn of immense importance; and the Teacher therefore takes care first to draw attention to the decisive character of what he is about to say, so that the mind of Arjuna may be awakened and attentive. For he is going to open his mind to the knowledge and sight of the integral Divinity and lead up to the vision of the eleventh book, by which the warrior of Kuruṣhetra becomes conscious of the author and upholder of his being and action and mission, the Godhead in man and the world, whom nothing in man and the world limits or binds, because all proceeds from him, is an action in his infinite being, continues and is supported by his will, is justified in his divine self-knowledge, has him always for its origin, substance and end. Arjuna is to become aware of himself as existing only in God and as acting only by the power within him, his workings only an instrumentality of the divine action, his egoistic consciousness only a veil and to his ignorance a misrepresentation of the real being within him which is an immortal spark and portion of the Divine.

This vision is to remove whatever doubt may still re-
main within his mind; it is to make him strong for the action from which he has shrunk, but to which he is irrevocably commanded and can no more recoil from it, for to recoil would be the negation and denial of the divine will and sanction within him which is soon to assume too the appearance of the cosmic sanction. For now the world Being appears to him as the body of God ensouled by his eternal Time-spirit and with its majestic and dreadful voice missions him to the crash of the battle; it calls him at once to the liberation of his spirit and to the fulfilment of his action in the cosmic mystery. His intellectual doubts are clearing away as a greater light of self-knowledge and the knowledge of God and Nature is being unfolded to him; but intellectual clarity is not enough, he must see with the inner sight illumining his blind outward human vision, so that he may act with the consent of his whole being, with a perfect faith in all his members, craddhā, with a perfect devotion to the self of his self and the master of his being and to the same self of the world and master of all being in the universe.

All that has gone before is of importance because it has laid the foundations of the knowledge or has prepared its first necessary materials or scaffolding; but now the full frame of the structure is to be placed before his eyes. All that is to come after, will have its great importance because it will analyse parts of this frame, show in what this or that in it consists; but in substance the integral knowledge of the Being who is speaking to him is to be now unveiled before his eyes so that he cannot choose but see. What has gone before, is to show him that he is not bound fatally to the knot of the ignorance and egoistic action in which he has hitherto remained contented, but whose partial solutions suffice no longer to satisfy a mind bewildered by the conflict of opposite appearances which make up the action of the world and by the entanglement of his works from which he is unable to escape except by
renunciation of life and works. He has been shown that there are two opposed ways of working and living, one in the ignorance of the ego, one in the clear self-knowledge of a divine being. He may act with desire, with passion, an ego driven by the qualities of the lower Nature, subject to the balance of virtue and sin, joy and sorrow, preoccupied with the fruits and consequences of his works, success and defeat, good result and evil result, bound on the world machine, caught up in a great tangle of action and inaction and perverse action which perplex the heart and mind and soul of man with their changing and contrary masks and appearances. But he is not utterly tied down to the works of the ignorance, he may do if he will the works of knowledge; he may act here as the higher thinker, the knower, the Yogin, the seeker of freedom first and afterwards the liberated spirit. To perceive that great possibility and to keep his will and intelligence fixed on the knowledge and self-vision which will realise and make it effectual, is the way of escape from his perplexity.

There is a spirit within us calm, superior to works, equal, not bound in this external tangle, surveying it as its supporter, source, immanent witness, but not involved in it. Infinite, containing all, one self in all, it surveys impartially the whole action of nature and it sees that it is only the action of Nature, not its own action. It sees that the ego and its will and its intelligence are all a machinery of Nature and that all their action is determined by the complexity of her triple modes and qualities. The eternal spirit itself is free from them. It is free from them because it knows; it knows that Nature and ego and the personal being of all these creatures do not make up the whole of existence. For existence is not merely a glorious or a vain, a wonderful or a dismal panorama of a constant mutation of becoming. There is something eternal, immutable, imperishable, a timeless self-existence; that is not affected by the mutation of Nature. It is their impartial witness,
neither affecting nor affected, neither acting nor acted upon, neither virtuous nor sinful, but always pure, complete, great and unwounded; neither grieving nor rejoicing at all that afflicts and attracts the egoistic being, it is the friend of none, the enemy of none, but one equal self of all. Man is not now conscious of this self, because he is wrapped up in his outward-going mind, because he will not learn to live within; he does not detach himself, draw back from his action and observe it as the work of Nature. Ego is the obstacle, the lynch-pin of the wheel of delusion: to lose the ego in the soul’s self is the first condition of freedom. Become spirit and not merely a mind and ego, is the opening word of this message of liberation.

Arjuna has been therefore called upon first to give up all desire of the fruits of his works and become simply the desireless impartial doer of whatever has to be done, leaving the fruit to whatever power may be the master of the cosmic workings. For he very evidently is not the master; it is not for the satisfaction of his personal ego that Nature was set upon her ways, not for the fulfilment of his desires and preferences that the universal Life is living, not for the fulfilment of his intellectual opinions, judgment, standard that the universal Mind is working, nor is it to that tribunal that it has to refer its cosmic aims or its terrestrial method and purposes. These claims can only be made by the ignorant souls who live in the personality and see everything from that poor and narrow standpoint. He must stand back first from that egoistic claim on the world and work only as one among the millions who contributes his share of action to a result determined not by himself, but by the universal action and purpose. But he has to do yet more, he has to give up the idea of being the doer and to see, freed from all personality, that it is the universal intelligence, will, mind, life that is at work in him and in all others. Nature is the universal worker; his works are hers, even as the fruits of
her works in him are part of the great sum of result guided by a greater Power than his own. If he can do these two things spiritually, then the tangle and bondage of his works will fall far away from him; for the whole knot of that bondage lay in his egoistic demand and participation. Passion and sin and personal joy and grief will fade away from his soul, which will now live within, pure, large, calm, equal to all persons and all things. Action will produce no subjective reaction and will leave no stain nor any mark on his spirit's purity. He will have the inner joy, rest, ease and inalienable bliss of a free, unaffected being. Neither within nor without will he have any more the old little personality, for he will feel consciously one self and spirit with all, even as his outer nature will have become to his consciousness an inseparable part of the universal mind, life and will. His separative egoistic personality will have been taken up and extinguished in the impersonality of spiritual being, his separative egoistic nature will be unified with the action of cosmic Nature.

But this liberation is dependent on two simultaneous, but not yet reconciled perceptions, the clear vision of spirit and the clear vision of Nature. It is not the scientific and intelligent detachment which is quite possible even to the materialistic philosopher who has some clear vision of Nature alone, but not the perception of his own soul and self-being; nor is it the intellectual detachment of the idealistic sage who escapes from the more limiting and disturbing forms of his ego by a luminous use of the reason. This is a greater, more perfect spiritual detachment which comes by a vision of the Supreme who is more than Nature and greater than mind and reason. But detachment is only the initial secret of freedom and of the clear vision of knowledge, it is not the whole clue to the divine mystery,—for by itself it would leave Nature unexplained and the natural active part of being isolated from the spiritual and quietistic self-existence. The divine
detachment must be the foundation for a divine participation in Nature which will replace the old egoistic participation, the divine quietism must support a divine activism and kinetism. This truth which the Teacher has had in view all along and therefore insisted on the sacrifice of works, the recognition of the Supreme as the master of our works, the doctrine of the Avatar and the divine birth, has yet been at first kept subordinate to the primary necessity of the quietistic liberation. Only yet the truths which lead to the spiritual calm, detachment, equality and oneness, in a word, to the perception and becoming of the immutable self, have been fully developed and given their largest amplitude of power and significance. The other great and necessary truth, its complement, has been left in a certain obscurity of a lesser or relative light; it has been hinted at constantly, but not as yet developed. Now in these successive chapters it is being rapidly released into expression.

Throughout Krishna, the Avatar, the Teacher, the charioteer of the human soul in the world-action, has kept one string always sounding across the preparatory strain and insistently coming in as a warning and prelude of a greater ultimate harmony. That note was the idea of a supreme Godhead which dwells within man and Nature, but is greater than man and Nature, is found by impersonality of the self, but of which impersonal self is not the whole significance. We now see the meaning of that strong recurring note. It was this one Godhead, the same in universal self and man and Nature who through the voice of the Teacher in the chariot was preparing for his absolute claim to the whole being of the awakened seer of things and doer of works. "I who am within thee", he was saying, "I who am here in this human body, I for whom all exists, acts, strives, am at once the secret of the self-existent spirit and of the cosmic activity. This 'I' is the greater I of whom the largest human personality is
only a partial and fragmentary manifestation, Nature itself only an inferior working. Master of the soul, master of all the works of the cosmos, it is the one Light, the sole Power, the only Being. This Godhead within thee is the Teacher, the Sun, the lifter of the clear blaze of knowledge in which thou becomest aware of the difference between thy immutable self and thy mutable nature. But look beyond to the source of the light itself, then shalt thou know the supreme Soul in which is recovered the spiritual truth of personality and Nature. See then the one self in all beings that thou mayst see me in all beings; see all beings in one spiritual self and reality, because that is the way to see all beings in me; know one Brahman in all that thou mayst see God who is the supreme Brahman. Know thyself, be thy self that thou mayst be united with me of whom this timeless self is the clear light or the transparent curtain. I the Godhead am the highest truth of self and spirit."

But Arjuna has to see also this that the same Godhead is the higher truth too of Nature and his personality. That was the will universal in Nature, greater than the acts of Nature which proceed from him, to whom belong her actions and man's and the fruits of them. Therefore he has to do works as a sacrifice, because that is the truth of his works and of all works; Nature is the worker and not ego, but Nature is only a power of the Being who is the sole master of all her works and energisms and of all the aeons of the cosmic sacrifice. Therefore since all his works are that Being's, he has to give up his works to the Godhead in him and the world by whom they are done in the divine mystery of Nature. This is the double condition of the divine birth of the soul, of its release from the mortality of the ego and the body into the spiritual, — knowledge first of one's timeless immutable self and union through it with the timeless Godhead, but knowledge too of that which lives behind the riddle of cosmos, the Godhead
in all existences and their workings, and union through the offering of all our nature and being with the One who has become in Time and Space all that is. Here comes in the place of bhakti in the scheme of the Yoga of an integral self-liberation. It is an adoration and aspiration towards that which is greater than imperishable self or changing Nature; all knowledge becomes an adoration and aspiration, but all works too become an adoration and aspiration. Works of nature and freedom of soul are unified in this adoration and become one self-uplifting to the one Godhead. The final release, a passing away from the lower nature to the source of the higher spiritual becoming, is not an extinction of the soul,—only the ego becomes extinct,—but a departure of our whole self of knowledge, will and love to dwell no longer in his universal, but in his supracosmic reality.

Necessarily, to make this knowledge clear to the mind of Arjuna the divine Teacher sets out by removing the source of two remaining difficulties, the antinomy between the impersonal self and the human personality and the antinomy between the self and Nature. While these two antinomies last, the Godhead in Nature and man remains obscure, irrational and unbelievable. Nature has been represented as the mechanical bondage of the gunas, the soul as the egoistic being subject to that bondage. But if that be all their truth, they are not and cannot be divine. Nature, ignorant and mechanical, cannot be a power of God, for divine Power must be free in its workings, spiritual in its origin, spiritual in its greatness: the soul bound and egoistic in Nature, mental, vital, physical only, cannot be a portion of the divine and itself a divine being; for such a divine being must be itself of the very nature of the Divine, free, spiritual, self-developing, self-existent, superior to mind, life and body. Both these difficulties and the obscurities they bring in are removed by one illuminining ray of truth. Mechanical Nature is only a
lower truth; it is the formula of an inferior phenomenal action. There is a higher which is the spiritual and that is the nature of our spiritual personality. God is at once impersonal and personal; his impersonality is to our psychological realisation a timeless being, consciousness, bliss of existence, his personality represents itself as a power of being, knowledge, will, joy of multiple self-manifestation. We are that impersonality in the static essence of our being; we are the multitude of that essential power in our spiritual personality. But the distinction is only for the purposes of self-manifestation; the divine impersonality is, when one goes behind it, a supreme soul and spirit. It is the great "I"—so aham, I am He, from which all personality and nature proceed and disport themselves here diversely in the world. Brahman is all this that is, says the Upanishad, for Brahman is one self which sees itself in four successive positions of consciousness. Vasudeva, the eternal Being, is all, says the Gita, he is the Brahman, supporting and originating all from his higher spiritual nature, becoming all things in a nature of intelligence, mind, life and sense and objective appearance of material being. The Jiva is he in that spiritual nature of the Eternal in its multiplicity. God, Nature and Jiva are the three terms of existence, and these three are one being.

How does this Being manifest himself in cosmos? First as the immutable timeless self omnipresent and all-supporting which is in its eternity being and not becoming; then, held in that being an essential power or spiritual principle of self-becoming, swabhāva, through which by spiritual self-vision it determines all that is in its own being. The power or the energy of that self-becoming looses forth into action all that is thus determined; all creation is this working of the essential nature, is Karma. But it develops it in a mutable Nature of intelligence, mind, life-sense and form-objectivity of material phenomenon. All its workings become a sacrifice of the soul in Nature to the
supreme Soul, and the supreme Godhead dwells therefore in all as the Master of their sacrifice, whose presence and power govern it and whose self-knowledge and delight of being receive it. To know this is to have the right knowledge of the universe and the vision of God in the cosmos. This knowledge, effected by the offering up of his works and his nature to the Godhead in all enables man to return to his spiritual nature of being and through it to the supra-
cosmic Reality.

This truth is the secret of being which the Gita is now going to apply in its amplitude of result for the life of man. What it is going to say is the most secret thing of all; * it is the knowledge of the whole Godhead, sam-
agram maim, which the Master of his being has promised to Arjuna, that essential knowledge attended with the complete knowledge of it in all its principles which will leave nothing to be still known. The whole knot of the ignorance which has bewildered his human mind and has made his will recoil from his divinely appointed work, will have been cut entirely asunder. This is the wisdom of all wisdoms, the secret of all secrets, the king-knowledge, the king-secret. It is a pure and supreme light which one can verify by direct spiritual experience and see in oneself as the truth, it is the right and just knowledge, the very law of being. It is easy to practice when one gets hold of it, sees it, tries faithfully to live in it.

But faith is necessary; if faith is absent, if one trusts to the critical intelligence which goes by outward facts and jealously questions the revelatory knowledge because that does not square with the divisions and imperfections of the apparent nature, seems to exceed it and state something which carries us beyond the first practical facts of our present existence, its grief, its pain, evil, defect, undivine error and stumbling, asubham, then there
is no possibility of living it out. The soul that fails to get faith in this higher truth and law, must return into the path of ordinary mortal living subject to death, for it cannot grow into the Godhead which it denies. For this is a truth which has to be lived, one has to grow into it, one has to become it, that is the only way of verifying it, by exceeding of the lower self one has to become the real divine self; and all the apparent truths which one can oppose to it, are appearances of the lower Nature. The release from the evil and the defect of the lower Nature, *asubham*, can only come by accepting a higher knowledge in which all this apparent evil becomes convinced of unreality. But to grow thus into the freedom of the divine Nature one must accept and believe in the Godhead within; for the reason why the practice of this Yoga becomes possible and easy is that in doing it we give up the whole working of our nature into the hands of the divine Being. The Godhead works out the divine birth in us progressively, simply, infallibly, by taking up our being into his and by filling it with his knowledge and power, *jñānādīpena bhāṣwatā*. What with entire faith and without egoism we believe in and impelled by him will to be, the God within will surely accomplish. But the egoistic mind and life we now seem must first surrender itself into the hands of the divine Being within us.
The Synthesis of Yoga

CHAPTER XLVIII

THE MYSTERY OF LOVE

The adoration of the impersonal Divine would not be strictly a Yoga of devotion according to the current interpretation; for in the current forms of Yoga it is supposed that the Impersonal can only be sought for a complete unity in which God and our own person disappear and there is none to adore or to be adored; only the delight of the experience of oneness and infinity remains. But in truth the miracles of spiritual consciousness are not to be subjected to so rigid a logic. When we first come to feel the presence of the infinite, as it is the finite personality in us which is touched by it, that may well answer to the touch and call with a sort of adoration. Secondly, we may regard the Infinite not so much as a spiritual status of oneness and bliss, or that only as its mould and medium of being, but rather as the presence of the ineffable Godhead to our consciousness, and then too love and adoration find their place. And even when our personality seems to disappear into unity with it, it may still be—and really is—the individual divine who is melting to the universal or the supreme by a union in which love and lover and loved are forgotten in a fusing experience of ecstasy, but are still there latent in the oneness and subconsciously persisting in it. All union of the self by love must necessarily be of this nature. We may even say, in a sense, that
it is to have this joy of union as the ultimate crown of all
the varied experiences of spiritual relation between the
individual soul and God that the One became many in
the universe.

Still, the more varied and most intimate experience
of divine love cannot come by the pursuit of the imper-
sonal Infinite alone; for that the Godhead we adore must
become near and personal to us. It is possible for the Im-
personal to reveal within itself all the riches of personality
when we get into its heart, and one who sought only to
enter into or to embrace the infinite Presence alone, may
discover in it things he had not dreamed of; the being of
the Divine has surprises for us which confound the ideas
of the limiting intellect. But ordinarily the way of devo-
tion begins from the other end; it starts from and it rises
and widens to its issue by adoration of the divine Person-
ality. The Divine is a Being and not an abstract existence
or a status of pure timeless infinity; the original and
universal existence is He, but that existence is inseparable
from consciousness and bliss of being, and an existence
conscious of its own being and its own bliss is what we
may well call a divine infinite Person,—Purusha. Moreover
all consciousness implies power, Shakti; where there is
infinite consciousness of being, there is infinite power of
being, and by that power all exists in the universe. All
beings exist by this Being; all things are the faces of God;
al thought and action and feeling and love proceed from
him and return to him, all their results have him for
source and support and secret goal. It is to this Godhead,
this Being that the Bhakti of an integral Yoga will be
poured out and uplifted. Transcendent, it will seek him
in the ecstasy of an absolute union; universal, it will seek
him in infinite quality and every aspect and in all beings
with a universal delight and love; individual, it will enter
into all human relations with him that love creates be-
tween person and person.
It may not be possible to seize from the beginning on all the complete integrality of that which the heart is seeking; in fact, is only possible if the intelligence, the temperment, the emotional mind have already been developed into largeness and fineness by the trend of our previous living. That is what the experience of the normal life is meant to lead to by its widening culture of the intellect, the aesthetic and emotional mind and of our parts too of will and active experience. It widens and refines the normal being so that it may open easily to all the truth of That which was preparing it for the temple of its self-manifestation. Ordinarily, man is limited in all these parts of his being and he can grasp at first only so much of the divine truth as has some large correspondence to his own nature and its past development and associations. Therefore God meets us first in different limited affirmations of his divine qualities and nature; he presents himself to the seeker as an absolute of the things he can understand and to which his will and heart can respond; he discloses some name and aspect of his Godhead. This is what is called in Yoga the ishta-devata, the name and form elected by our nature for its worship. In order that the human being may embrace this Godhead with every part of himself, it is represented with a form that answers to its aspects and qualities and which becomes the living body of God to the adorer. These are those forms of Vishnu, Shiva, Krishna, Kali, Durga, Christ, Buddha, which the mind of man seizes on for adoration. Even the monothest who worships a formless Godhead, yet gives to him some form of quality, some mental form or form of Nature by which he envisages and approaches him. But to be able to see a living form, a mental body, as it were, of the Divine gives to the approach a greater closeness and sweetness.

The way of the integral Yoga of bhakti will be to universalise this conception of the Deity, to personalise
him intimately by a multiple and an all-embracing relation, to make him constantly present to all the being and to devote, give up, surrender the whole being to him, so that he shall dwell near to us and in us and we with him and in him. Manana and darshana, a constant thinking of him in all things and seeing of him always and everywhere is essential to this way of devotion. When we look on the things of physical Nature, in them we have to see the divine object of our love; when we look upon men and beings, we have to see him in them and in our relation with them to see that we are entering into relations with forms of him; when breaking beyond the limitation of the material world we know or have relations with the beings of other planes, still the same thought and vision has to be made real to our minds. The normal habit of our minds which are open only to the material and apparent form and the ordinary mutilated relation and ignore the secret Godhead within, has to yield by an unceasing habit of all-embracing love and delight to this deeper and ampler comprehension and this greater relation. In all godheads we have to see this one God whom we worship with our heart and all our being; they are forms of his divinity. So enlarging our spiritual embrace we reach a point at which all is he and the delight of this consciousness becomes to us our normal uninterrupted way of looking at the world. That brings us the outward or objective universality of our union with him.

Inwardly, the image of the Beloved has to become visible to the eye within, dwelling in us as in his mansion, informing our hearts with the sweetness of his presence, presiding over all our activities of mind and life as the friend, master and lover from the summit of our being, uniting us from above with himself in the universe. A constant inner communion is the joy to be made close and permanent and unfailing. This communion is not to be confined to an exceptional nearness and adoration
when we retire quite into ourselves away from our normal preoccupations, nor is it to be sought by a putting away of our human activities. All our thoughts, impulses, feelings, actions have to be referred to him for his sanction or disallowance, or if we cannot yet reach this point, to be offered to him in our sacrifice of aspiration, so that he may more and more descend into us and be present in them all and pervade them with all his will and power; his light and knowledge, his love and delight. In the end all our thoughts, feelings, impulses, actions will begin to proceed from him and change into some divine seed and form of themselves; in our whole inner living we shall have grown conscious of ourselves as a part of his being till between the existence of the Divine whom we adore and our own lives there is no longer any division. So too in all happenings we have to come to see the dealings with us of the divine Lover and take such pleasure in them that even grief and suffering and physical pain become his gifts and turn to delight and disappear finally into delight, slain by the sense of the divine contact, because the touch of his hands is the alchemist of a miraculous transformation. Some reject life because it is tainted with grief and pain, but to the God-lover grief and pain become means of meeting with him, imprints of his pressure and finally cease as soon as our union with his nature becomes too complete for these masks of the universal delight at all to conceal it. They change into the Ananda.

All the relations by which this union comes about, become on this path intensely and blissfully personal. That which in the end contains, takes up or unifies them all, is the relation of lover and beloved, because that is the most intense and blissful of all and carries up all the rest into its heights and yet exceeds them. He is the teacher and guide and leads us to knowledge; at every step of the developing inner light and vision, we feel his touch like
that of the artist moulding our clay of mind, his voice revealing the truth and its word, the thought he gives us to which we respond, the flashing of his spears of lightning which chase the darkness of our ignorance. Especially, in proportion as the partial lights of the mind become transformed into lights of gnosis, in whatever slighter or greater degree that may happen, we feel it as a transformation of our mentality into his and more and more he becomes the thinker and seer in us. We cease to think and see for ourselves, but think only what he wills to think for us and see only what he sees for us. And then the teacher is fulfilled in the lover; he lays hands on all our mental being to embrace and possess, to enjoy and use it.

He is the Master; but in this way of approach all distance and separation, all awe and fear and mere obedience disappear, because we become too close and united with him for these things to endure and it is the lover of our being who takes it up and occupies and uses and does with it whatever he wills. Obedience is the sign of the servant, but that is the lowest stage of this relation, dāṣya. Afterwards we do not obey, but move to his will as the string replies to the finger of the musician. To be the instrument is this higher stage of self-surrender and submission. But this is the living and loving instrument and it ends in the whole nature of our being becoming the slave of God, rejoicing in his possession and its own blissful subjection to the divine grasp and mastery. With a passionate delight it does all he wills it to do without questioning and bears all he would have it bear, because what it bears is the burden of the beloved being.

He is the friend, the adviser, helper, saviour in trouble and distress, the defender from enemies, the hero who fights our battles for us or under whose shield we fight, the charioteer, the pilot of our ways. And here we come at once to a closer intimacy; he is the comrade and eternal companion, the playmate of the game of living. But
still there is so far a certain division, however pleasant, and friendship is too much limited by the appearance of beneficence. The lover can wound, abandon, be wroth with us, seem to betray, yet our love endures and even grows by these oppositions; they increase the joy of reunion and the joy of possession; through them the lover remains the friend, and all that he does we find in the end has been done by the lover and helper of our being for our soul’s perfection as well as for his joy in us. These contradictions lead to a greater intimacy. He is the father and mother too of our being, its source and protector and its indulgent cherisher and giver of our desires. He is the child born to our desire whom we cherish and rear. All these things the lover takes up; his love in its intimacy and oneness keeps in it the paternal and maternal care and lends itself to our demands upon it. All is unified in that deepest many-sided relation.

From the beginning even it is possible to have this closest relation of the lover and beloved, but it will not be as exclusive for the integral Yogan as for certain purely ecstatic ways of Bhakti. It will from the beginning take into itself something of the hues of the other relations, since he follows too knowledge and works and has need of the Divine as teacher, friend and master. The growing of the love of God must carry with it in him an expansion of the knowledge of God and of the action of the divine Will in his nature and living. The divine Lover reveals himself; he takes possession of the life. But still the essential relation will be that of love from which all things flow, love passionate, complete, seeking a hundred ways of fulfilment, every means of mutual possession, a million facets of the joy of union. All the distinctions of the mind, all its barriers and "cannot be"'s, all the cold analyses of the reason are mocked at by this love or they are only used as the tests and fields and gates of union. Love comes to us in many ways; it may come as an awakening to the beauty
of the Lover, by the sight of an ideal face and image of him, by his mysterious hints to us of himself behind the thousand faces of things in the world, by a slow or sudden need of the heart, by a vague thirst in the soul, by the sense of someone near us drawing us or pursuing us with love or of some one blissful and beautiful whom we must discover.

We may seek after him passionately and pursue the unseen beloved; but also the lover whom we think not of, may pursue us, may come upon us in the midst of the world and seize on us for his own whether at first we will or no. Even, he may come to us at first as an enemy, with the wrath of love, and our earliest relations with him may be those of battle and struggle. Where first there is love and attraction, the relations between the Divine and the soul may still for long be chequered with misunderstanding and offence, jealousy and wrath; strife and the quarrels of love, hope and despair and the pain of absence and separation. We throw up all the passions of the heart against him, till they are purified into a sole ecstasy of bliss and oneness. But that too is no monotony; it is not possible for the tongue of human speech to tell all the utter unity and all the eternal variety of the ananda of divine love. Our higher and our lower members are both flooded with it, the mind and life no less than the soul: even the physical body takes its share of the joy, feels the touch, is filled in all its limbs, veins, nerves with the flowing of the wine of the ecstasy, amrīta. Love and Ananda are the last word of being, the secret of secrets, the mystery of mysteries.

Thus universalised, personalised, raised to its intensities, made all-occupying, all-embracing, all-fulfilling, the way of love and delight gives the supreme liberation. Its highest crest is a supracosmic union. But for love complete union is mukti; liberation has to it no other sense; and it includes all kinds of mukti together, nor are they in the end, as some would have it, merely successive to each
other and therefore mutually exclusive. We have the absolute union of the divine with the human spirit, sāyniṣya; in that reveals itself a content of all that depends here upon difference,—but there the difference is only a form of oneness,—ananda too of nearness and contact and mutual presence, sāmīṣya, sālokya, ananda of mutual reflection, the thing that we call likeness, sādriṣya, and other wonderful things too for which language has as yet no name. There is nothing which is beyond the reach of the God-lover or denied to him; for he is the favourite of the divine Lover and the self of the Beloved.
The Renaissance in India

(4)

The renaissance thus determining itself, but not yet finally determined, if it is to be what the name implies, a rebirth of the soul of India into a new body of energy, a new form of its innate and ancient spirit, *prajñā purāṇī*, must insist much more finally and integrally than it has as yet done on its spiritual turn, on the greater and greater action of the spiritual motive in every sphere of our living. But here we are still liable to be met by the remnants of a misunderstanding or a refusal to understand,—it is something of both,—which was perhaps to a little extent justified by certain ascetic or religionist exaggerations, a distrust which is accentuated by a recoil from the excessive other-worldliness that has marked certain developments of the Indian mind and life, but yet is not justified, because it misses the true point at issue. Thus we are sometimes asked what on earth we mean by spirituality in art and poetry or in political and social life,—a confession of ignorance strange enough in any Indian mouth at this stage of our national history,—or how art and poetry will be any the better when they have got into them what I have recently seen described as the "twang of spirituality," and how the practical problems either of society or of politics are going at all to profit by this element. We have here really an echo of the European idea, now of sufficiently long standing, that religion and spirituality on the one side and intellectual activity and practical life on the other are
two entirely different things and have each to be pursued on its own entirely separate lines and in obedience to its own entirely separate principles. Again we may be met also by the suspicion that in holding up this ideal rule before India we are pointing her to the metaphysical and away from the dynamic and pragmatic or inculcating some obscurantist reactionary principle of mystical or irrational religiosity and diverting her from the paths of reason and modernity which she must follow if she is to be an efficient and a well-organised nation able to survive in the shocks of the modern world. We must therefore try to make clear what it is we mean by a renaissance governed by the principle of spirituality.

But first let us say what we do not mean by this ideal. Clearly it does not signify that we shall regard earthly life as a temporal vanity, try to become all of us as soon as possible monastic ascetics, frame our social life into a preparation for the monastery or cavern or mountain-top or make of it a static life without any great progressive ideals but only some aim which has nothing to do with earth or the collective advance of the human race. That may have been for some time a tendency of the Indian mind, but it was never the whole tendency. Nor does spirituality mean the moulding of the whole type of the national being to suit the limited dogmas, forms, tenets of a particular religion, as was often enough attempted by the old societies, an idea which still persists in many minds by the power of old mental habit and association; clearly such an attempt would be impossible, even if it were desirable, in a country full of the most diverse religious opinions and harbouring too three such distinct general forms as Hinduism, Islam and Christianity, to say nothing of the numerous special forms to which each of these has given birth. Spirituality is much wider than any particular religion, and in the larger ideas of it that are now coming on us even the greatest religion becomes no more than a broad
sect or branch of the one universal religion, by which we shall understand in the future man's seeking for the eternal, the divine, the greater self, the source of unity and his attempt to arrive at some equation, some increasing approximation of the values of human life with the eternal and the divine values.

Nor do we mean the exclusion of anything whatsoever from our scope, of any of the great aims of human life, of any of the great problems of our modern world, of any form of human activity, of any general or inherent impulse or characteristic means of the desire of the soul of man for development, expansion, increasing vigour and joy, light, power, perfection. Spirit without mind, spirit without body is not the type of man, therefore a human spirituality must not belittle the mind, life or body or hold them of small account: it will rather hold them of high account, of immense importance, precisely because they are the conditions and instruments of the life of the spirit in man. The ancient Indian culture attached quite as much value to the soundness, growth and strength of the mind, life and body as the old Hellenic or the modern scientific thought, although for a different end and a greater motive. Therefore to everything that serves and belongs to the healthy fullness of these things, it gave free play, to the activity of the reason, to science and philosophy, to the satisfaction of the aesthetic being and to all the many arts great or small, to the health and strength of the body, to the physical and economical wellbeing, ease, opulence of the race,—there was never a national ideal of poverty in India as some would have us believe, nor was bareness or squalor the essential setting of her spirituality,—and to its general military, political and social strength and efficiency. Their aim was high, but firm and wide too was the base they sought to establish and great the care bestowed on these first instruments. Necessarily the new India will seek the same end in new ways under the vivid impulse of fresh and
large ideas and by an instrumentality suited to more complex conditions; but the scope of her effort and action and the suppleness and variety of her mind will not be less, but greater than of old. Spirituality is not necessarily exclusive; it can be and in its fullness must be all-inclusive.

But still there is a great difference between the spiritual and the purely material and mental view of existence. The spiritual view holds that the mind, life, body are man’s means and not his aims and even that they are not his last and highest means; it sees them as his outer instrumental self and not his whole being. It sees the infinite behind all things finite and it adjudges the value of the finite by higher infinite values of which they are the imperfect translation and towards which, to a truer expression of them, they are always trying to arrive. It sees a greater reality than the apparent not only behind man and the world, but within man and the world, and this soul, self, divine thing in man it holds to be that in him which is of the highest importance, that which everything else in him must try in whatever way to bring out and express, and this soul, self, divine presence in the world it holds to be that which man has ever to try to see and recognise through all appearances, to unite his thought and life with it and in it to find his unity with his fellows. This alters necessarily our whole normal view of things; even in preserving all the aims of human life, it will give them a different sense and direction.

We aim at the health and vigour of the body; but with what object? For its own sake, will be the ordinary reply, because it is worth having; or else that we may have long life and a sound basis for our intellectual, vital, emotional satisfactions. Yes, for its own sake, in a way, but in this sense that the physical too is an expression of the spirit and its perfection is worth having, is part of the dharma of the complete human living; but still more as a basis for all that higher activity which ends in the dis-
covery and expression of the divine self in man. Ācarām khalu dharma-sādhanam, runs the old Sanscrit saying, the body too is our means for fulfilling the dharma, the Godward law of our being. The mental, the emotional, the aesthetic parts of us have to be developed, is the ordinary view, so that they may have a greater satisfaction, or because that is man's finer nature, because so he feels himself more alive and fulfilled. This, but not this only; rather because these things too are the expressions of the spirit, things which are seeking in him for their divine values and by their growth, subtlety, flexibility, power, intensity he is able to come nearer to the divine Reality in the world, to lay hold on it variously, to tune eventually his whole life into unity and conformity with it. Morality is in the ordinary view a well-regulated individual and social conduct which keeps society going and leads towards a better, a more rational, temperate, sympathetic, self-restrained dealing with our fellows. But ethics in the spiritual point of view is much more, it is a means of developing in our action and still more essentially in the character of our being the diviner self in us, a step of our growing into the nature of the Godhead.

So with all our aims and activities; spirituality takes them all and gives them a greater, diviner, more intimate sense. Philosophy is in the western way of dealing with it a dispassionate enquiry by the light of the reason into the first truths of existence, which we shall get at either by observing the facts science places at our disposal or by a careful dialectical scrutiny of the concepts of the reason or a mixture of the two methods. But from the spiritual view-point truth of existence is to be found by intuition and inner experience and not only by the reason and by scientific observation; the work of philosophy is to arrange the data given by the various means of knowledge, excluding none, and put them into their synthetic relation to the one Truth, the one supreme and universal reality.
Eventually, its real value is to prepare a basis for spiritual realisation and the growing of the human being into his divine self and divine nature. Science itself becomes only a knowledge of the world which throws an added light on the spirit of the universe and his way in things. Nor will it confine itself to a physical knowledge and its practical fruits or to the knowledge of life and man and mind based upon the idea of matter or material energy as our starting-point; a spiritualised culture will make room for new fields of research, for new and old psychical sciences and results which start from spirit as the first truth and from the power of mind and of what is greater than mind to act upon life and matter. The primitive aim of art and poetry is to create images of man and Nature which shall satisfy the sense of beauty and embody artistically the ideas of the intelligence about life and the responses of the imagination to it; but in a spiritual culture they become too in their aim a revelation of greater things concealed in man and Nature and of the deepest spiritual and universal beauty. Politics, society, economy are in the first form of human life simply an arrangement by which men collectively can live, produce, satisfy their desires, enjoy, progress in bodily, vital and mental efficiency; but the spiritual aim makes them much more than this, first, a framework of life within which man can seek for and grow into his real self and divinity, secondly, an increasing embodiment of the divine law of being in life, thirdly, a collective advance towards the light, power, peace, unity, harmony of the diviner nature of humanity which the race is trying to evolve. This and nothing more but nothing less, this in all its potentialities, is what we mean by a spiritual culture and the application of spirituality to life.

Those who distrust this ideal or who cannot understand it, are still under the sway of the European conception of life which for a time threatened to swamp entirely the
Indian spirit. But let us remember that Europe itself is
labouring to outgrow the limitations of its own concep-
tions and precisely by a rapid infusion of the ideas of the
East,—naturally, essential ideas and not the mere forms,—
which have been first infiltrating and are now more freely
streaming into Western thought, poetry, art, ideas of life,
not to overturn its culture, but to transform, enlighten
and aggrandise its best values and to add new elements
which have too long been ignored or forgotten. It will be
singular if while Europe is thus intelligently enlarging
herself in the new light she has been able to seize and admit-
ting the truths of the spirit and the aim at a divine change
in man and his life, we in India are to take up the cast-
off clothes of European thought and life and to straggle
along in the old rut of her wheels, always taking up today
what she had cast off yesterday. We should not allow
our cultural independence to be paralysed by the accident
that at the moment Europe came in upon us, we were in
a state of ebb and weakness, such as comes some day upon
all civilisations. That no more proves that our spirituality,
our culture, our leading ideas were entirely mistaken and
the best we can do is vigorously to europeanise, raciona-
lose, materialise ourselves in the practical parts of life,—
keeping perhaps some spirituality, religion, Indianism as
a graceful decoration in the background,—than the great
catastrophe of the war proves that Europe's science, her
democracy, her progress were all wrong and she should
return to the Middle Ages or imitate the culture of China
or Turkey or Tibet. Such generalisations are the facile
falsehoods of a hasty and unreflecting ignorance.

We have both made mistakes, faltered in the true ap-
lication of our ideals, been misled into unhealthy exag-
gerations. Europe has understood the lesson, she is striving
to correct herself; but she does not for this reason for-
swear science, democracy, progress, but purposes to com-
plete and perfect them, to use them better, to give them a
sounder direction. She is admitting the light of the East, but on the basis of her own way of thinking and living, opening herself to truth of the spirit, but not abandoning her own truth of life and science and social ideals. We should be as faithful, as free in our dealings with the Indian spirit and modern influences; correct what went wrong with us; apply our spirituality on broader and freer lines, be if possible not less but more spiritual than were our forefathers; admit western science, reason, progressiveness, the essential modern ideas, but on the basis of our own way of life and assimilated to our spiritual aim and ideal; open ourselves to the throb of life, the pragmatic activity, the great modern endeavour, but not therefore abandon our fundamental view of God and man and Nature. There is no real quarrel between them; for rather these two things need each other to fill themselves in, to discover all their own implications, to awaken to their own richest and completest significances.

India can best develop herself and serve humanity by being herself and following the law of her own nature. This does not mean, as some narrowly and blindly suppose, the rejection of everything new that comes to us in the stream of Time or happens to have been first developed or powerfully expressed by the West. Such an attitude would be intellectually absurd, physically impossible, and above all unspiritual; true spirituality rejects no new light, no added means or materials of our human self-development. It means simply to keep our centre, our essential way of being, our inborn nature and assimilate to it all we receive, and evolve out of it all we do and create. Religion has been a central preoccupation of the Indian mind; some have told us that too much religion ruined India, precisely because we made the whole of life religion or religion the whole of life, we have failed in life and gone under. I will not answer, adopting the language used by the poet in a slightly different connection, that our fall
does not matter and that the dust in which India lies is sacred. The fall, the failure does matter, and to lie in the dust is no sound position for man or nation. But the reason assigned is not the true one. If the majority of Indians had indeed made the whole of their lives religion in the true sense of the word, we should not be where we are now; it was because their public life became most irreligious, egoistic, self-seeking, materialistic that they fell. It is possible, that on one side we deviated too much into an excessive religiosity, that is to say, an excessive externalism of ceremony, rule, routine, mechanical worship, on the other into a too world-shunning asceticism which drew away the best minds who were thus lost to society instead of standing like the ancient Rishis as its spiritual support and its illuminating life-givers. But the root of the matter was the dwindling of the spiritual impulse in its generality and broadness, the decline of intellectual activity and freedom, the waning of great ideals, the loss of the gust of life.

Perhaps, there was too much religion in one sense; the word is English, smacks too much of things external such as creeds, rites, an external piety; there is no one Indian equivalent. But if we give rather to religion the sense of the following of the spiritual impulse in its fullness, and define spirituality as the attempt to know and live in the highest self, the divine, the all-embracing unity and to raise life in all its parts to the divinest possible values, then it is evident that there was not too much of religion, but rather too little of it— and in what there was, a too one-sided and therefore an insufficiently ample tendency. The right remedy is, not to belittle still farther the age-long ideal of India, but to return to its old amplitude and give it a still wider scope, to make in very truth all the life of the nation a religion in this high spiritual sense. This is the direction in which the philosophy, poetry, art of the West is, still more or less obscurely, but with an increa-
sing light, beginning to turn, and, even some faint glints of the truth are beginning now to fall across political and sociological ideals. India has the key to the knowledge and conscious application of the ideal; what was dark to her before in its application, she can now, with a new light, illumine; what was wrong and wry in her old methods she can now rectify; the fences which she created to protect the outer growth of the spiritual ideal and which afterwards became barriers to its expansion and farther application, she can now break down and give her spirit a freer field and an ampler flight: she can, if she will, give a new and decisive turn to the problems over which all mankind is labouring and stumbling, for the clue to their solutions is there in her ancient knowledge. Whether she will rise or not to the height of her opportunity in the renaissance which is coming upon her, is the question of her destiny.
"The Feast of Youth"

This is the first published book of a young poet whose name has recently and suddenly emerged under unusually favourable auspices. English poetry written by an Indian writer who uses the foreign medium as if it were his mother-tongue, with a spontaneous ease, power and beauty, the author a brother of the famous poetess Sarojini Naidu, one of a family which promises to be as remarkable as the Tagores by its possession of culture, talent and genius, challenging attention and sympathy by his combination of extreme youth and a high and early brilliance and already showing in his work, even though still immature, magnificent performance as well as a promise which makes it difficult to put any limits to the heights he may attain,—the book at once attracts interest and has come into immediate prominence amidst general appreciation and admiration. We have had already in the same field of achievement in Sarojini Naidu's poetry qualities which make her best work exquisite, unique and unmatchable in its kind. The same qualities are not to be found in this book, but it shows other high gifts which, when brought to perfection, must find an equal pitch with a greater scope. Here perhaps are the beginnings of a supreme utterance of the Indian soul in the rhythms of the English tongue.

That is a combination which, it may be well hoped for the sake of India's future, will not become too frequent a phenomenon. But at the present moment it serves both an artistic and a national purpose and seems to

be part of the movement of destiny. In any case, whatever may be said of the made-in-India type of second-hand English verse in which men of great literary gift in southern India too often waste their talent, Mr. Chattopadhyay’s production justifies itself by its beauty. This is not only genuine poetry, but the work of a young, though still unripe genius with an incalculable promise of greatness in it. As to the abundance here of all the essential materials, the instruments, the elementary powers of the poetical gift, there can be not a moment’s doubt or hesitation. Even the first few lines, though far from the best, are quite decisive. A rich and finely lavish command of language, a firm possession of his metrical instrument, an almost blinding gleam and glitter of the wealth of imagination and fancy, a stream of unfailingly poetic thought and image and a high though as yet uncertain pitch of expression, are the powers with which the young poet starts. There have been poets of a great final achievement who have begun with gifts of a less precious stuff and had by labour within themselves and a difficult alchemy to turn them into pure gold. Mr. Chattopadhyay is not of these; he is rather overburdened with the favours of the goddess, comes like some Vedic Marut with golden weapons, golden ornaments, car of gold, throwing in front of him continual lightnings of thought in the midst of a shining rain of fancies, and a greater government and a more careful and concentrated use rather than an enhancement of his powers is the one thing his poetry needs for its perfection.

The name of the volume, taken from its first poem, the Feast of Youth, is an appropriate description of its spirit, though one is inclined to call it rather a riot or revel than a simple feast. It is the singing of a young bacchanal of the Muse drunk with a bright and heady wine. In his first poem he promises to himself,

O, I shall drew the blue out of the skies
And offer it like wine of Paradise
To drunken Youth,
and the rest is an ample fulfilment of the promise. For
the thought and sentiment are an eager, fine and fiery
drinking of the joy of life and being, not in the pagan or
physically sensuous kind of enjoyment, but with a spiritual
and singularly pure intoxication of the thought, imagi-
ation and higher sense. The spiritual joy of existence,
of its primal colour and symbolic subtleties, its essential
sense, images, suggestions, a free and intense voluptuous-
ness of light is the note. Occasionally there is the at-
ttempt to bring in an incidental tone of sorrow, but at-
tacked by the glowing atmosphere of exultation, over-
come and rendered unreal by the surrounding light and
bliss, it fails to convince. Expression matches substance;
there is here no holding back, no reticence, no idea of
self-restraint, but rather a reckless ecstasy and outpouring.
Suggestion chases suggestion, fancy runs after or starts
away from fancy with no very exacting sequence; the
exhilaration of self-utterance dominates. One is a little
dazzled at first and has to accustom the eyes to the glitter,
before one can turn to the heart of the meaning: excess, profusion, an unwearied lavishing of treasures
creates the charm of the manner as well as its limitations,
but this is often an excellent sign in a young poet, for it
promises much richness in the hour of maturity; and here it is almost always,—not quite always, for there are
lapses,—a fine, though not yet a sovereign excess, which
continually attracts and stimulates the imagination, if it
does not always quite take it captive.

There is here perhaps a side effect of one remarkable
peculiarity of Mr. Chattopadhyay’s poetical mentality.
There is a background in it of Hindu Vedantic thought
and feeling which comes out especially in “Fire”, “Dusk”
“Messages” and other poems, but will be found repea-
tedly elsewhere and runs though the whole as a sort of
undercurrent; but the mould of the thought, the colour and tissue of the feeling betray a Moslem, a Persian, a Sufi influence. This source of inspiration appears in the title of some of the poems, and it has helped perhaps the tendency to lavishness. Sanscrit poetry, even when it clothes itself in the regal gold and purple of Kalidasa, or flows in the luscious warmth and colour of Jayadeva, keeps still a certain background of massive restraint, embanks itself in a certain firm solidity; the later poetry of the regional languages, though it has not that quality, is oftenest sparing at heart, does not give itself up to a curious opulence. But the Moslem mind has the tendency of mosaic and arabesque, loves the glow of many colours, the careful jewellery of image and phrase; its poetry is appareled like a daughter of the Badshahs.

Her girdles and her fillets gleam,
Like changing fires on sunset seas;
Her raiment is like morning mist,
Shot opal, gold and amethyst.

Mr. Chattopadhyay's spirit and manner are too expansive for the carefully compressed artistry of the Persian poets, but the influence of the passion for decorative colour is there. But though the kinship is visible even in the external expression, what is more striking, is a certain idiosyncracy of the fancy, the turn given to the thought, the colour of the vision, which are very often of the Sufi type. Something of the union of the two cultures appeared in the temperament of Mrs. Naidu's poetry, but here it is more subtly visible as part of the intellectual strain. This is however only one shaping influence behind; except in one or two poems, where we get some echo of his sister's manner and movement, this young poet is astonishingly original; it is himself that he utters in every line.

The thought-substance, the governing inspiration of this poetry is such as might well spring from a fusion of the Vedantic and the Sufi mentality. It is the utterance of
a mystical joy in God and Nature, sometimes of the direct God-union,—but this is not quite so successful—more characteristically of God through Nature. Yet this is not usually the physical Nature that we feel with the outward bodily sense; it is a mystic life of light and ecstasy behind her, hidden in sun and moon and star, morning and noon and dusk and night, sea and sky and earth. It is to bring this remoter splendid vision near to us that image is strained and crowded, symbol multiplied. We get this mystic sense and aspiration in the poem, "Fire," in an image of love,—

I am athirst for one glimpse of your beautiful face, O Love,

Veiled in the mystical silence of stars and the purple of skies.

The closing lines of the "Hour of Rest" express it more barely,—I quote them only for their directness, though the expression stumbles and even lapses badly in the last two lines,—

There is a sweetness in the world
That I have sometimes felt,
And oft in fragrant petals curled
His fragrance I have smelt,
And in sad notes of birds, unfurled,
The kindness He hath dealt.

It is more beautifully and mystically brought out in another poem, "Worship,"—

Like a rich song you chant your red fire sunrise
Deep in my dreams and forge your white flame moon.

You hide the crimson secret of your sunset
And the pure golden message of your noon.

You fashion cool-grey clouds within my body
And weave your rain into a diamond mesh.

The Universal Beauty dances, dances
A glimmering peacock in my flowering flesh.

Spring lives as a symbol of inner experience, universal spring,—
The spring-hues deepen into human bliss,
The heart of God and man in scent are blended,
The sky meets earth and heaven in one transparent kiss.

Simple, moving, melodious and direct is its utterance in "Message," with one image at least which deepens into intimate revelation,—

In my slumber and my waking
I can hear his sobbing flute
Through the springtime and the autumn
Shaping every flower and fruit,
And his gleaming laughter colours
Orange hills and purple streams.
He is throbbing in the crystal,
Magic centre of my dreams...
Silver stars are visible twinkles
Of his clear transparent touch.
He is moving every moment
To the world He loves so much.

In the sea

God churns the water into silvern foam
And breathes his music into every shell.
Noon is the Master's "mystic dog with paws of fire" and "Behind the clouds some hidden Flutist plays His flute."
These are some of the more overt and express phrasings of the predominant idea, exquisite in harmony, lovely and subtly penetrating in their thought. Elsewhere it is simply Nature and the bliss, light and wonder behind her that are expressed, the rest is concealed, yet suggested in the light. But there is always the same principle of a bright mystic vision and the transmutation of natural things into symbol values of the universal light, joy and beauty.

This poetry is an utterance of an ancient mystic experience with a new tone and burden of its own. Its very character brings in a certain limitation, it is empty of the touch of normal human life; our passion is absent
the warm blood of our emotion does not run through the veins of this Muse to flush her cheek with earthly colour. There is indeed a spiritual passion, a spiritual, not a physical sensuousness. Light and ecstasy there is, not the flame of earth's desire. Heaven takes up the symbols of the earth-life, but there is not the bringing of the Divine into the normal hues of our sight and our feeling which is the aim of Vaishnava poetry. Crystal is a favourite epithet of the poet, and there is here something crystalline, a rainbow prism of colours in the whiteness of shining stalactites. There is at first even some impression of a bright and fiery coldness of purity, as of a virgin rarity of the atmosphere of some high dawn, or as if that had happened which is imaged in "Dusk,"

Ah, God my heart is turning crystalline,
Seeing Thee play at crystal stars above!

or as if the poet had indeed, as he writes elsewhere, "put out the lamp of his love and desire, for their light is not real," and replaced them by the miraculous fire of this shining ideal. In the Sonnets, however, in some other poems and in the poet's later work there is the beginning of a greater warmth and a nearer sweetness.

The genius, power, newness of this poetry is evident. If certain reserves have to be made, it is because of a frequent immaturity in the touch which at times makes itself too sharply felt and is seldom altogether absent. I do not refer to the occasional lapses and carelessnesses of which I have noted one example,—for these are not very numerous, and the flagrant subjection of the expression to the necessity of the rhyme occurs only in that one passage,—but to the fact that the poet is still too much possessed by his gifts rather than their possessor, too easily carried away by the delight of brilliant expression and image to steep his word always in the deeper founts of his inspiration. The poetic expression is always brilliant, but never for long together quite sure,—lines of most perfect
beauty too often alternate with others which are by no means so good. The image-maker's faculty is used with a radiant splendour and lavishness, but without discrimination; what begins as imaginative vision frequently thins away into a bright play of fancy, and there are lines which come dangerously near to prettiness and conceit. Especially there is not yet that sufficient incubation of the inspiration and the artistic sense which turns a poem into a perfectly satisfying artistic whole; even in the sonnets, beautiful enough in themselves, there is an insufficient force of structure. The totality of effect in most of these poems is a diffusion, a streaming on from one idea and image to another, not a well-completed shapeliness. The rhythmic turn is always good, often beautiful and admirable, but the subtlest secrets of sound have not yet been firmly discovered, they are only as it were glimpsed and caught in passing.

These limitations however matter very little as they are natural in a first and early work and do not count in comparison with the riches disclosed. Moreover there is quite enough to show that they are likely to be rapidly outgrown. Young as he is, the poet has already almost all the secrets, and has only to use them more firmly and constantly. Already—in most of the poems, but I may instance "Memory," "My unlaunched Boat," the three Sonnets and some of the Songs of Sunlight,—there is the frequency of a full and ripe expression and movement, sometimes varying from a mellow clarity to a concentrated force,—

daylight dies
In silence on the bosom of the darkening skies,
And with him, every note
Is crushed to silent sorrow in the song-bird's throat,—
sometimes in a soft, clear and magical beauty,—

The Spring hath come and gone with all her coloured hours,
The earth beneath her tread
Laughed suddenly a peal of blue and green and red,
And for her tender beauty wove a flowery bed.
She gathered all her touch-born blossoms from bright bower...

And fled with all the laughter of earth's flowers,
sometimes in a delicate brightness and richness, constantly
in a daring yet perfectly successful turn, suggestion or subtle correspondence of image. There is often an extraordinary and original felicity in the turning of the physical image to bring out some deep and penetrating psychological or psychical suggestion.

Since the appearance of this book Mr. Chattopadhyay has given to the public one or two separate poems of a still greater beauty which show a very swift development of his powers; he is already overcoming, almost though not yet quite entirely, the touch of unripeness which was apparent in his earlier poems. Sureness of expression, a thought in full possession of itself and using in admirable concordance its imaginative aids and means, subtler turns of melody and harmony, especially an approach to firmer structural power are now strongly visible and promise the doubling of the ecstatic poet with an impeccable artist. There is also a greater warmth and nearness, a riper stress, a deeper musing. We may well hope to find in him a supreme singer of the vision of God in Nature and Life, and the meeting of the divine and the human which must be at first the most vivifying and liberating part of India's message to humanity that is now touched everywhere by a growing will for the spiritualising of the earth-existence.

A G.
Sentences of Bhartrihari

(1)
Cease never from the work thou hast begun
Till thou accomplish; such the great gods be,
Nor paused for gems unknown beneath the sun,
Nor feared for the huge poisons of the sea,
Then only ceased when nectar's self was won.

(2)
Happiness is nothing, sorrow nothing. He
Recks not of these whom his clear thoughts impel
To action whether little and miserably
He fare on roots or softly dine and well,
Whether bare ground receive his sleep or bed
With softest pillows ease his pensive head,
Whether in rags or heavenly robes he dwell.

(3)
If men praise thee, O man, 'tis well; nor ill,
If they condemn, let fortune curst or boon
Enter thy doors or leave them as she will.
Though death expect thee ere yon sinking moon
Vanish or wait till unborn stars give light,
The firm high soul remains immutable,
Nor by one step will deviate from the right.

(4)
Some from high action through base fear refrain;
The path is difficult, the way not plain.
Others more noble to begin are stayed
By a few failures. Great spirits undismayed
Abandon never what once to do they swore.
Baffled and beaten back they spring once more,
Buffeted and borne down, rise up again
And, full of wounds, come on like iron men.

(5)
Touched by one hero's tread, how vibrating
Earth starts as if sun-visited, ablaze
Vast, wonderful, young! Man's colourless petty days
Bloom suddenly and seem a grandiose thing.
The Knowledge of Brahman

(READINGS IN THE TAITTIRIYA UPANISHAD)

The knower of Brahman reacheth that which is supreme.

This is that verse which was spoken; "Truth, Knowledge, Infinity the Brahman,
He who knoweth that hidden in the secrecy in the supreme ether,
Enjoyeth all desires along with the wise-thinking Brahman."

This is the burden of the opening sentences of the Taittiriya Upanishad's second section; they begin its elucidation of the highest truth. Or in the Sanscrit,

brahma-vid āpnoti param—
tad eśābhyauktā — satyam ānānam anantam
brahma—
yā veda nihitam guhāyām—parame vyoman—
so' cūnte sarvān kāmān saha—brahmanā vipač-chiteti.

But what is Brahman?

Whatever reality is in existence, by which all the rest subsists, that is Brahman. An Eternal behind all instabi-
lities, a Truth of things which is implied, if it is hidden in all appearances, a Constant which supports all mutations, but is not increased, diminished, abrogated,—there is such an unknown \( x \) which makes existence a problem, our own self a mystery, the universe a riddle. If we were only what we seem to be to our normal self-awareness, there would be no mystery; if the world were only what it can be made out to be by the perceptions of the senses and their strict analysis in the reason, there would be no riddle; and if to take our life as it is now and the world as it has so far developed to our experience were the whole possibility of our knowing and doing, there would be no problem. Or at best there would be but a shallow mystery, an easily solved riddle, the problem only of a child's puzzle. But there is more, and that more is the hidden head of the Infinite and the secret heart of the Eternal. It is the highest and this highest is the all; there is none beyond and there is none other than it. To know it is to know the highest and by knowing the highest to know all. For as it is the beginning and source of all things, so everything else is its consequence; as it is the support and constituent of all things, so the secret of everything else is explained by its secret; as it is the sum and end of all things, so everything else amounts to it and by throwing itself into it achieves the sense of its own existence.

This is the Brahman.

If this unknown be solely an indecipherable, only indefinable \( x \), always unknown and unknowable, the hidden never revealed, the secret never opened to us, then our mystery would for ever remain a mystery, our riddle insoluble, our problem intangible. Its existence, even while it determines all we are, know and do, could yet make no practical difference to us; for our relation to it
would then be a blind and helpless dependence, a relation binding us to ignorance and maintainable only by that ignorance. Or again, if it be in some way knowable, but the sole result of knowledge were an extinction or cessation of our being, then within our being it could have no consequences; the very act and frustration of knowledge would bring the annihilation of all that we now are, not its completion or fulfilment. The mystery, riddle, problem would not be so much solved as abolished, for it would lose all its data. In effect we should have to suppose that there is an eternal and irreconcilable opposition between Brahman and what we now are, between the supreme cause and all its effects or between the supreme source and all its derivations. And it would then seem that all that the Eternal originates, all he supports, all he takes back to himself is a denial or contradiction of his being which, though in itself a negative of that which alone is, has yet in some way become a positive. The two could not coexist in consciousness; if he allowed the world to know him, it would disappear from being.

But the Eternal is knowable, He defines himself so that we may seize him, and man can become, even while he exists as man and in this world and in this body, a knower of the Brahman.

The knowledge of the Brahman is not a thing luminous but otiose, informing to the intellectual view of things but without consequence to the soul of the individual or his living; it is a knowledge that is a power and a divine compulsion to change; by it his existence gains something that now he does not possess in consciousness. What is this gain? it is this that he is conscious now in a lower state only of his being, but by knowledge he gains his highest being.

The highest state of our being is not a denial, contradiction and annihilation of all that we now are; it is a supreme accomplishment of all things that our present exist-
ence means and aims at, but in their highest sense and in the eternal values.

To live in our present state of self-consciousness is to live and to act in ignorance. We are ignorant of ourselves, because we know as yet only that in us which changes always, from moment to moment, from hour to hour, from period to period, from life to life, and not that in us which is eternal. We are ignorant of the world because we do not know God; we are aware of the law of appearances, but not of the law and truth of being.

Our highest wisdom, our minutest most accurate science, our most effective application of knowledge can be at most a thinning of the veil of ignorance, but not a going beyond it, so long as we do not get at the fundamental knowledge and the consciousness to which that is native. The rest are effective for their own temporal purposes, but prove ineffective in the end, because they do not bring to the highest good; they lead to no permanent solution of the problem of existence.

The ignorance in which we live is not a baseless and wholesale falsehood, but at its lowest the misrepresentation of a Truth, at its highest an imperfect representation and translation into inferior and to that extent misleading values. It is a knowledge of the superficial only and therefore a missing of the secret essential which is the key to all that the superficial is striving for; a knowledge of the finite and apparent, but a missing of all that the apparent symbolises and the finite suggests; a knowledge of inferior forms, but a missing of all that our inferior life and being has above it and to which it must aspire if it is to fulfil its greatest possibilities. The true knowledge is that of the highest, the inmost, the infinite. The knower of the Brahman sees all these lower things in the light of the Highest, the external and superficial as a translation of the internal and essential, the finite from the view of the
Infinite. He begins to see and know existence no longer as the thinking animal, but as the Eternal sees and knows it. Therefore he is glad and rich in being, luminous in joy, satisfied of existence.

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Knowledge does not end with knowing, nor is it pursued and found for the sake of knowing alone. It has its full value only when it leads to some greater gain than itself, some gain of being. Simply to know the eternal and to remain in the pain, struggle and inferiority of our present way of being, would be a poor and lame advantage.

A greater knowledge opens the possibility and, if really possessed, brings the actuality of a greater being. To be is the first verb which contains all the others; knowledge, action, creation, enjoyment are only a fulfilment of being. Since we are incomplete in being, to grow is our aim, and that knowledge, action, creation, enjoyment are the best which most help us to expand, grow, feel our existence.

Mere existence is not fullness of being. Being knows itself as power, consciousness, delight; a greater being means a greater power, consciousness and delight.

If by greater being we incurred only a greater pain and suffering, this good would not be worth having. Those who say that it is, mean simply that we get by it a greater sense of fulfilment which brings of itself a greater joy of the power of existence, and an extension of suffering or a loss of other enjoyment is worth having as a price for this greater sense of wideness, height and power. But this could not be the perfection of being or the highest height of its fulfilment; suffering is the seal of a lower status. The highest consciousness is integrally fulfilled in wideness and power of its existence, but also it is integrally fulfilled in delight.

The knower of Brahman has not only the joy of light, but gains something immense as the result of his
knowledge, brahmavid āpriti.

What he gains is that highest, that which is supreme; he gains the highest being, the highest consciousness, the highest wideness and power of being, the highest delight; brahmavid āpriti param.

The Supreme is not something aloof and shut up in itself. It is not a mere indefinable, prisoner of its own featureless absoluteness, impotent to define, create, know itself variously, eternally buried in a sleep or a swoon of self-absorption. The Highest is the Infinite and the Infinite contains the All. Whoever attains the highest consciousness, becomes infinite in being and embraces the all.

To make this clear the Upanishad has defined the Brahman as the Truth, Knowledge, Infinity and has defined the result of the knowledge of Him in the secrecy, in the cave of being, in the supreme ether as the enjoyment of all its desires by the soul of the individual in the attainment of its highest self-existence.

Our highest state of being is indeed a becoming one with Brahman in his eternity and infinity, but it is also an association with him in delight of self-fulfilment, açunte saha brahmanā. And that principle of the Eternal by which this association is possible, is the principle of his knowledge, his self-discernment and all-discernment, the wisdom by which he knows himself perfectly in all the world and all-beings, brahmanā vipacchita.

Delight of being is the continent of all the fulfilled values of existence which we now seek after in the forms of desire. To know its conditions and possess it purely and perfectly is the infinite privilege of the eternal Wisdom,
The Future Poetry

THE COURSE OF ENGLISH POETRY

(4)

In the work of the intellectual and classical age of English poetry, one is again struck by the same phenomenon that we meet throughout, of a great power of achievement limited by a characteristic defect which turns to failure, wastes the power spent and makes the total result much inferior to what it should have been with so much nerve of energy to speed it or so broad a wing of genius to raise it into the highest heights of the empyrean. The mind of this age went for its sustaining influence and its suggestive models to Greece, Rome and France. That was inevitable; for these have been the three intellectual nations, their literatures have achieved, each following its own different way and spirit, the best in form and substance that that kind of inspiration can produce, and not having the root of the matter in itself, the inborn intellectual depth and subtlety, the fine classical lucidity and aesthetic taste, if the attempt was to be made at all, it was here that the English mind must turn. Steeping itself in these sources, it might have blended with the classical clarity and form its own masculine force and strenuousness, its strong imagination, its deeper colour and profounder intuitive suggestiveness and arrived at something new and great to which the world could have turned as another supreme element of its aesthetic culture. But the effect did not answer to the possibility. To have arrived at it, it was essential to keep, transmuted, all that was best in the Elizabethan spirit and to colour, enrich and sweeten with its touch the classical form and the intellectual motive. There was instead a breaking away, a decisive rejection, an entirely new attempt with no roots in the past. In the end not only was the preceding structure of poetry abolished, but all its Muses were expelled; a stucco imitation classical temple, very elegant, very cold and very empty, was erected and the gods of satire and didactic commor-
place set up in a shrine which was built more like a coffee-house than a sanctuary. A sterile brilliance, a set polished rhetoric was the poor final outcome.

The age set out with a promise of better things; for a time it seemed almost on the right path. Milton's early poetry is the fruit of a strong classical intellectuality still touched with the glow and beauty of a receding romantic colour, emotion and vital intuition. Many softer influences have woven themselves together into his high language and rhythm and been fused in his personality into something wonderfully strong and rich and beautiful. Suggestions and secrets have been caught from Chaucer, Peele, Spenser, Shakespeare, and their hints have given a strange grace to a style whose austerity of power has been nourished by great classical influences; Virgilian beauty and majesty, Lucretian grandeur and Aeschylean sublimity coloured or mellowed by the romantic elements and toned into each other under the stress of an original personality make the early Miltonic manner which maintains a peculiar blending of greatness and beauty not elsewhere found in English verse. The substance is often slight, for it is as yet Milton's imagination rather than his soul or his whole mind that is using the poetic form, though the form itself is of a faultless beauty. But still here we already have the coming change, the turning of the intelligence upon life to view it from its own intellectual centre of vision. Some of the Elizabethans had attempted it, but with no great poetical success; when they wrote their best, then even though they tried to think closely and strongly, life took possession of the thought or rather itself quivered out into thought-expression. Here on the contrary, even in the two poems that are avowedly expressions of vital moods, it is yet the intellect and its imaginations that are making the mood a material for reflective brooding, not the life mood itself chanting its own sight and emotion. In the minor Carolean poets too we have some lingering of the colours of the Elizabethan sunset, something of the life-
sense and emotional value, but, much thinned and diluted, finally they die away into trivialities of the intelligence playing insincerely with the objects of the emotional being. For here too the idea already predominates, is already rather looking at the thing felt than taken up in the feeling. Some of this work is even mystical, but that too suffers from the same characteristic; the opening of an age of intellect was not the time when a great mystical poetry could be created.

In the end we find the change complete; colour has gone, sweetness has vanished, song has fallen into a dead hush; for a whole long century the lyrical faculty disappears from the English tongue, to reawaken again first in the Celtic north. Only the grandiose epic chant of Milton breaks the complete silence of genuine poetry; but it is a Milton who has turned away from the richer beauty and promise of his youth, lost the Virgilian accent, put away from him all delicacies of colour and grace and sweetness to express only in fit greatness of speech and form the conception of Heaven and Hell and man and the universe which his imagination had constructed out of his intellectual beliefs and reviewed in the vision of his soul. One might speculate on what we might have had if, instead of writing after the long silence during which he was absorbed in political controversy until public and private calamities compelled him to go back into himself, he had written his master work in a continuity of ripening from his earlier style and vision. Nothing quite so great perhaps, but surely something more opulent and otherwise perfect.

As it is, it is by *Paradise Lost* that he occupies his high rank among the poets; that is the one supreme fruit of the attempt of English poetry to seize the classical manner, to achieve a poetical expression disciplined by a high intellectual severity and to forge a complete balance and measured perfection of form.

*Paradise Lost* is assuredly a great poem, one of the five great epic poems of European literature, and in
certain qualities it reaches heights which no other of them had attained, even though as a whole it comes a long way behind them. Rhythm and speech have never attained to a mightier amplitude of epic expression and movement, seldom to an equal sublimity. And to a great extent Milton has done in this respect what he had set out to do; he has given English poetic speech a language of intellectual thought which is of itself highly poetic without depending in the least on any of the formal aids of poetic expression except those which are always essential and indispensable, a speech which is in its very grain poetry and in its very grain intellectual thought-utterance. This is always the aim of the classical poet in his style and movement, and Milton has fulfilled it, adding at the same time that peculiar grandeur in both the soul and manner of the utterance and in both the soul and the gait of the rhythm which belongs to him alone of poets. These qualities are, besides, easily sustained throughout, because with him they are less an art, great artist though he is, than the natural language of his spirit and the natural sound of its motion. His aim too is high, his subject loftier than that of any one of his predecessors except Dante; there is nowhere any more magnificently successful opening than the conception and execution of his Satan and Hell, the living spirit of egoistic revolt fallen to its natural element of darkness and pain, yet preserving still the greatness of the divine principle from which he was born. If the rest had been equal to the opening, there would have been no greater poem, few as great in literature.

Here too the performance failed the promise. Paradise Lost commands admiration, but as a whole, apart from its opening, it has failed either to go home to the heart of the world and lodge itself in its imagination or to enrich sovereignly what we may describe as the acquired stock of its more intimate poetical thought and experience. But the poem that does neither of these things, however
fine its powers of language and rhythm, has missed its best aim. The reason is not to be found in the disparity between Milton's professed aim, which was to justify the ways of God to man, and his intellectual means for fulfilling it. The theology of the Puritan religion was a poor enough aid for so ambitious a purpose, but the Scriptural legend treated was still quite sufficient poetically if only it had received throughout a deeper interpretation. Dante's theology, though it has the advantage of the greater richness of import and spiritual experience of mediaeval Catholicism, is still intellectually insufficient, but through his primitive symbols Dante has seen and has revealed things which make his work poetically great and sufficient. It is here that Milton has failed. Nor is the failure mainly intellectual. It is true that he had not an original intellectuality, his mind was rather scholastic and traditional, but he had an original soul and personality and the vision of a poet. To justify the ways of God to man intellectually is not the province of poetry; what it can do, is to reveal them. Yet just here is the point of failure. Milton has seen Satan and Death and Sin and Hell and Chaos; there is a Scriptural greatness in his account of these things: he has not so seen God and heaven and man or the soul of humanity at once divine and fallen, subject to evil and striving for redemption; here there is no inner greatness in the poetic interpretation of his materials. In other words, he has ended by stumbling over the rock of offence that always awaits poetry in which the intellectual element becomes too predominant, the fatal danger of a failure of vision.

This failure extends itself to all the elements of his later poetry; it is definitive and he never, except in passages, recovered from it. His language and rhythm remain unfalteringly great to the end, but they are only a splendid robe and the body they clothe is a nobly carved but lifeless image. His architectural structure is always greatly and classically proportioned; but structure has two
elements or, perhaps we should say, two methods, that which is thought out and that which grows from an inward artistic and poetic vision. Milton's structures are thought out; they have not been seen, much less been lived out into their inevitable measures and free inspired lines of perfection. The difference becomes evident by a simple comparison with Homer and Dante or even with the structural power, much less inspired and vital than theirs, but always finely aesthetic and artistic, of Virgil. Poetry may be intellectual, but only in the sense of having a strong intellectual strain in it and of putting forward as its aim the play of imaginative thought in the service of the poetical intelligence; but that must be supported very strongly by the emotion or sentiment or by the imaginative vision to which the idea opens. Milton's earlier work is suffused by his power of imaginative vision, the opening books of Paradise Lost are upborne by the greatness of the soul that finds expression in its harmonies of speech and sound and the greatness of its sight. But in the later books and still more in the Samson Agonistes and the Paradise Regained this flame sinks; the sight, the thought become intellectually externalised. Milton writing poetry could never fail in a certain greatness and power, nor could he descend, as did Wordsworth and others, below his well-attained poetical level, but the supreme vitalising fire has sunk; the method and idea retain sublimity, the deeper spirit has departed.

Much greater, initial and essential was the defect in the poetry that followed. Here all is unredeemed intellectuality and even the very first elements of the genuine poetic inspiration are for the most part, one might almost say, entirely absent. Pope and Dryden and their school, except now and then,—Dryden especially has lines sometimes in which he suddenly rises above his method,—are busy only with one aim, with thinking in verse, thinking with a clear force, energy and point or with a certain rhetorical pomp and effectiveness, in a well-turned and well-
polished metrical system. That seems to have been their sole idea of "numbers," of poetry, and it is an idea of unexampled falsity. No doubt this was a necessary phase, and perhaps, the English mind being what it then was, being always so much addicted in its poetry to quite the reverse method, it had to go to an extreme, to sacrifice even for a time many of its native powers in order to learn as best it could how to arrive at the clear and straightforward expression of thought with a just, harmonious and lucid turn; an inborn gift in all the Latin tongues, in a half-Teutonic speech attacked by the Celtic richness of imagination it had to be acquired. But the sacrifice made was great and cost much effort of recovery to the later development of the language. These writers got rid of the Elizabehan confusions, the involved expression, the lapses into trailing and awkward syntax, the perplexed turn in which ideas and images jostle and stumble together, fall into each other's arms and strain and burden the expression in a way which is sometimes stimulating and exhilarating, but sometimes merely awkward and embarrassing; they got rid too of the crudeness and extravagance; but also of all the rich imagination and vision, the sweetness, lyricism, grace and colour. They replaced it with mere point and false glitter. They got rid too of Milton's Latinisms and poetic inversions,—though they replaced them by some merely rhetorical artifices of their own,—dismissed his great and packed turns of speech and replaced his grandeur by what they thought to be a noble style, though it was no more than a spurious rhetorical pomp. Still the work they had to do they did effectively, with talent, energy, even a certain kind of genius.

Therefore, if the substance of this poetry had been of real worth, it would have been less open to depreciation and need not have excited so vehement a reaction or fallen so low from its exaggerated pride of place. But the substance was on a par with, often below the method. It took for its models the Augustan poets of Rome, but
it substituted for the strength and weight of the Latin manner an exceeding superficiality and triviality. It followed more really contemporary French models, but missed their best ordinary qualities, their culture, taste, tact of expression, and missed too the greater gifts of the classical French poetry, which though it may suffer by its excessive cult of reason and taste or its rhetorical tendency, may run often in too thin a stream, has yet ideas, power, a strong nobility of character in Corneille, a fine grace of poetic sentiment in Racine. But this poetry cares nothing for such gifts: it is occupied with expressing thought, but its thought is of little or no value; for the most part it is brilliant commonplace, and even ideas which have depths behind them become shallow and external by the way of their expression. The thought of these writers has no real eye on life, except when it turns to satire. Therefore that is the part of their work which is still most alive; for here the Anglo-Saxon spirit gets back to itself, leaves the attempt at a Gallicised refinement, finds its own robust vigour and arrives at a brutal, but still genuine and sometime really poetic vigour and truth of expression. Energy, driving force is, however, a general merit of the verse of Pope and Dryden and in this one respect they excel their nearest French exemplars. Their expression is striking in its precision, each couplet rings out with a remarkable force of finality and much coin of their minting has passed into common speech and citation: it is not gold of poetry for all that, but it is well-gilt copper coin of a good currency. But all turns to a monotonous brilliance of language, a monotonous decisiveness and point of rhythm. It has to be read by couplets and passages, for each poem is only a long string of these and except in one instance the true classical gift, the power of structure is quite wanting. The larger thought-power which is necessary for structure, was absent. This intellectual age of English poetry did its work, but, as must happen when there is in art a departure from what is best in the national mind, ended in a failure and for a time even a death of the true poetic faculty.
CONTENT

The Life Divine.................. Aurobindo Ghose
Ch. LII. The Spiritual Gnostic Being

Essays on the Gita................ A. G.
The Divine Truth and the Way

The Synthesis of Yoga............. A. G.
Ch. XLIX. The Principle of the Integral Yoga

The Unseen Power..................

Is India Civilised (1)

The Future Poetry
The Course of English Poetry (5)
The Life Divine

CHAPTER LII

THE SPIRITUAL Gnostic BEING

The ascent into the divine life is a growth out of limited mentality, a separative consciousness and the ways of thought, living, acting, feeling of the ignorant ego into an infinite of spiritual self-existence, a cosmic consciousness governed by a transcendent Presence and Light and the ways of thought, living, acting, feeling of the gnostic spiritual individual. This we can see to be the evolution of which Nature in man can be capable and which is hinted along all the topmost borders of his present being. It is therefore the highest next possible ideal beyond our present arc of attainment whether for individual man or the race in the urge of their ascent and their hunger for perfection.

Evolution threads the whole scheme of existence. The Eternal evolves the universe continually out of his own being with his extended self-conception in space and time as its matrix; involving his spiritual being in the universe he evolves it there in its forms. But evolution means always a progressive development of that which is in seed and a manifestation of that which is phenomenally hidden. As the Idea has hidden the physical form of man in the obscure seed of protoplasm,—where too spirit is involved in form of living matter,—so the spiritual form of the Divine is hidden
in man even in his greatest animality or his most inveterate egoism of a limited humanity. To manifest it is his destiny. All else that he does, is or has developed in all the cycles of his births or collectively in all the cycles of the race, is only work of the stages of his growth, is only the power and delight of the way of his journey: but this is the perfect issue and the destination. It is a progressive evolution, a long continuity of development, a manifestation by stages and successions though a long series of births, aeons, environments; it may have many risings and fallings, repeated shootings beyond himself and returns upon himself, even returns to his lowest self, his relapses as we call them, but the upshot is his progress towards a concealed Ideal. To remain satisfied in his own present nature ignorantly like the animal being is not the fate to which he was born. The animal existence is there in him, and though exceeded, it still limits his self-vision and conscious aim of being, but the god is there too secret, unborn, demanding birth, pressing towards it in all the great highest stresses of the powers and ways of humanity, where it feels most the light and passion of the secret urge within it.

Man's distinct status among the creations of terrestrial Nature which makes him unique among her children, comes from this peculiarity that Nature in him seeks to exceed herself consciously, no longer by a subliminal will and power alone, no longer by physical and vital means alone, but by at first a mental and then a spiritual effort. The psychological necessity of this development in him is that he is a mind looking upward too as well as around him and downward; he feels that there is a lower self which he has exceeded, but to which he is still drawn by the continued force of his beginnings and has yet definitely to transcend, a present self with many capacities which he has yet to enlarge and perfect, a higher ideal self into which some force in him labours to grow. The sense of this urge has not as yet grown into a perfectly clear vision
in him, even as the need of growth and self-enlargement is not universally felt by the race. For in his lowest types Nature still keeps much of her old brute, subliminal, subconscious way of working, in his highest types she has only partially enlightened the superficial conscious man in vision, in degrees of self-knowledge and in power of aspiration. To become more and more fully self-conscious mentally and spiritually and to embrace in this highest self-conscious aim of perfection our whole human existence and apply it to all the ways of our being is the first condition of the growth into divine living.

When we have got the deeper self-knowledge, we discover that what we envisage as a self-exceeding, is in fact a self-becoming. It is an exceeding of the present outward development of nature, but a becoming too of some inward secret reality which is our true being and of which what we are is only a preliminary material and a stage of self-expression. For that reason to exceed the lower animal and the present mental self does not mean to destroy and uproot what is essential to the method of the spirit's self-expression in these formations, but to change their whole character and value of working by making them the instrument of some power beyond them into whose law of works and tongue of symbols their operation and values have to be lifted and translated. Man is a mental being living in a body and still hampered and too much dominated by the original self-valuations and limiting balances of the bodily life because of his insufficient faith in the power of the mental being he is and his insufficient knowledge of the laws and capacities of mind. For he sees mind and its ways too much as they now are, as they have become in the past process of the evolution of Spirit involved in matter, too little as they are in the proper law of mind and as they may become in their greater control of the bodily life which they inhabit. Something of this power he has seen and labours to realise and enlarge it,
but only in a superficial emergence of its force, which is still obliged at every turn to consult the claims and objections of life and body; the rest, the larger powers of mind are still to him occult and mysterious. But these larger powers of mind themselves go back to the higher, still more occult and mysterious powers of the spirit and its gnosis. Even the highest overt powers of mind, reason and the imagination and self-mastering will and aesthetic vision, are in reality deflected rays, a modified glow of the light, crude energies of the force of gnosis which cannot do their perfect work because they have descended into mind, taken on its nature, and subdued themselves to the functionings of an embodied and life-dominated mentality. To liberate spirit and gnosis into their proper workings by opening mind to these and turning its values into notes of their greater harmony, is the other and consequent condition of the growth into divine living. Man on earth has to become the embodied spiritual and gnostic being.

To achieve spirituality is the first necessity, because gnosis or supermind is only an instrument; it is the characteristic instrument of fully self-conscious spirit working in the world, as mind is the characteristic instrument of spirit conscious in matter and of material living, but not yet self-conscious in the form. These two powers of consciousness belong respectively to the two hemispheres of the graded existence of the being, one to the lower separative divided consciousness, the other to the higher, integral and unifying consciousness. We have to effect a change of the poise of our being, to ascend to its higher hemisphere, to cross the line of demarcation which shuts off our true integral being from our present partial, divided, unharmonised existence. This passage is the critical turning-point which commences a real self-becoming and ends the lower preparatory stage of our evolution. It is the lifting of the golden lid of which the Upanishad speaks,
the opening to the greater Light in which knowing and seeing our true self we can say "I am he," so'ham. It is a becoming possessed of self, a becoming self and Brahman, a process of conversion into the divine nature. Self-knowledge is the first necessity, for without self-knowledge there can be no self-becoming, and since the highest self in us is the same as the self of the world and of all being, self-knowledge is also the knowledge of God, of Brahman, of the eternal and the universal. But this self-knowledge must be made effective and transfiguring. We have not only to know, but to grow into the spirit, the divine, the universal, the eternal. That is a conversion of which the intellect and the lower mentality have not the magical secret. We must go to a higher power; the spiritual being in us alone can make our human being spiritual; only the Godhead in us can raise us to the divine living.

The discovery of self and spirit within is therefore the one supreme discovery. All the highest endeavour of our mentality has for its one culminating secret and utility the preparation of the human existence for this supreme light and this great change; our philosophy, our religion, our ethical aspiration, our aesthetic longings, even our mentalised dynamic and vital will have no other preordained consummation. But to arrive at it they must first turn to their own highest powers and secrets. Philosophy is the right knowledge of self and the world; but a philosophy that confines itself to generalisations from the external knowledge of this world supplied by Science, which has its eye only upon phenomena, or to an examination and systematising of the concepts of the reason, cannot carry us beyond our present narrow circle, though it may fill it in and enlarge our scope in it. The knowledge of the phenomenal world can bring us increased power of intellectual seeing and external living, only the knowledge of self and God can bring us liberation. The world itself
cannot really be known unless a greater truth is first seen and made real to our experience. Philosophy may first concern itself with the rationale of phenomenal existence and the scrutiny, arrangements and relations of subject and object in our concepts, but this is only its outward preliminary and inferior work,—it belongs to the knowledge only of the inferior hemisphere of being: its highest and what for the higher aim of all effort of life becomes finally its real utility, begins when it pursues a greater self-knowledge, the knowledge of the real self within and of the spirit behind and within the world. The same truth applies to religion.

The more formal parts of religion that aim simply at moralising and pietising life, belong to the discipline of the lower being. The native aim of religion appears when it becomes an impulse of turning in the whole being of the human creature to the vision and pursuit of the Divine and to the manifestation of his own divinity by a change from the lower mental to the higher spiritual self. Morality too is not fulfilled when it is confined to a rule for the normal human life, but only then when its greater aim of creating in man something abnormal to his present nature not only emerges out of the pettiness of ordinary morals, but perceives with a clear and high vision that it is the divine in human nature which it is attempting to liberate and to habituate to it the recalcitrant animal and mental disposition. Not the physical, sensuous and mental satisfaction of the aesthetic instinct, but the spiritual realisation of beauty,—which takes up too and raises to a higher scale and to a purer and a more intense satisfaction the lower aesthetic pleasure,—is the beginning of the greater aesthetic levels. The final end of the dynamic and vital sides of our being is to be the channel of a higher inward life and not simply to regulate and satisfy the ordinary mental action in the body. This is not ordinarily recognised because we are content to lump together all
the many various degrees of these activities and do not see sufficiently that there is a long ladder of degrees, a scale of values and that it is the highest which gives us the key to that which we have to aim at and seek to become. Ancient thought, less weighted down than the modern by the worship of practical utilitarian reason and the cult of the average man, had recognised more clearly the implication of these variations in our nature and its fluctuations between its highest, lowest and mediary possibilities. To recognise the highest and to aim at it in all things was to it much more of an imperative claim of the soul upon the nature. Nature herself at the crest of all our mental activities lifts to us so many index fingers pointing at one same object, at something divine and spiritual which we can see, know, feel, enjoy, adore, seek to become and, becoming, express in all our existence.

But by these mental means we can only at most reflect something of the radiance of the higher existence in our mental and vital being. To grow into it we have to do more; for we have to change the whole character of our consciousness. Man's enlargement from a separative egoistic into a universalised individuality, is the first necessity. For in our present poise the individual centrally lives to himself, he is divided from God, divided from all others than his own ego, cut off by separative egoistic experience from the universal; this is the closest knot of the ignorance. But the spiritual being is that in which the transcendental Divine, the universal and the individual enjoy the consciousness of oneness. To grow into it is to feel no longer our separateness, but our oneness with others, our oneness with the universal and our oneness with the Divine. Substantially, this is more or less clearly or else obscurely recognised in all our efforts. To grow closer to God and man by love or otherwise is the aim of religion; to impersonalise knowledge and so arrive at a universal truth unaffected by individual deformation of truth is the
aim of philosophy and science; to feel and to express the universal beauty is the principle of art; to altruise is the highest effort of ethical action; to live for humanity is the largest ideal of social living. But all these things can only be done very relatively so long as we are imprisoned on our present level of mentality. The real reality of this universalised action of our being can only come by growing into the cosmic consciousness of the Self, the Spirit where all that we thus now attempt with difficulty and achieve in a very rudimentary way and slight initial degree, becomes the natural status and action, a reality, a thing of power. To become one Self with all, is then the first aim, which the ancient knowledge set very clearly before it. But the cosmic consciousness of the Self is only a mould of the Divine who expresses himself in the cosmos. To become one self with all not only by an impersonalising of the consciousness into universality, but by an active oneness is only possible in so far as the becoming one self is also to our utmost capacity a becoming one with the Divine. To live in the Divine acting through the universalised and divinised individual is the acme of the growth into divine living.

Mind is capable of the spiritual and cosmic consciousness at a highest height of itself where it rises above its own normal and characteristic level to an abnormal mentality. But then it is either by an overpowering, reflection of the spirit in mind or by a sort of losing of mind in self and spirit, a swallowing up in light, an immersion in impersonality and universality. For a passive spirituality this may be sufficient; an active spirituality cannot be perfectly attained on this level. To be one self with all actively, is to be also actively one heart, one mind, one body with all, that is to say, to live extended in the universal Mind, Life, physical being of the one Self; but to do this is not entirely possible for spirit in mind, because mind acts characteristically by division;
in its action and relation it meets only across barriers, by a contact, a joining of hands across the barriers, but not a breaking down of the screens and a living in constant unity. The characteristic action of the Spirit in its unity, in its global regard on cosmos is supramental; the other, the mental action is at best a secondary and a derivative functioning. From the secondary into the primary, from the mental into the gnostic consciousness is therefore the next step in the scale, once the mind has been sufficiently spiritualised to allow of any real success in such an endeavour. Until then a sort of preliminary divine living is all that is possible, a stress of spiritualised mental living in which the meeting of mind with mind and of life with life across the mental and the physical barriers becomes more frequent, more easy and rapid, continuous, normal, and our existence can be increasingly moulded into this type of a diminished division and a modified oneness. A second step that can be taken is to rise from this intenser living into a use of our faculties and habits of consciousness in which they will become more and more a reflected secondary functioning of the supramental powers of spirit. We have already such an action fitful, partial and irregular, though more luminous in the most developed human types, but always dispersed, untrained and clogged with and incrusted in our normal mentality. To purify it and intensify its action is possible, even in the end to make it the normal type of all our intelligence, will, aesthetics, feeling. Beyond this already difficult achievement lies the overstepping of the boundary and a first decisive conversion into the gnostic spiritual being.

Intuition is the name which we commonly give to the secondary activity of the supramental power in the lower hemisphere of mind, life and body. But intuition is of many grades; for there is the physical intuition proper to matter, the vital intuition, the emotional and sensational intuition, the intuition too of the mind acting as a sixth
sense, the intellectual intuition and the other intuitions of the intelligence, ethical, aesthetic, dynamic or volitional; but all these only work subdued to their medium. There is another, a supra-intellectual power of intuition, much rarer than these its more normal workings, in which there comes a nearer approach to the characteristic ways of working of the supermind, though it still leans much on the limitations of mind and in a way or to a very great extent limits itself by the highest scope of the mental action. That is the highest to which man in his mental humanity can proceed, the highest power of his mental being which he can turn from a superior and abnormal to a normal functioning of his earthly way of existence. Supermind acting entirely in its own power, although we may give to its functions the same names, may call it intuitive, inspirational, revelatory, is something quite otherwise spontaneous, sovereign, luminously imperative, tranquilly and royally self-fulfilling. It is a godhead and a divine seerhood, self-ruling and ruling its medium of Nature, swarât, samrât.

Whether to the supreme mental height or beyond the supramental border, the transition from our present limited being must be in the nature of a new manifestation and a conversion. That is the rule throughout the whole ascending scale of Nature. The transition from brute matter to life is a first manifestation of vital and nervous power in which the crude impulsions and reactions of matter are taken up, exalted in their sense and exceeded in their operation by the novel energy manifested. The change from submental life to the life of the animal is a manifestation of sense-mind in which the nervous life of the plant level is taken up, exalted in its sense and exceeded in its operations by the new light and power evolved. The transition from animal mind to human mind is a manifestation of the self-regulating and self-understanding intelligence in which the crude intelligence and the ins-
tinctive, vital, sensational reason of the animal is taken up, transformed in value, exceeded in its operation by the light of this other self-viewing consciousness. The transition from a mental to a gnostic humanity would be the manifestation of an entirely self-conscious, global, universalised, self-luminously comprehensive consciousness in which all the powers of reason, will, aesthetic, emotion, sensation, mentalised vitality would be taken up, given new values and another action and exceeded by the introduction of supreme luminous operations which in their fullness would be as decisively higher than the mental as reason is above the thought-power in the animal. Nothing essential would be sacrificed, but only those inferior operations no longer now needed because they would be superfluous, their work being done in a higher kind by superior faculties, would be rejected. It would be a self-fulfilment of man in supermanhood which would yet be the flowering of all that was implied in his humanity.

But such a conversion could only be operated by the transmuting action of a higher self upon the lower being invited by the aspiration of Nature in the opening mind. Physically the animal form may or may not have grown out of the vegetable, the body and the life of man out of the body and life of the animal; but that body would have still housed an animal and not a human mind if a new Soul belonging to a higher plane had not leaned down to aid in its evolution and descended, we might say, or phenomenally manifested within it. But here the higher self, belonging to the supramental sphere, is the divine Soul and only by the action of the Divine himself leaning down to the human aspiration could such a great conversion be effected. For the evolution of the supermind in man would be the manifestation of a divine self in its characteristic powers, a divine wisdom and knowledge, a divine will-power, a divine purity of temperament, a divine bliss, a divine heart of love and unity, in the end,—for that would
be the last term of perfection, the change of the lowest to a vessel of the highest being,—even a transfigured vital and physical existence. And if the Godhead were not within us, but only we in the Godhead, a separate finite in his infinity, or if we were incapable of becoming conscious of the indwelling Godhead, this conversion would be out of the question, even as is, so far as we know, the conversion of the ape mind into the human. But since man is a being in whom Nature becomes, with whatever difficulty, conscious of the Godhead within her, this and no other should be, we will not say his ultimately ultimate, but speaking in large terms of time, his proximately ultimate destiny. It would be not the next step perhaps for any but the summit of the next flight of steps in the destined ascension.
Essays on the Gita

THE DIVINE TRUTH AND THE WAY

What the Gita then proceeds to unveil is the one thought and truth in which the seeker of perfection and liberation must learn to live and the one law of his spiritual members and of all their movements. The supreme secret is the mystery of the transcendent Godhead who is all and everywhere, yet so much greater and other than the universe and all its forms that nothing here contains him, nothing expresses him really, and no language which is borrowed from the appearances of things in space and time and their relations can suggest the truth of his unimaginable being. The consequent law of our perfection is an adoration by our whole being and its self-surrender to its divine source and possessor; it is the turning of our entire existence in the world and not merely of this or that in it, into one movement towards the Eternal. By the power and mystery of a divine Yoga we have come out of his inexpressible secracies into the bounded nature of phenomenal being; by a reverse movement of the same Yoga we must transcend the limits of that being and recover the greater consciousness by which we can live in the Divine and the Eternal.

The supreme being of the Divine is beyond manifestation, the image of him is not revealed in matter, nor is it seized by life, nor is it cognizable by mind, achintyārūpa, avyaktamūrti. What we see is only a self-created form,
riṣa, not the eternal form of the Divinity, swarūpa. There is some one or there is something that is other than the universe, inexpressible, unimaginable, an ineffably infinite Godhead beyond our largest or subtlest conceptions of infinity. All this weft of things to which we give the name of universe, all this immense sum of motion to which we can fix no limits and vainly seek in its forms and movements for any stable reality, any status, level and point of cosmic leverage, has been spun out, shaped, extended by and founded upon this ineffable supracosmic Being. It is founded upon a self-formulation which is itself unmanifest and unthinkable. All this mass of becoming always changing and in motion, all these creatures, existences, things, breathing and living beings, cannot contain him either in their sum or in their separate existence. He is not in them; it is not in them or by them that he lives, moves or has his being.—God is not the Becoming; it is they that are in him, it is they that live, move and have their being in him and by him; they are becoming, he is their being.* In the unthinkable infinity of his existence he has extended this minor phenomenon of a boundless universe in an endless space and time.

And yet to say of him that all exists in him is not the truth of his reality; for it is to speak of him with the idea of space, and the Divine is spaceless and timeless. Space and time, immanence and pervasion and exceeding are all of them terms and images of his consciousness. There is a Yoga of divine Power, me yoga aiśvāra, by which the Supreme creates phenomena of himself in a spiritual self-conception of his own extended infinity. With that and all it contains he sees himself as one, is identified with it. In that infinite self-seeing, which is not his whole seeing,—the pantheist's identity of God and universe is a still more

* Matstāni sarvabhūtani na chāham teshwvaasthitah.
limited view,—he is at once one with all that is and yet exceeds it; but he is other also than this self or extended infinity of spiritual being which contains and exceeds the universe. All exists here in his world-conscious infinity, but that again is upheld as a self-conception by the supracosmic reality of the Godhead which exceeds all our terms of world and being and consciousness. This is the mystery of his being that he is supracosmic, yet not in any exclusive sense extracosmic. For he pervades it all as its self; there is a presence of the self-being of God, mama ātmā, which is in relation to the becoming and by it all its existences are brought into manifestation.† Therefore it is that we have these terms of Being and becoming, existence in itself, ātman, and existences dependent upon it, bhūtānī, mutable beings and immutable being. But the highest truth of these two relations and the resolution of their antinomy must be found in that which exceeds it; it is the supreme Godhead who manifests both containing self and its contained phenomena by the power of his spiritual consciousness, Yogamāya. And it is only through union with him in our spiritual consciousness that we can arrive at our real relations with his being.

Metaphysically stated, this is the intention of these verses of the Gita; but they rest founded not upon any intellectual speculation, but on spiritual experience; they synthetise because they arise globally from certain truths of spiritual consciousness. When we attempt to put ourselves into conscious relations with whatever supreme or universal Being there exists concealed or manifest in the world, we arrive at a very various experience, one or other term of which different intellectual conceptions turn into their fundamental idea of existence. We have to start with the crude experience first of a Divine who is something quite

† Bhūtabhrin na cha bhūtastho, mamātmā bhūtabhāvanah.
different from and greater than ourselves, different from
and greater than the universe in which we live, and so it is
and no more so long as we live only in our phenomenal
selves and see around us only the phenomenal face of the
world; for the Supreme is supracosmic and all that is
phenomenal is a thing seen by his self-conscious Spirit in
its being. When we dwell in this difference only, we re-
gard the Divine as if extracosmic; but that he is only in
this sense that he is not, being supracosmic, contained in
the cosmos and its beings, but not in the sense that they
are outside his being, for there is nothing outside the one
eternal Reality. We realise this truth spiritually when we
get the experience that we live and move and have our
being in him alone and the universe itself is only a phe-
nomenon and movement in the Spirit.

But again we have the farther and more transcendent
experience that our self-existence is one with his self-
existence. We perceive a one self of all, of that we have
the consciousness and the vision, and there we can no
longer say or think that we are entirely different from him,
but that there is self and there is phenomenon of the self-
existent, and all is one in self, but all is variation in the
phenomenon. By an intensity of union with the self we
may come to experience the phenomenon as a thing un-
real, but by a double intensity we may have the double
experience of a self-existent oneness with him and of our-
selves as living with him and in relation with him in a
real form and derivation of his being. The universe and
our existence in the universe becomes to us a constant
form of his self-aware existence; in that we have our re-
lations of difference between us and him and the other
forms of his being and his cosmic form of self in the
nature of the universe. These relations are other than the
supracosmic truth, they are derivative creations of a cer-
tain power of consciousness of the spirit, and because they
are other and because they are creations the exclusive
seekers of the supracosmic Absolute tax them with unreality. Yet are they from him, they are existent forms derived from his being, not figments created out of nothing. For it is ever itself and forms of itself and not things quite other than itself that the Spirit sees everywhere. Nor can we say that there is nothing at all in the supracosmic that corresponds to these relations. We cannot say that they are derivations of consciousness sprung from that source, but yet with nothing in the source which at all supports or justifies them, nothing that is the eternal reality and supernal principle of these forms of his being.

Again if we press in yet another way the difference between the self and the forms of self, we may come to regard the Self as containing and immanent, we may admit the truth of omnipresent spirit, and yet the forms of spirit, the moulds of its presence may affect us not only as something other than it, not only as transient, but as unreal images. We have the experience of the Spirit, the Divine, immutable, containing in its vision the mutabilities of the universe; we have too the separate, the simultaneous or the coincident experience of the Divine as immanent in ourselves and in all creatures; but the universe may be to us only an empirical form of his and our consciousness, or an image or a symbol of being by which we have to construct our significant relations with him and to grow gradually aware of him. But on the other hand, we get another revealing spiritual experience in which we are forced to see as the very Divine all things, not only that Spirit which dwells immutable in the universe and in its countless beings, but all this inward and outward becoming. All is then to us a divine Reality manifesting his being as ourselves and the cosmos. If this experience is exclusive, we get the pantheistic identity; but the pantheistic vision is only a partial seeing, because this extended universe is not all that the Spirit is, there is a Reality greater than it by which alone its existence is possible.
Cosmos is not the Divine in his utter reality, but a single self-expression, a motion of his being. All these spiritual experiences, however different or opposed at first sight, are yet reconcilable if we cease to press on one or other exclusively and if we see this simple truth that the divine Reality is something greater than the universal existence, but yet that all universal and particular things are the Divine and nothing else,—significative of it, we might say and not entirely it in anything that appears, but still they could not be significative of it if they were something else and not term and stuff of the divine existence. That is the Real; but they are its expressive realities.

This is what the Gita intended by its phrase, vāsudevah sarvam iti; the Godhead is all that is universe and all that is in the universe and all that is more than the universe. It lays stress first on his supracosmic being, for otherwise the mind would miss its highest goal and remain turned towards the cosmic only or else attached to some experience of the Divine in the cosmos. It lays stress next on his universal existence in which all moves and acts; for that is the justification of the cosmic effort and that is the vast spiritual self-awareness in which the Godhead self-seen as the Time-Spirit does his universal works. Next it insists with a certain austere emphasis on the acceptance of the Godhead as the divine inhabitant in the human body; for he is the Immanent in all existences, and if the indwelling divinity is not recognised, not only will the divine meaning of individual existence be missed, the urge to our supreme spiritual possibilities deprived of its greatest force, but the relations of soul with soul in humanity will be left petty, egoistic and limited. Finally, it insists at great length on the divine manifestation in all things in the universe and affirms the derivation of all that is from the nature, power and light of the one Godhead; for that seeing too is essential to the God-knowledge; on it is founded the integral turning of the being in the whole
nature Godwards, the acceptance by man of the works of the divine Power in the world and the remoulding of his mentality and will into the type of the God-action cosmic in our individuality.

The supreme Godhead, the Self immutable behind the cosmic consciousness, the individual Divinity in the human being and the Divine secretly conscious or partially manifested in cosmic Nature and all its works and creatures, are one reality; but the truths that we can put forward the most confidently of one, are reversed or they alter their sense when we try to apply them to the other poises of the one Being. Thus the Divine is always the Lord, Icwara, but we cannot therefore crudely apply the idea of his essential lordship and mastery in exactly the same way without change in all four fields. As the Divine manifest in cosmic Nature he acts in close identity with the Nature; he is himself then Nature, so to speak, but with a spirit within her workings which foresees, and forewills, understands and enforces, compels the action, overrules in the result. As the one silent self of all he is the non-doer, and Nature alone is the doer; leaving all these works to be done by her according to the law of the being, swabhivas tu pravartate, he is still the lord, prabhu vibhu, because he views and upholds our action and enables Nature to work by his silent sanction; his immobility transmits the power of the supreme Godhead through the compulsion of the pervading presence and the equal regard of his witness Self in all things. As the supreme supracosmic Godhead he originates all, but is above all, compels all to manifest, but yet does not lose himself in or attach himself to the works of his Nature; his is the free presiding Will of being that is antecedent to all the necessities of the natural action. In the individual he is during the ignorance the secret Godhead in us who compels all to revolve on the machine of Nature on which the ego is carried round as part of the machinery; but since all the Divine is within
each being, we can rise above this relation by transcending the ignorance. For we can identify ourselves with the one Self supporter of all things and become the witness and non-doer, or we can put our individual being into the human soul's right relation with the supreme Godhead and make it in its parts of nature the immediate cause and instrument, \textit{nimitta}, in its spiritual being a participant in the supreme, free and unattached mastery. This is a thing we have to see clearly in the Gita; we have to allow for this variation of the sense of the same truth according to the nodus of relation from which its application comes into force; otherwise we shall see mere contradiction and inconsistency where none exists or be baffled like Arjuna by what seems to us a riddling utterance.

Thus the Gita begins by affirming that the Supreme contains all things in itself, but is not in any, \textit{mats\text{\textmacron}d\text{\textae}u sar\text{\textae}a-bh\text{\textae}t\text{\textae}n}, "all are situated in Me, not I in them," and yet it proceeds immediately to say," and yet all existences are not situated in Me, my self is the bearer of all existences, and it is not situated in existences." And yet again it insists with an apparent self-contradiction that the Divine has lodged itself, has taken up its abode in the human body, \textit{m\text{\textae}nu\text{\textae}cm t\text{\textae}num \text{\textae}gr\text{\textae}tam}, and that the recognition of this truth is necessary for the soul's release by an integral works and love and knowledge. It is as the supracosmic Godhead that he is not in existences, nor even they in him; for the distinction we make between Being and becoming applies only to the manifestation in the phenomenal universe; but in the supracosmic existence all is eternal Being and all, if there too there is any multiplicity, are eternal beings, nor can the spatial idea of indwelling come in, since a supracosmic absolute being is not affected by the concepts of time and space which are created here by the Lord's Yoganaya. There a spiritual, not a spatial or temporal co-existence, a spiritual identity and coincidence must be the foundation. But in the cosmic manifestation there is an
extension of the movement of the universe in space and time by the supreme unmanifest supracosmic Being, and in that extension he appears first as a self who supports all these existences; bhūta-bhūt, he bears them in his all-pervading self-existence and, even, through this omnipresent self the supreme Self too, the Paramatman, can be said to bear the universe; he is its secret spiritual foundation and the secret spiritual cause of the becoming of all existences. He bears the universe as the secret spirit in us bears our thoughts, works, movements; he seems to pervade and to contain mind, life and body, to support them by his presence, but this pervasion is itself conceptual, not, really material, the body itself is only a conception of spirit.

This divine self contains all existences, all are situated in him, not materially in essence, but in that extended spiritual conception of self-being of which our notion of a material and etheric space is only a rendering in the terms of a material consciousness. In reality all even here is spiritual coexistence, identity and coincidence, but that is a fundamental truth which we cannot apply until we get back to the supreme consciousness: till then such an idea would only be an intellectual concept to which nothing corresponds in our practical experience. We have to say, then, using these terms of relation in space and time, that the universe and all its beings exist in the divine Self-existent as everything else exists in the spatial primacy of ether. "It is as the great, the all-pervading aerial principle dwells in the etheric that all existences dwell in Me, that is how you have to conceive of it," says the Teacher here to Arjuna. The universal existence is all-pervading and infinite and the Self-existent is all-pervading and infinite; but the self-existent infinity is stable, static, immutable, the universal is an all-pervading movement, sarvatragah; the Self is one, not many but the universal expresses itself as all existence and is, as it seems, the sum of all existences. One is Being, the other is Power of Being which
moves and creates and acts in the existence of the fundamental, supporting, immutable Spirit. The Self does not dwell in all these existences or in any, that is to say, he is not contained by any, any more than the ether here is contained in any form, though all forms are derived ultimately from ether; nor is he contained in or constituted by all existences any more than ether is contained in the mobile extension of the aerial principle or is constituted by the sum of its forms or its gaseous or other forces. But still in the movement also is the Divine, he dwells in the many as the Lord in each being. The one is a relation of self-existence to the universal movement; the other is a relation of the universal existence to its own forms. The one is a truth of being in its containing immutability; the other is a truth of Power of being in the government and informing of its own movements.

The Supreme from above cosmic existence leans, it is here said, or presses down upon his Nature to loose from it in an eternal cyclic recurrence all that it contains in it. All existences act in the universe in subjection to this impelling movement and to the laws of manifested being by which it expresses in cosmic harmonies the phenomenon of the divine All-existence. The Jiva follows the cycle of its becoming in the action of this divine Nature, prakritim māmikām, swām prakritim, the "own nature" of the Divine. It becomes in the turns of her progression this or that personality; it follows always the curve of its own law of being as a manifestation of the divine Nature, whether in ignorance or in knowledge; it returns to that Nature in the lapse of the cycle. Ignorant, it is subject to her cyclic whirl, not master of itself, but dominated by her, avaçaḥ prakriter vaṣat; only by return to the divine consciousness can it attain to mastery. The Divine too follows the cycle, not as subject to it, but as its informing Spirit and guide, not with his whole being involved in it, but with his power of being accompanying and shaping it. He is the
presiding control of his action of Nature, *adhyaksha*, not a spirit born in her, but the creative spirit who causes her to produce all that appears in the manifestation. If in his power he accompanies her and causes all her workings, he is too as if seated above her universal action in the supracosmic mastery, not attached to it by any involving and mastering desire and not therefore bound by her works because he infinitely exceeds them and precedes them, is the same before, during and after all their procession in the cycles of Time. All their mutations make no difference to his immutable being. The self that pervades and supports the cosmos, is not affected by its changes because, though supporting, it does not participate in them. The supreme supracosmic Self is not affected because it exceeds and it eternally transcends them.

But also since this action is the action of the divine Nature, *swād prakritiḥ*, and the divine Nature can never be separate from the Divine, in everything it creates the Godhead must be immanent. That is a relation which is not the whole truth of his being, but neither is it a truth which we can at all afford to ignore. He is lodged in the human body. Those who ignore his presence, who despise because of its masks the divinity in the human form, are bewildered and befooled by the appearances of Nature, they can not realise that there is the secret Godhead within, whether conscious in humanity, as in the Avatar, or veiled by his Maya. Those who are great-souled, who are not shut up in their idea of ego, who open themselves to the indwelling Divinity, know that the secret spirit in man which appears here bounded by the limited human nature, is the same ineffable splendour which we worship beyond as the supreme Godhead. They become aware of the highest status of him in which he is master and lord of all existences and yet see that in each existence he is still the supreme Godhead and the indwelling Deity. All the rest is a self-limitation for the manifesting
of the variations of Nature in the cosmos. They see too that as it is his Nature which has become all that is in the universe, everything here is in its inner fact nothing but one Divine, all is Vasudeva, and they worship him not only as the supreme Godhead beyond, but here in the world, in his oneness and in every separate being. They see this truth and in this truth they live and act; him they adore, live, serve both as the One and in the world and in all beings, serve him with works of sacrifice, seek him out by knowledge, see nothing else but him everywhere, and lift their whole being to him in its self and in all its Nature. This they know to be the large and perfect way; for it is the way of the whole truth of the supreme and universal and individual Godhead.
The Synthesis of Yoga

THE YOGA OF SELF-PERFECTION

CHAPTER XLIX

THE PRINCIPLE OF THE INTEGRAL YOGA

The principle of Yoga is the turning of one or of all powers of our human existence into a means of reaching divine Being. In an ordinary Yoga one main power of being or one group of its powers is made the means, vehicle, path. In a synthetic Yoga all powers will be combined and included in the transmuting instrumentation.

In Hathayoga the instrument is the body and life. All the power of the body is stilled, collected, purified, heightened, concentrated to its utmost limits or beyond any limits by Asana and other physical processes; the power of the life too is similarly purified, heightened, concentrated by Asana and Pranayama. This concentration of powers is then directed towards that physical centre in which the divine consciousness sits concealed in the human body. The power of Life, Nature-power, coiled up with all its secret forces asleep in the lowest nervous plexus of the earth-being,—for only so much escapes into waking action in our normal operations as is sufficient for the limited uses of human life,—rises awakened through centre after centre and awakens, too, in its ascent and passage the forces of each successive nodus of our being, the nervous life, the
heart of emotion and ordinary mentality, the speech, sight, will, the higher knowledge, till through and above the brain it meets with and it becomes one with the divine consciousness.

In Rajayoga the chosen instrument is the mind. Our ordinary mentality is first disciplined, purified and directed towards the divine Being, then by a summary process of Asana and Pranayama the physical force of our being is stilled and concentrated, the life-force released into a rhythmic movement capable of cessation and concentrated into a higher power of its upward action, the mind, supported and strengthened by this greater action and concentration of the body and life upon which it rests, is itself purified of all its unrest and emotion and its habitual thought-waves, liberated from distraction and dispersion, given its highest force of concentration, gathered up into a trance of absorption, Two objects, the one temporal, the other eternal, are gained by this discipline. Mind-power develops in another concentrated action abnormal capacities of knowledge, effective will, deep light of reception, powerful light of thought-radiation which are altogether beyond the narrow range of our normal mentality; it arrives at the Yogic or occult powers around which there has been woven so much quite dispensable and yet perhaps salutary mystery. But the one final end and the one all-important gain is that the mind, stilled and cast into a concentrated trance, can lose itself in the divine consciousness and the soul be made free to unite with the divine Being.

The triple way takes for its chosen instruments the three main powers of the mental soul-life of the human being. Knowledge selects the reason and the mental vision and it makes them by purification, concentration and a certain discipline of a God-directed seeking its means for the greatest knowledge and the greatest vision of all, God-knowledge and God-vision. Its aim is to see, know and be the Divine. Works, action selects for its instrument the
will of the doer of works; it makes life an offering of sacrifice to the Godhead and by purification, concentra-
tion and a certain discipline of subjection to the divine
Will a means for contact and increasing unity of the
soul of man with the divine Master of the universe. Devo-
tion selects the emotional and aesthetic powers of the
soul and by turning them all Godward in a perfect purity,
intensity, infinite passion of seeking makes them a means
of God-possession in one or many relations of unity with
the Divine Being. All aim in their own way at a union or
unity of the human soul with the supreme Spirit.

Each Yoga in its process has the character of the
instrument it uses; thus the Hathayogic process is psycho-
physical, the Rajayogic mental and psychic, the way of
knowledge is spiritual and cognitive, the way of devotion
spiritual, emotional and aesthetic, the way of works spiri-
tual and dynamic by action. Each is guided in the ways of
its own characteristic power. But all power is in the end
one, all power is really soul-power. In the ordinary pro-
cess of life, body and mind this truth is quite obscured by
the dispersed, dividing and distributive action of Nature
which is the normal condition of all our functionings,
although even there it is in the end evident; for all mate-
rial energy contains hidden the vital, mental, psychic,
spiritual energy and in the end it must release these forms
of the one Shakti, the vital energy conceals and liberates
into action all the other forms, the mental supporting it-
self on the life and body and their powers and function-
ings contains undeveloped or only partially developed the
psychic and the spiritual power of the being. But when by
Yoga any of these powers is taken up from the dispersed
and distributive action, raised to its highest degree, con-
centrated, it becomes manifest soul-power and reveals the
essential unity. Therefore the Hathayogic process has too
its pure psychic and spiritual result, the Rajayogic arrives
by psychic means at a spiritual consummation. The tri-
ple way may appear to be altogether mental and spiritual in its way of seeking and its objectives, but it can be attended by results more characteristic of the other paths, which offer themselves in a spontaneous and involuntary flowering, and for the same reason, because soul-power is all-power and where it reaches its height in one direction its other possibilities also begin to show themselves in fact or in incipient potentiality. This unity at once suggests the possibility of a synthetic Yoga.

Tantric discipline is in its nature a synthesis. It has seized on the large universal truth that there are two poles of being whose essential unity is the secret of existence, Brahman and Shakti, Spirit and Nature, and that Nature is power of the spirit or rather is spirit as power. To raise nature in man into manifest power of spirit is its method and it is the whole nature that it gathers up for the spiritual conversion. It includes in its system of instrumentation the forceful Hathayogic process and especially the opening up of the nervous centres and the passage through them of the awakened Shakti on her way to her union with the Brahman, the subtler stress of the Rajayogic purification, meditation and concentration, the leverage of will-force, the motive power of devotion, the key of knowledge. But it does not stop short with an effective assembling of the different powers of these specific Yogas. In two directions it enlarges by its synthetic turn the province of the Yogic method. First, it lays its hand firmly on many of the main springs of human quality, desire, action and it subjects them to an intensive discipline with the soul's mastery of its motives as a first aim and their elevation to a diviner spiritual level as its final utility. Again, it includes in its objects of Yoga not only liberation, which is the one all-mastering preoccupation of the specific systems, but a cosmic enjoyment of the power of the Spirit, which

* Mukti. † Bhukti.
the others may take incidentally on the way, in part, casually, but avoid making a motive or object. It is a bolder and larger system.

In the method of synthesis which we have been following, another clue of principle has been pursued which is derived from another view of the possibilities of Yoga. This starts from the method of Vedanta to arrive at the aim of the Tantra. In the Tantric method Shakti is all-important, becomes the key to the finding of spirit; in this synthesis spirit, soul is all-important, becomes the secret of the taking up of Shakti. The Tantric method starts from the bottom and grades the ladder of ascent upwards to the summit; therefore its initial stress is upon the action of the awakened Shakti in the nervous system of the body and its centres; the opening of the six lotuses is the opening up of the ranges of the power of Spirit. Our synthesis takes man as a spirit in mind much more than a spirit in body and assumes in him the capacity to begin on that level, to spiritualise his being by the power of the soul in mind opening itself directly to a higher spiritual force and being and to perfect by that higher force so possessed and brought into action the whole of his nature. For that reason our initial stress has fallen upon the utilisation of the powers of soul in mind and the turning of the triple key of knowledge, works and love in the locks of the spirit; the Hathayogic methods can be dispensed with,—though there is no objection to their partial use,—the Rajayogic will only enter in as an informal element. To arrive by the shortest way at the largest development of spiritual power and being and divinise by it a liberated nature in the whole range of human living is our inspiring motive.

The principle in view is a self-surrender, a giving up of the human being into the being, consciousness, power, delight of the Divine, a union or communion at all the points of meeting in the soul of man, the mental being,
by which the Divine himself, directly and without veil
master and possessor of the instrument, shall by the light
of his presence and guidance perfect the human being in
all the forces of the Nature for a divine living. Here we
arrive at a farther enlargement of the objects of the Yoga.
The common initial purpose of all Yoga is the liberation
of the soul of man from its present natural ignorance and
limitation, its release into spiritual being, its union with
the highest self and Divinity. But ordinarily this is made
not only the initial but the whole and final object: enjoy-
mement of spiritual being there is, but either in a dissolution
of the human and individual into the silence of self-being
or on a higher plane in another existence. The Tantric
system makes liberation the final, but not the only aim;
it takes on it way a full perfection and enjoyment of the
spiritual power, light and joy in the human existence, and
even it has a glimpse of a supreme experience in which
liberation and cosmic action and enjoyment are unified
in a final overcoming of all oppositions and dissonances.
It is this wider view of our spiritual potentialities from
which we begin, but we add another stress which brings
in a completer significance. We regard the spirit in man
not as solely an individual being travelling to a transcen-
dent unity with the Divine, but as a universal being cap-
able of oneness with the Divine in all souls and all Natu-
re and we give this extended view its entire practical con-
sequence. The human soul's individual liberation and en-
joyment of union with the Divine in spiritual being, con-
ciousness and delight must always be the first object of
the Yoga; its free enjoyment of the cosmic unity of the
Divine becomes a second object; but out of that a third
appears, the effectuation of the meaning of the divine uni-
ty with all beings by a sympathy and participation in the
spiritual purpose of the Divine in humanity. The indivi-
dual Yoga then turns from its separateness and becomes
a part of the collective Yoga of the divine Nature in the
human race. The liberated individual being, united with the Divine in self and spirit, becomes in his natural being a self-perfecting instrument for the perfect outflowering of the Divine in humanity.

This outflowering has its two terms; first, comes the growth out of the separative human ego into the unity of the spirit, then the possession of the divine nature in its proper and its higher forms and no longer in the inferior forms of the mental being which are a mutilated translation and not the authentic text of the original script of divine Nature in the cosmic individual. In other words, a perfection has to be aimed at which amounts to the elevation of the mental into the full spiritual and supramental nature. Therefore this integral Yoga of knowledge, love and works has to be extended into a Yoga of spiritual and gnostic self-perfection. As gnostic knowledge, will and ananda are a direct instrumentation of spirit and can only be won by growing into the spirit, into divine being, this growth has to be the first aim of our Yoga. The mental being has to enlarge itself into the oneness of the Divine before the Divine will perfect in the soul of the individual its gnostic outflowering. That is the reason why the triple way of knowledge, works and love becomes the key-note of the whole Yoga, for that is the direct means for the soul in mind to rise to its highest intensities where it passes upward into the divine oneness. That too is the reason why the Yoga must be integral. For if immersgence in the Infinite or some close union with the Divine were all our aim, an integral Yoga would be superfluous, except for such greater satisfaction of the being of man as we may get by a self-lifting of the whole of it towards its Source. But it would not be needed for the essential aim, since by any single power of the soul-nature we can meet with the Divine; each at its height rises up into the infinite and absolute, each therefore offers a sufficient way of arrival, for all the hundred separate paths meet in the Eternal,
But the gnostic being is a complete enjoyment and possession of the whole divine and spiritual nature; and it is a complete lifting of the whole nature of man into its power of a divine and spiritual existence. Integrity becomes then an essential condition of this Yoga.

At the same time we have seen that each of the three ways at its height, if it is pursued with a certain largeness, can take into itself the powers of the others and lead to their fulfilment. It is therefore sufficient to start by one of them and find the point at which it meets the other at first parallel lines of advance and melts into them by its own widenings. At the same time a more difficult, complex, wholly powerful process would be to start, as it were, on three lines together, on a triple wheel of soul-power. But the consideration of this possibility must be postponed till we have seen what are the conditions and means of the Yoga of self-perfection. For we shall see that this also need not be postponed entirely, but a certain preparation of it is part of and a certain initiation into it proceeds by the growth of the divine works, love and knowledge.
The Unseen Power

A war has ended, a world has perished in the realm of thought and begun to disappear in the order of outward Nature. The war that has ended, was fought in physical trenches, with shell and shot, with machine-gun and tank and aeroplane, with mangling of limbs and crash of physical edifices and rude upturning of the bosom of our mother earth; the new war, or the old continued in another form, that is already beginning, will be fought more with mental trenches and bomb-proof shelters, with reconnaissances and batteries and moving machines of thought and word, propaganda and parties and programmes, with mangling of the desire-souls of men and of nations, crash of many kinds of thrones and high-built institutions and strong upturning of the old earth of custom which man has formed as a layer over the restless molten forces of evolutionary Nature. The old world that is shaken outwardly in its bases and already crumbling in some of its parts, is the economical and materialistic civilisation which mankind has been forming for the last few centuries from once new materials now growing rapidly effete pieced out with broken remnants of antiquity and the middle ages. The period of military conflict just at an end came to breach that which thought had already been sapping, an era of revolutions has opened which is
likely to complete the ruin and prepare the building of a new structure. In this struggle the question arises to the thinking man what Power or what Powers are expressing their will or their strivings in this upheaval? and we, what power or powers shall we serve? to what thing inward or superhuman, since outward thrones and systems are but as leaves driven before the storm-wind of the breath of Time, shall we owe allegiance? what or whom is it that we shall fight to enthrone?

Men fight for their personal or communal or national interests or for ideas and principles of which they make watchwords and battle-cries. But the largest human interests are only means and instruments which some Force greater than themselves breaks or uses in its inconscient impulse or else for its conscious purposes; ideas and principles are births of our minds which are born, reign and pass away and they are mere words unless they express some power of our being and of world-being which finds in them a mental self-expression. Something there is greater than our thoughts and desires, something more constant and insistent which lasts and grows beyond and yet by their changings. If no such thing were, then all this human effort would be a vain perturbation, the life of man only the busy instinctive routine of the hive and the ant-hill on a little higher scale, but with more useless suffering in it and less economy and wisdom, and our thought a vain glittering of imaginations weaving out involuntarily a web like that of old legend that is spun and respun only to be undone and again undone and of reasonings that build a series of intellectual and practical conventions which we represent to ourselves as the truth and the right, making the fallacies of our minds a substitute for wisdom and the fallacies of our social living a substitute for happiness. For this is certain that nothing we form and no outward system we create can last beyond its appointed or else its possible time. As this great materialistic civilisation of Eu-
rope to which the high glowing dawn of the Renaissance gave its brilliant birth and the dry brazen afternoon of nineteenth-century rationalism its hard maturity, is passing away and the bosom of earth and the soul of man have a sigh of relief at its going, so whatever new civilisation we construct after this evening of the cycle, yuga-sandhyā, on which we are entering,—for those are surely mistaken who think it is already the true dawn,—will also live its time and collapse fiercely or decay dully,—unless indeed there is that eternal Spirit in things and he should have found in its keynote the first sounds of the strain of his real harmony, in which case it may be the first of an ascending series of changes to the creation of a greater humanity. Otherwise, all this vast clash and onset of peoples an world-wide bloodshed would be only a fortuitous nightmare, and the happiest known age of nation or mankind only the pleasant dream of a moment. Then the old-world gospel which bade us look upon human life as a vanity of vanities, would be the only wisdom.

But with that creed the soul of man has never remained contented and still less can we at the present day live in it, because this intuition of a greater Power than our apparent selves in the workings of the world is now growing upon the race and the vast sense of an unaccomplished aim in the urge of life is driving it to an unprecedented effort of human thought and energy. In such a moment even the hugest calamities cannot exhaust the life or discourage its impetus, but rather impel it to a new elan of endeavour; for the flames of thought rise higher than the flames of the conflagration that destroys and see in it a meaning and the promise of a new creation. In the destruction that has been effected, in the void that has been left the mind sees only more room for hope to grow and a wide space that the Spirit who builds in Time has cleared for his new structure. For who that has eyes at all to see cannot see this, that in what has happened, immense
Powers have been at work which nourish a vaster world-purpose than the egoistic mind of individual or nation could meet with their yard-measure of narrow personal idea or communal interest and for which the motives and passions of governments and peoples were only tools or opportunities? When the autocrats and the war-lords of the east and the centre resolved to dare this huge catastrophe in order to seize from it the crown of their ambitions, when they drove madly to the precipice of an incalculable world-conflict, they could have no inkling that within four years or less their thrones would have fallen, themselves be slain or flee into exile and all for which they stood be hastening into the night of the past; only that which impelled them foresaw and intended it. Nor were the peoples who staggered unwillingly over the brink of war, more enlightened of the secret purpose: defence of what they were and possessed, wrath at a monstrous aggression which was a menace to their ordered European civilisation, drove their will and inflamed their resolution. Yet to convict that civilisation of error and prepare another era of humanity was the intention of the Force that has given them victory, its voice echoed confusedly in their thought and growing clearer in the minds of those who entered later with a deliberate and conscious will into the struggle.

Great has been the havoc and ruin, immense the suffering, thick the blood-red cloud of darkness enveloping the world, heavy the toll of life, bottomless the expenditure of treasure and human resources, and all has not yet been worked out, the whole price has not yet been paid; for the after effects of the war are likely to be much greater than its present effects and much that by an effort of concentration has resisted the full shock of the earthquake will fall in the after-tremblings. Well might the mind of a man during the calamity, aware of the Power that stood over the world wrapped in this tempest, repeat the words
of Arjuna on the field of Kurukshetra,—

drishtwād bhutam rūpam ugram tavedam
lokatrayam pravyathitam mahātman...
drishtwā hi tvām pravyathitāntarātma
dhritim na vindāmi çaman cha vishno...
yathā nadinām bahavo ' mbuvegāh
samudram evābhīmukhā dravanti,
tathā tavāmi nara-loka-virāh
viçanti vaktrānyabhivijwalanti.
yathā pradiptam jvalanam patangā
viçanti nāçāya samriddhavegāh,
tathaiva nāçāya viçanti lokās
tavāpi vaktrāni samriddhavegāh.
lelihyase grasamānah samantāl
lokān samagrān vadanair jvaladbhīh,
tejobhir āpūrya jagat samagram
bhāsas tavogrāh pratapanti vishno.
akhāhi me ko bhavān ugarūpo
namo'stu te devavara prasida,
vijnātum ichchhāmi bhavantam ādyam
na hi prajānāmi āva pravrittim.

“When is seen this thy fierce and astounding form, the three worlds are all in pain and suffer, O thou mighty Spirit...Troubled and in anguish is the soul within me as I look upon thee and I find no peace or gladness. As the speed of many rushing waters race towards the ocean, so all these heroes of the world of man are entering into thy many mouths of flame. As a swarm of moths with ever increasing speed fall to their destruction into a fire that some one has kindled, so now the nations with ever increasing speed are entering into thy jaws of doom. Thou lickest the regions all around with thy tongues and thou art swallowing up all the nations in thy mouths of burning; all the world is filled with the blaze of thy energies; fierce and terrible are thy lustres and they burn us, O Vishnu. Declare to me who art thou that comest to us in
this form of fierceness; salutation to thee, O thou great
godhead, turn thy heart to grace! I would know who
art thou who wast from the beginning, for I know not
the will of thy workings."

If the first answer might seem to come in the same
words that answered the appeal of Arjuna, "I am the
Time-Spirit, destroyer of the world, arisen huge-statured
for the destruction of the nations"

kālo'smi loka-kshaya-krit praviddho
lokān samāhartum iha pravritah,

and the voice the same to those who would shrink back
hesitating from participation in the devastating struggle
and massacre, "Without thee even all these shall cease
to be who stand in the opposing hosts, for already have
I slain them in my foreseeing will; know thyself to be an
instrument only of an end predestined,"—still in the end
it is the Friend of man, the Charioteer of his battle and his
journey who appears in the place of the form of destruc-
tion and the outcome of all the ruin is the dharmarājya,
the kingdom of the Dharma. To humanity as to the warri-
or of Kurukshetra the concluding message has been uttered,
"Therefore arise, destroy the foe, enjoy a rich and happy
kingdom." But the kingdom of what Dharma? It is
doubtful enough whether as the nations were blind to the
nature of the destruction that was coming, they may not
be at least purblind to the nature of the construction that
is to be created. An increase of mechanical freedom to
be lavished or doled out according to the needs, inter-
ests, hesitations of the old-world forces that still remain
erect, a union affected by a patchwork of the remnants
of the past and the uns shaped materials of the future, a
credit and debit account with fate writing off so much of
the evil and error of the past as can no longer be kept
and writing up as good capital,—with some diminutions
by way of acquittance of conscience, part payment of
overdue debts,—all that has not been hopelessly destroy-
ed, an acceptance of the change already affected by the tempest or made immediately inevitable and a new system of embankments to prevent the farther encroachments of the flood, is not likely to put a successful term to the cataclysm. Even if a short-sighted sagacity could bring this about for a time by a combined effort of successful and organised egoisms making terms with the powerful Idea-forces that are abroad as the messengers of the Time-Spirit, still it would be only an artificial check leading to a new upheaval in the not distant future. A liquidation of the old bankrupt materialistic economism which will enable it to set up business again under a new name with a reserve capital and a clean ledger, will be a futile attempt to cheat destiny. Commercialism has no doubt its own dharma, its ideal of utilitarian justice and law and adjustment, its civilisation presided over by the sign of the Balance, and, its old measures being now annulled, it is eager enough to start afresh with a new system of calculated values. But a dharmarājya of the half-penitent Vaishya is not to be the final consummation of a time like ours pregnant with new revelations of thought and spirit and new creations in life, nor is a golden or rather a copper-gilt age of the sign of the Balance to be the glorious reward of this anguish and travail of humanity. It is surely the kingdom of another and higher dharma that is in preparation.

What that dharma is we can only know if we know this Power whose being and whose thought are at work behind all that we attempt and suffer, conceive and strive for. A former humanity conceived of it as a creative Divinity or almighty Power high above man and his being and his effort, or of a pantheon or hierarchy of universal Powers who looked upon and swayed the labour and passion and thought of the race. But the system of cosmic deities lacked a base and a principle of unity in their workings and above it the ancients were obliged to con-
ceive of a vague and ineffable Divinity, the unknown God to whom they built a nameless altar, or a Necessity with face of sphinx and hands of bronze to whom the gods themselves had to give an ignorant obedience, and it left the life of man at once the victim of an inscrutable fate and the puppet of superhuman caprices. That to a great extent he is so long as he lives in his vital ego and is the servant of his own personal ideas and passions. Later religions gave a name and some body of form and quality to the one unknown Godhead and proclaimed an ideal law which they gave out as his word and scripture. But the dogmatism of a partial and unlived knowledge and the external tendencies of the human mind darkened the illuminations of religion with the confusions of error and threw over its face strange masks of childish and cruel superstitions. Religion too by putting God far above in distant heavens made man too much of a worm of the earth little and vile before his Creator and admitted only by a caprice of his favour to a doubtful salvation in superhuman worlds. Modern thought seeking to make a clear riddance of these past conceptions had to substitute something else in its place, and what it saw and put there was the material law of Nature and the biological law of life of which human reason was to be the faithful exponent and human science the productive utiliser and profiteer. But to apply the mechanical blindness of the rule of physical Nature as the sole guide of thinking and seeing man is to go against the diviner law of his being and maim his higher potentiality. Material and vital Nature is only a first form of our being and to overcome and rise beyond its formula is the very sense of a human evolution. Another and greater. Power than hers is the master of this effort, and human reason or human science is not that Godhead, but can only be at best one and not the greatest of its ministers. It is not human reason and human science which have been working out their ends in or through
the tempest that has laid low so many of their constructions. A greater Spirit awaits a deeper questioning to reveal his unseen form and his hidden purpose.

Something of this truth we have begun to see dimly, in the return to more spiritual notions and in the idea of a kingdom of God to be built in the life of humanity. On the old sense of a Power in the universe of which the world that we live in is the field, is supervening the nearer perception of a Godhead in man, the unseen king of whom the outer man is the veil and of whom our mind and life can be the servants and living instruments and our perfected souls the clear mirrors. But we have to see more lucidly and in the whole before we can know this Godhead. There are three powers and forms in which the Being who is at work in things presents himself to our vision. There is first the form of him that we behold in the universe, but that, or at least what we see of it in the appearances of things, is not the whole truth of him; it is indeed only a first material shape and vital foundation which he has offered for the starting-point of our growth, an initial sum of preliminary realisations from which we have to proceed and to transcend them. The next form is that of which man alone here has the secret, for in him it is progressively revealing itself in a partial and always incomplete accomplishing and unfolding. His thoughts, his ideals, his dreams, his attempts at a high self-exceeding are the clues by which he attempts to discover the Spirit, the moulds in which he tries to seize the form of the Divinity. But they too are only a partial light and not the whole form of the Godhead. Something waits beyond which the human mind approaches in a shapeless aspiration to an ineffable Perfection, an infinite Light, an infinite Power, an infinite Love, a universal Good and Beauty. This is not something that is not yet in perfect being, a God who is becoming or who has to be created by man; it is the Eternal of whom this infinite ideal is a mental reflection.
It is beyond the form of the universe and these psychological realisations of the human being and yet it is here too in man and subsists surrounding him in all the powers of the world he lives in. It is both the Spirit who is in the universe and the invisible king in man who is the master of his works. It develops in the universe through laws which are not complete here or not filled in in their sense and action until humanity shall have fully evolved in its nature the potentialities of the mind and spirit. It works in man, but through his individual and corporate ego so long as he dwells within the knot of his present mentality. Only when his race knows God and lives in the Divine, will the ideal sense of his strivings begin to unfold itself and the kingdom be founded, naiyam samriddham.

When we try to build our outer life in obedience to our ego, our interests, our passions or our vital needs only or else in a form of our vital needs served and enlarged by our intellect, but not enlightened with a greater spiritual meaning, we are living within the law of the first cosmic formulation. It is as insistent Rudra that the unseen Power meets us there, the Master of the evolution, the Lord of Karma, the King of justice and judgment, who is easily placated with sacrifice and effort, for even to the Asura and Rakshasa, the Titan and the giant he gives the fruit of their tapasya, but who is swift also to wrath and every time that man offends against the law, even though it be in ignorance, or stands stiff in his ego against the urge of the evolution or provokes the rebound of Karma, he strikes without mercy; through strife and stumblings, through passioning and yearning and fierce stress of will and giant endeavour, construction and destruction, slow labour of evolution and rushing speed of revolution Rudra works out the divine purpose. When on the contrary we seek to shape our life by the Ideal, it is the severe Lord of Truth who meets us with his questioning. Then in so far as we work in the sincerity of the inner truth, we shall live in an increas-
ing harmony of the result of a divine working. But if the measures of our ideal are false or if we cast into the balance the unjust weights of our egoism and hypocrisy and self-deceiving or if we misuse the truth for our narrower ends, if we turn it into a lie or a convention or an outward machinery without the living soul of the truth in it, then we must pay a heavy reckoning. For as before we fell into the terrible hand of Rudra, so now we fall into the subtler more dangerous noose of Varuna. Only if we can see the Truth and live in it, shall our aspiration be satisfied. Then it is the master of Freedom, the Lord of Love, the Spirit of unity who shall inform the soul of the individual and take up the world's endeavour. He is the great Liberator and the strong and gentle founder of Perfection.

It is the wrath of Rudra that has swept over the earth and the track of his footprints can be seen in these ruins. There has come as a result upon the race the sense of having lived in many falsehoods and the need of building according to an ideal. Therefore we have now to meet the question of the Master of Truth. Two great words of the divine Truth have forced themselves insistently on our minds through the crash of the ruin and the breath of the tempest and are now the leading words of the hoped-for reconstruction,—freedom and unity. But everything depends, first, upon the truth of our vision of them, secondly, upon the sincerity with which we apply it, last and especially on the inwardness of our realisation. Vain will be the mechanical construction of unity, if unity is not in the heart of the race and if it be made only a means for safeguarding and organising our interests; the result will then be only, as it was in the immediate past, a fiercer strife and new outbreaks of revolution and anarchy. No paltering mechanisms which have the appearance but not the truth of freedom, will help us; the new structure, however imposing, will only become another prison and compel a fresh struggle for
liberation. The one safety for man lies in learning to live from within outward, not depending on institutions and machinery to perfect him, but out of his growing inner perfection availing to shape a more perfect form and frame of life; for by this inwardness we shall best be able both to see the truth of the high things which we now only speak with our lips and form into outward intellectual constructions, and to apply their truth sincerely to all our outward living. If we are to found the kingdom of God in humanity, we must first know God and see and live the diviner truth of our being in ourselves; otherwise how shall a new manipulation of the constructions of the reason and scientific systems of efficiency which have failed us in the past, avail to establish it? It is because there are plenty of signs that the old error continues and only a minority, leaders perhaps in light, but not yet in action, are striving to see more clearly, inwardly and truly, that we must expect as yet rather the last twilight which divides the dying from the unborn age than the real dawning. For a time, since the mind of man is not yet ready, the old spirit and method may yet be strong and seem for a short while to prosper; but the future lies with the men and nations who first see beyond both the glare and the dusk the gods of the morning and prepare themselves to be fit instruments of the Power that is pressing towards the light of a greater ideal.
"Is India Civilised"*

(1)

This is the rather startling title of a short book by Sir John Woodroffe, the well-known judge, scholar, exponent of Tantric philosophy; to whom India already owes a great debt for his publication of Tantric Shastras and his exposition and defence of the true meaning of Tantra. The book is in its form an answer to an extravagant *jou d'esprit* by Mr. William Archer in which that well-known dramatic critic leaving his safe natural sphere for fields in which his chief claim to speak is a sublime and confident ignorance, assails the whole life and culture of India,—philosophy, religion, art, poetry, Upanishads, Ramayana all lumped together with a splendid thoroughness of condemnation,—as a repulsive mass of unspeakable barbarism. Mr. Archer is a very pervious object of attack, constantly vulnerable, self-exposed at every point, and Sir John Woodroffe with his calm judicial mind and deliberate lucidity has an easy task in destroying him. One might perhaps suggest that this is to break a butterfly, or in this case a bumble-bee, upon the wheel. But the essayist insists that even an attack of this ignorant kind ought not to be neg-

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*Essays in Indian Culture; by Sir John Woodroffe. Ganeesh and Co. Madras,
lected, and, even, he has taken it as of a particularly typical kind because it raises the question from the rationalistic, not from the Christian and missionary standpoint and betrays the grosser underlying motives of all such attacks. I shall perhaps have occasion to speak of Mr. Archer's performance from this point of view of a typical opposition; but at present I leave the reader to find him scarified and exposed in all the unashamed nakedness of his absurdity in the pages of this volume.

This book demands the close attention of every Indian who is interested in the future of his country, and I may say that it has its special importance for all who are interested in the spiritual, intellectual, cultural future of humanity. It raises with a challenging force and distinctness a question which may well become the most important of all that will have to be solved in the future reconstruction of the race-life; beside it many of the problems now agitating the mind of Europe may turn out to have been of a minor and temporary consequence. Sir John Woodroffe does not enter in detail into the character of Indian civilisation,—after all, the question whether there is a civilisation is not really any longer debatable, for every one now whose opinion counts recognises the presence of a distinct civilisation in India,—he only gives us a large indication of its character. But what he does bring forward with strong and persistent emphasis is the great fact of the conflict of cultures, and especially the conflict of European and Asiatic culture, arising out of the more outward physical clash, and in particular prominence the distinct meaning of Indian civilisation and the peril of its destruction. The author holds its preservation to be of an immense importance to humanity and he believes it to be in great danger; it is evident, in fact he expresses it in one place, that he is moved by an apprehension that in the stupendous rush of change which is coming on the world as a result of the present tornado of upheaval ancient In-
dia's culture, attacked by European modernism, betrayed by the indifference of her children, may perish for ever along with the soul of the nation who hold it in their keeping. This volume is an urgent invitation to us to appreciate better both this sacred trust and the near peril which besets it and to stand firm and faithful in the hour of the ordeal. The author develops his theory with great skill and much quiet depth and the essays are strewn throughout with acute and penetrating observations expressed with a lucid solidarity which tempts one constantly to quotation. But I must keep to the central matter. It will be best to state first briefly the gist of it as it is given us by the writer before making any comment.

Sir John Woodroffe starts from the description of true happiness in this world, the right terrestrial aim of man, we might say, as a natural harmony of spirit, mind and body. A culture therefore must be judged by the extent to which it has discovered the right key of this harmony and a civilisation by the manner in which all its principles, its ideas, forms, ways of living work to bring that out, manage its rhythmic play, its secure continuance or the development of its motives. It follows that a civilisation may be predominantly material like the modern European culture, or predominantly mental and intellectual like the old Graeco-Roman, or predominantly spiritual like the still persistent culture of India. India's central conception is that of the Eternal, the Spirit here incased in matter, involved and immanent in it, evolving on the material plane by rebirth of the individual up the scale of being till in mental man it enters the world of ideas and realm of conscious morality, dharma; that develops until the increasing manifestation of the sattwic or spiritual portion of the vehicle of mind enables the individual being to identify itself with the pure spiritual consciousness. India's social system is built upon this conception, her philosophy formulates it, her religion is the aspiration to the spiritual consciousness
and its fruits, her art and literature have the same upward look, her whole dharma or law of being is founded upon it. Progress she admits, but it is this spiritual progress, not that of a more and more prosperous and efficient material civilisation. Her founding of life upon this exalted conception, her urge towards the spiritual and the eternal constitutes the distinct value of her civilisation, and her fidelity, with whatever human shortcomings, to her ideal has made her people a nation apart in humanity. But there are other cultures in the world led by a different conception, even an opposite motive, and, by the law of struggle which is the first law of existence in the material universe, varying cultures are bound to come into conflict, to attempt to extend themselves and destroy, assimilate, replace all disparates or opposites. Conflict is not indeed the last and ideal stage; that comes when various cultures develop freely and without hatred, misunderstanding or aggression their special motives with an underlying sense of unity. But so long as the principle of struggle prevails, it is fatal to disarm; the culture which gives up its separateness and neglects its self-defence will be swallowed up and the nation which lived by it will lose its soul and perish. For each nation is a Shakti or power of the evolving spirit in humanity and lives by the principle which it embodies. India is the Bharata Shakti, the living energy of this great spiritual conception, and fidelity to it must be the principle of her existence. By its virtue alone she has been one of the immortal nations.

The principle of struggle has assumed the large historical aspect of an age-long clash of conflict between Asia and Europe, which has had its material, but borne also its cultural and spiritual aspect. Both materially and spiritually Europe has been throwing itself constantly upon Asia, Asia too upon Europe, to conquer, assimilate, dominate; there has been a constant alternation, a flowing backward and forward. All Asia has always had in more or less intensity,
with more or less clearness the spiritual tendency; but India is in this respect the quintessence of the Asiatic way of being. Europe too in mediaeval times had a culture in which by the dominance of the Christian idea—Christianity being of an Asiatic origin—the spiritual motive took the lead, and then there was an essential similarity as well as a certain difference. Still the differentiation of cultural temperament has on the whole been constant. Since some centuries, Europe has become material, aggressive, predatory, and has lost the harmony of the inner and outer man which is the true meaning of civilisation and the efficient condition of a true progress. Material comfort, material progress, material efficiency have become the gods of her worship. The modern European civilisation which has invaded Asia and which all violent attacks on Indian ideals represent, is the form of this materialistic culture. India true to her spiritual motive has never shared in the physical attacks of Asia upon Europe; her method has always been an infiltration of the world with her ideas, such as we today see again in progress. But she herself has now been physically occupied by Europe and this physical conquest must necessarily be associated with an attempt at cultural conquest and that invasion too has also made some progress. On the other hand English rule has enabled India still to retain her social type and identity, has awakened her to herself and has meanwhile, until she became conscious of her strength guarded her against the flood which would otherwise have submerged and broken her civilisation. It is for her now to recover herself, defend her cultural existence against the alien penetration, preserve her distinct spirit, essential principle, characteristic forms for her own salvation and the total welfare of humanity.

But many questions may arise, whether such a spirit of defence and attack is the right spirit, whether union, harmony, interchange is not our proper temperament for the
coming human advance, whether a unified world-culture is not the large way of the future, whether, finally, either an exaggeratedly spiritual or an excessively temporal civilisation can be the sound condition of human progress or human perfection; a reconciliation would seem to be the key to a harmony of Spirit, Mind and Body. There is the question too whether the forces must be observed intact as well as the spirit. Sir John Woodroffe would reply with his law of the three stages of the spiritual advance of humanity. The first stage is that of conflict and competition which has been ever dominant in the past and still overshadows the present of humanity; for even when the crudest forms of material conflict are mitigated, the conflict itself still survives and the cultural struggle comes into greater prominence. The second step brings the stage of concert; the third and last is marked by the spirit of sacrifice in which, all being known as the one Self, each gives himself for the good of others. The second stage has hardly at all commenced for most; the third belongs to the indeterminate future. Individuals have reached the highest stage; the perfected Sannyasin, the liberated man, the soul that has become one with the Spirit, knows all being as himself and for him all self-defence and attack are needless, they do not belong to the law of his seeing; sacrifice, self-giving become naturally the whole principle of his action. But no people has reached that level, and to follow a law or principle involuntarily or ignorantly or contrary to the truth of one's consciousness is a falsehood and a self-destruction. To allow oneself to be killed, like the lamb attacked by the wolf, brings no growth, development, spiritual merit. As for concert or unity, that may come in good time, but it must be an underlying unity with a free differentiation, not a swallowing up of one by another or an incongruous and inharmonious mixture; nor can it come before the world is ready for it. To lay down one's arms in a state of war is to invite destruction. Spiritual and temporal have indeed to be perfect
ly harmonised, for the spirit works through mind and body; particularly, the purely intellectual or heavily material culture bears in its heart the seed of death, for the end of culture is the realisation on earth of the kingdom of heaven. But India, though its urge is towards the Eternal, since that is always the highest, the entirely real, still contains in her own culture and her own philosophy a supreme reconciliation of the eternal and the temporal; she need not seek it from outside. On the same principle the form too is important as well as the spirit, for the form is the rhythm of the spirit, and to break up the form is to injure or endanger the spirit's self-expression. Change of forms there may and will be, but it must be a new self-expression developed from within and characteristic of the spirit, not servilely borrowed from the embodiments of an alien nature.

Where then does India actually stand in this critical hour of her necessity? Already she has been largely affected by European culture and the peril is far from over, on the contrary it will be greater, more insistent, more imperatively violent in the immediate future. Asia is rearising; that very fact will intensify, is already intensifying the attempt, the natural and legitimate attempt, according to the law of competition, of European civilisation to assimilate Asia, so that, when she again counts in the material order of the world, it will not be with any menace of the invasion of Europe by the Asiatic ideal. It is a cultural quarrel complicated with a political question. Asia must become culturally a province of Europe and form politically one part of a Europeanised if not a European concert, so that Europe may not become culturally a province of Asia, asiaticised by the dominant influence of wealthy, enormous, powerful Asiatic peoples in the new world-system. The motive of Mr. Archer's attack is frankly a political motive. This is the burden of all his song that the reconstruction of the world must take place in the forms and follow the canons of a rationalistic, materialistic European civilisation; India i
she adheres to her civilisation, its spiritual motive, its spiritual principle of formation, will stand out as a living denial, a hideous "blot" upon this fair, luminous, rationalistic world; she must either Europeanise, rationalise, materialise her whole being and so deserve liberty or else be kept in subjection and administered, her people of three hundred million religious savages be held down taught, civilised by the noble and enlightened Christian-atheistic European. A grotesque statement in form, but in substance it has in it the root of the matter. As against the attack—not universal, for understanding and appreciation of Indian culture are more common nowadays,—India is indeed awaking, is defending herself, but not sufficiently and not with that whole-heartedness, clear sight and firm resolution which can alone save her from the peril. To-day it is close; let her choose,—to live or to perish.

I have given only a bare statement, omitted the rich developments, the important side-issues, the qualifications,—for Sir John Woodroffe has always the judicial mind and can see the other side of the case,—but this was all that was possible within my limits and it is sufficient for my present purpose. With the general purport of the theory I find myself in agreement; nor can the writer's warning be neglected; recent utterances of European publicists and statesmen point to the reality of the danger he signals, which indeed arises as a necessity from the present political situation and cultural trend of humanity at this moment of enormous decisive change. Certain qualifications I am inclined to make. I cannot quite follow him in his eulogy of the mediaeval civilisation of Europe; its interest, the beauty of its artistic motives, its deep and sincere spiritual urgings are marred for me by its large strain of ignorance and obscurantism, its cruel intolerance, a certain early-Teutonic hardness, coarseness, brutality. He seems to me to hit a little too hard at the later European culture, ugly enough in its strain of utilitarian materialism,
which we shall err grossly if we imitate, but still uplifted by nobler ideals that have done much for the race, even though they are still crude and imperfect in their form and need to be spiritualised in their meaning before they can be wholly admitted by the mind of India. I think too that he has a little underrated the force of the Indian revival, not its outward realised strength, for that is still deficient, but its spiritual and potential force and inevitability. He makes a little too much of that type of Indian who is capable of mouthing the portentous servile imagination that "European institutions are the standard by which the aspirations of India are set." That, except for the rapidly dwindling class to which this spokesman belongs, has its truth now only in one field, the political,—a very important exception, I admit, and one which opens the door to a peril of stupendous proportions; but even there a deep change of spirit is foreshadowed. He does not attach either to my mind a sufficient importance to that infiltration of India's ideas into Europe which is her characteristic retort upon the European invasion. It is from this point of view that I would give a different aspect to the whole question.

Sir John Woodroffe invites us to a vigorous self-defence, but defence by itself in the modern struggle can only end in defeat, and, if battle there must be, aggression based on a strong defence is the only sound policy; for by that alone can the defence itself be effective. Why are a certain class of Indians still hypnotised by European culture and why are we all still hypnotised by it in the field of politics? Because they constantly saw all the power, creation, activity on the side of Europe, all the immobility or weakness of a static inefficient defence on the side of India. But wherever the Indian spirit has been able to react energetically, attack, create, the European glamour has begun immediately to lose its hypnotic power. No one now feels the weight of the religious assault from Europe
which was very powerful at the outset, because the creative activities of the Hindu revival have made Indian religion a living, evolving, secure, triumphant and self assertive power: but the seal was put to this work by two events, the coming of the Theosophical movement and the appearance of Swami Vivekananda at Chicago. For these two things showed the spiritual ideas for which India stands aggressive, invading and affecting by their power the materialised mentality of the occident. All educated India had been vulgarised and europeanised in its aesthetic notions until the brilliant and sudden dawn of the Bengal school of art cast its rays so far as to be seen in Tokio, London and Paris; recent as that event has been, it has already created a cultural revolution, not yet by any means complete, but irresistible and sure of the future. The same phenomenon extends to other fields. Even in the province of politics that was the internal sense of the policy of the so-called extremist party in the Swadeshi movement; it was a movement which attempted to override the previous impossibility of political creation by the Indian spirit upon other than imitative European lines in the present circumstances of the country. It failed for the time being; its incipient creations were broken or left languishing and deprived of their original significance, and therefore on this side a serious danger still besets the Indian spirit. But the attempt is bound to be renewed as soon as a wider gate is opened by more favourable circumstances. Already a few voices are beginning to give to the idea of self-determination this profounder meaning.

But we must give the whole question first its larger world-wide import. It is true that the principle of struggle, conflict, competition still governs and for some time will still govern,—in other forms, even if war is abolished,—international relations. At the same time the growing mutual closeness of the life of humanity is the most prominent phenomenon of the day. The War has brought
it into violent relief; but the after-war will bring out all its implication. There is not yet a real concert, still less the beginning of a true unity, but a physical oneness forced on us by circumstances. This physical oneness will bring necessarily its mental, cultural, psychological results. It will probably at first accentuate struggle in many directions, the struggle between Capital and Labour for instance, probably too at length a cultural struggle. In regard to culture it may in the end bring about a swallowing unification, a destruction of all others by one aggressive European type,—bourgeois economical, labour materialistic, rationalistic intellectualism, what it may be, cannot easily be foreseen,—or it may lead to a free concert with some underlying unity. But the ideal of each people developing its sharply separatist culture with a sort of alien exclusion law for ideas and cultural forms, though it has for some time been abroad and was growing in vigour, is not likely to prevail,—unless indeed the whole aim and first scheme of unification, of which the proposed League of Nations is a suggestion, falls to pieces,—not a quite impossible catastrophe. Europe now dominates the world; it would therefore be natural to forecast a Europeanised world with such petty differences as might be permissible in a European unity. But across this possibility falls the shadow of India.

Sir John Woodroffe quotes the dictum of Professor Lowes Dickinson that the opposition is not so much between Asia and Europe as between India and the rest of the world. There is a truth behind that dictum, though the cultural opposition of Europe and Asia too remains still an unabolished factor. Spirituality is not the monopoly of India: it is, however submerged in intellectualism or hid in other concealing veils, a necessary part of human being. But the difference is between spirituality made the leading motive and determining power of the inner and the outer life and spirituality brought in only as a minor power, its
reign denied or put off in favour of intellectualism or a dominant materialistic vitalism. The former way was the type of the ancient wisdom once universal in all civilized countries—literally, from China to Peru. But all other nations have fallen away from it, diminished its large pervasiveness or are now, as in Asia, in danger of abandoning it for the invading economic, commercial, industrial, intellectually utilitarian modern type. India alone, with whatever fall or decline of light and vigour, has remained faithful to the heart of the spiritual motive; she alone is still obstinately recalcitrant, as indeed Mr. Archer angrily complains,—China and Japan, he says, have outgrown that foolishness, by which he means that they have both grown rationalistic and materialistic, though I am not disposed to believe that that is entirely true,—she alone has till now, as a nation, whatever individuals or a small class may have done,—quite refused to give up her worshipped Godhead and bow the knee to the strong reigning idols of rationalism, commercialism and economism. Affected she has been, but not yet overcome. Certain western ideas she is taking in, such as liberty, equality, democracy, not inconsistent with her vedantic Truth—but she is not at ease with them in the western form and has already begun thinking of giving to them an Indian which cannot fail to be a spiritualised turn. To this situation there can be only one out of two issues. Either India will be rationalised and industrialised or by her example and cultural infiltration aiding powerfully the new tendencies of the West she will spiritualise humanity. That is the question at issue whether the spiritual motive which India represents is to prevail on Europe taking there, no doubt, new and other forms congenial to the West, or European rationalism and commercialism will put an end to the Indian type of culture.

Not whether India is civilized, but whether the motive which has shaped her civilisation or the old-European intellectual or the new-European materialistic motive
is to lead human culture, whether the harmony of the spirit, mind and body is to found itself on the gross law of our physical life, rationalised only or touched at the most by an ineffective spiritual glimmer, or rather the dominant power of spirit is to take the lead and force the intellect and physical life to a more exalted effort of highest harmony, is the real question. India must defend herself by reshaping her cultural forms to express more powerfully, intimately and perfectly her ancient ideal; her aggression must be conducted by the waves of the light thus liberated making again the round of the world which it once possessed or at least enlightened in far-off ages. Whatever appearance of conflict may be assumed for a time, so long as the attack of an opposite culture continues, it will, since it will be in effect an assistance to all the best that is emerging from the advanced thought of the West, prove in reality the beginning of concert on a higher plane and a preparation of unity.
The Future Poetry

THE COURSE OF ENGLISH POETRY

(5)

A power of poetry in a highly evolved language which describes so low a downward curve as to reach this dry and brazen intellectualism, must either perish by a dull slow decay of its creative force and live flexibilities of expression,—that has happened more than once in literary history,—or else be saved by a violent revulsion. But this saving revulsion, if it comes, is likely, if bold enough, to compensate for the past prone descent by an equally steep ascension to an undreamed-of novelty of illumined motive and revealing spirit. This is the economy of Nature's lapses in the things of the mind no less than in the movements of life: these falls are,—when the needed energy is within,—an obscure condition of unprecedented elevations. In the recoil, in the rush or upwinging to the opposite extreme, some discovery is made which would otherwise have been long postponed or not at all have arrived, doors are burst open which would have been passed by unseen or resisted any less vehement or rapidly illumined effort to unlock them. On the other hand it is a constant disadvantage of these revolutions—which are in fact forced rapidities of evolution—that they carry in them a premature light and an element of quick unripeness by which a subsequent
reaction and return to lower levels becomes inevitable, because the contemporary mind is not really ready and what is accomplished is itself rather an intuitive anticipation than a firmly based knowledge and execution of the thing seen. All these familiar phenomena are visible in the new turn, a swift and far-reaching upward curve, which carries English poetry from the hard and glittering, well-turned and well-rhymed intellectual superficialities of a thin pseudo-classicism to its second luminous outbreak of sight and inspiration.

Intellect, reason, a clarity of the understanding and arranging intelligence is not the highest power of our being. If it were our summit, many things which have now a great or a supreme importance for human culture, religion, art, poetry, would either be a lure or graceful play of the imagination and emotions, or though admissible and useful for certain human ends, would still be deprived of the truth of their own highest indications. Poetry, even when it is dominated by intellectual tendency and motive, cannot really live and work by intellect alone; it is not created nor wholly shaped by reason and judgment, but is an intuitive seeing and an inspired hearing. But intuition and inspiration are not only spiritual in their essence, they are the characteristic means of all spiritual vision and utterance; they are rays from a greater and intenser Light than the tempered clarity of our intellectual understanding. They may be turned fruitfully to a use which is not their last or most intrinsic purpose,—used, in poetry, to give a deeper and more luminous force and a heightened beauty to the perceptions of outward life or to the inner but still surface movements of emotion and passion or the power of thought to perceive certain individual and universal truths which enlighten or which raise to a greater meaning the sensible appearances of the inner and outer life of Nature and man. But every power in the end finds itself drawn towards its own proper home and own high-
est capacity, and the spiritual faculties of hearing and seeing must climb at last to the expression of things spiritual and eternal and their power and working in temporal things and must find in that interpretation their own richest account, largest and most satisfied action, purest acme of native capacity. An ideal and spiritual poetry revealing the spirit in itself and in things, the unseen in the seen or above and behind it, unveiling ranges of existence which the physical mind ignores, pointing man himself to capacities of godhead in being, truth, beauty, power, joy which are beyond the highest of his common or his yet realised values of existence, is the last potentiality of this creative, interpretative power of the human mind. When the eye of the poet has seen life externally or with a more vital inwardness, has risen to the clarities and widenesses of a thought which intimately perceives and understands it, when his word has caught some revealing speech and rhythm of what he has seen, much has been seized, but not the whole possible field of vision; this other and greater realm still remains open for a last transcendence.

In this fourth turn of the evolution of English poetry we get, for the first time in occidental literature, some falling of this higher light upon the poetic mind,—except in so far as the ancient poets had received it through myth and symbol or a religious mystic here and there attempted to give his experience rhythmic and imaginative form. But here there is the first poetic attempt of the intellectual faculty striving at the height of its own development to look beyond its own level directly into the unseen and the unknown and to unveil the ideal truth of its own highest universal conceptions. This was not an inevitable outcome of the age that preceded Wordsworth, Blake and Shelley. For the intellectual endeavour had been in Milton inadequate in range, subtlety and depth, in those who followed paltry, narrow and elegantly null; a new larger endeavour in the same field might have been expected which would
have set before it the aim of a richer, deeper, wider, more curious intellectual humanism, poetic, artistic, many-sided, sounding by the poetic reason the ascertainable truth of God and man and Nature. To that eventually, following the main stream of European thought and culture, English poetry turned for a time in the intellectual fullness of the nineteenth century; that too was more indistinctly the half-conscious drift of the slow transitional movement which intervenes between Pope and Wordsworth. But this movement was obscure, faltering and poor in its achievement; when the greater force came in, the influences that were abroad were those which elsewhere found expression in the revolutionary idealism of the French Revolution and in German transcendentalism and romanticism. Intellectual in their idea and substance, they were in the mind of five or six English poets, each of them a remarkable individuality, carried beyond themselves by the sudden emergence of some half-mystical Celtic turn of the national mind into supra-intellectual sources of inspiration. Insufficiently supported by any adequate spiritual knowledge, unable to find securely the right and native word of their own meaning, these greater tendencies faded away or were lost by the premature end of the poets who might, had they lived, have given them a supreme utterance. But still theirs was the dawn of whose light we shall find the noon in the age now opening before us if its fulfils all its intimations. Blake, Shelley, Wordsworth were first explorers of a new world of poetry other than that of the ancients or of the intermediate poets, which may be the familiar realm of the aesthetic faculty in the future, must be in fact if we are not continually to describe the circle of efflorescence, culmination and decay within the old hardly changing circle.

Certain motives which led up to this new poetry are already visible in the work of the middle eighteenth century. There is, first, a visible attempt to break quite away
from the prison of the formal metrical mould, rhetorical style, limited subject-matter, absence of imagination and vision imposed by the high pontiffs of the pseudo-classical cult. Poets like Gray, Collins, Thomson, Chatterton, Cowper seek liberation by a return to Miltonic blank verse and manner, to the Spenserian form,—an influence which prolonged itself in Byron, Keats and Shelley,—to lyrical movements, but more prominently the classical ode form, or to freer and richer moulds of verse. Some pale effort is made to recover something of the Shakespearian wealth of language or of the softer, more pregnant colour of the pre-Restoration diction and to modify it to suit the intellectualised treatment of thought and life which was now an indispensible element; for the old rich vital utterance was no longer possible, an intellectualised speech had become a fixed and a well-acquired need of a more developed mentality. Romanticism of the modern type now makes its first appearance in the choice of the subjects of poetic interest and here and there in the treatment, though not yet quite in the grain and the spirit. Especially, there is the beginning of a direct gaze of the poetic intelligence and imagination upon life and Nature and of another and a new power in English speech, the poetry of sentiment as distinguished from the inspired voice of sheer feeling or passion. But all these newer motives are only incipient and unable to get free expression because there is still a a heavy weight of the past intellectual tradition. Rhetoric yet loads the style or, when it is avoided, still the purer tension of poetic emotion is not altogether found. Verse form tends to be still rather hard and external or else ineffective in its movement; the native lyric note has not yet returned, but only the rhetorical stateliness of the ode, not lyricised as in Keats and Shelley, or else lyrical forms managed with only an outward technique but without any cry in them. Romanticism is still rather of the intellect han in the temperament, sentiment runs thinly and feeble
and is weighted with heavy intellectual turns. Nature and life and things are seen accurately as objects and forms, but not with any vision, emotion or penetration into the spirit behind them. Many of the currents which go to make up the great stream of modern poetry are beginning to run in thin tricklings, but still in a hard and narrow bed. There is no sign of the sudden uplifting that after a few decades was to come as if upon the sudden wings of a splendid moment.

In Burns these new-born imprisoned spirits break out from their bounds and get into a free air of natural, direct and living reality, find a straightforward speech and a varied running or bounding movement of freedom. This is the importance of this solitary voice from the north in the evolution, apart from the intrinsic merits of his poetry. His work has its limitations; the language is often too intellectualised to give the lyrical emotion, though it comes from the frank, unartificial and sturdy intellect of a son of the soil; the view on life is close, almost too close to give the deeper poetic or artistic effect, but it deals much with outsides and surfaces and the commonnesses and realisms of action, sometimes only does it suggest to us the subtler something which gives lyrical poetry not only its form and lilt and its power to stir,—all these he has,—but its more moving inmost appeal. Nevertheless, Burns has in him the things which are most native to the poetry of our modern times; he brings in the new naturalness, the nearness of the fuller poetic mind, intellectualised, informed with the power of clear reflective thought, to life and nature, the closely observing eye, the stirring force of great general ideas, the spirit of revolt and self-assertion, the power of personality and the free play of individuality, the poignant sentiment, sometimes even a touch of the psychological subtlety. These things are in him fresh, strong, initial as in a forerunner impelled by the first breath of the coming air, but not in that finished possession of the new mo-
tives which is to be the greatness of the future mastersingers. That we begin to get first in Wordsworth. His was the privilege of the earliest initiation.

This new poetry has six great voices who fall naturally in spite of their pronounced differences into pairs, Wordsworth and Byron, Blake and Coleridge, Shelley and Keats. Byron sets out with a strangely transformed echo of the past intellectualism, is carried beyond it by the elemental force of his personality, has even one foot across the borders of the spiritual, but never quite enters into that kingdom. Wordsworth breaks away with deliberate purpose from the past, forces his way into this new realm, but finally sinks under the weight of the narrower intellectual tendencies which he carries with him into its amplitudes. Blake and Coleridge open magical gates, pass by flowering side lanes with hedges laden with supernatural blooms into a middle world whence their voices come to us ringing with an unearthly melody. In Shelley the idealism and spiritual impulse rise to almost giddy heights in a luminous ether and are lost there, unintelligible to contemporary humanity, only now beginning to return to us with their message. Keats, the youngest and in many directions the most gifted of these initiators, enters the secret temple of ideal Beauty, but has not time to find his way into the deepest mystic sanctuary. In him the spiritual seeking stops abruptly short and prepares to fall away down a rich sensuous incline to a subsequent poetry which turns from it to seek poetic Truth or pleasure through the senses and an artistic or curiously observing or finely psychologizing intellectualism. This dawn has no noon, hardly even a morning.
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CONTENTS

THE LIFE DIVINE .................. Aurobindo Ghose
Ch. LIII. Conclusion

ESSAYS ON THE GITA ................ A. G.
Works Devotion and Knowledge

THE SYNTHESIS OF YOGA ............ A. G.
Ch. L. The Integral Perfection

THE ETERNAL WISDOM ............... Paul Richard
The Mastery of Thought
The Mastery of Self

IS INDIA CIVILISED (2)

THE FUTURE POETRY
The Movement of Modern Literature (1)
The Life Divine

CHAPTER LIII

CONCLUSION.

The conscient aim of the spiritual idealism implanted in the human being, the aspiration to which a secret witness in him constantly bears witness despite the contradictions of the world and the doubts and denials of material reason, to achieve out of this half light of our human and mortal existence that which waits concealed in it, God, freedom, light, immortality, assumes, when we scrutinise being to discover its source and justification, this complexion and this significance. It is to live in the immortality of the spirit, though manifested in a mortal body, in the conscious infinity of the divine being expressed in a mounting harmony of the finite becoming, in the perfection of the divine nature, light, power, unity, bliss, while keeping the mould of a transfigured humanity. Growth out of the materialised into a spiritualised, out of a mental into a gnostic being is the conversion which is the crown of our human evolution.

This transfiguration would be indeed impossible, as our materialised reason imagines, if these things were in fact something alien and quite opposite to our nature. Or if God were all and man nothing, the infinite and the finite two opposites, this light a thing beyond the range of our mortal ignorance, freedom only to be acquired by self-extinction, immortality a disappearance of the human in-
dividual into the Indeterminable, this hope would be for ever withheld and life could have no divine fulfilment. In one case the materialistic, in the other the ascetic refusal would be justified. But we see that what we aspire to, is all the time the Reality within us which is masked by our humanity, but of which it is, too, ever pregnant and bound in the urge of its nature to deliver this secret content it holds within it. This is not a growing into something utterly other than what we are, but a self-finding and a self-becoming. We have to outgrow much in order to arrive at it, to change most of our present self-formulations, but not to reject, destroy or extinguish anything essential in our being; for all things that we are, are in their substance material of that into which we have to grow, though their forms are imperfect, at present often perverse, constantly mutable and perishable. That which we are to evolve is already contained within that which we have evolved; from the beginning the divine Spirit of which our souls are the eternal manifestations, was there in the base of all being and rises to be revealed more and more as our consciousness elevates itself towards its own summits. The transfiguration to which we aspire, is not a violent and paradoxical mystery, but the very law of our nature and the inevitable high point to which the line it is following rises. What appears to us as mortal existence, is self-impelled by its own nature towards God and immortality. Ignorance alone, obscuration of self-knowledge, conceals this fact from our mentality.

God is all, but man is not therefore nothing; rather this soul in the form of humanity is of the divine essence and conceals in itself the divine nature. If the One alone exists, it follows, not that all is non-existent, but that all in the Many are the One, and each in the Many can come to the knowledge and possession of that truth which is secret and eternal in his own being. Matter is in its first appearance a mask, but it has within it the eternal Cons-
ciousness which supports and compels its phenomena, is even in the nescience a dense body of the Spirit. Life is in its present appearance a precarious struggle to exist; but in this struggle is the power of an eternal existence, and its strife and effort are a constant motion towards self-awareness, are a labour of delivery of the great self-aware unity of which life is the outward pulse of self-seeking. Mind is in appearance an ignorance striving towards knowledge, but never in firm and intimate possession of it; but this ignorance is in its nature an awaking to self-awareness of which life is the effort; it is a first term of it only and to be outgrown and transcended in the form, but that transcending fulfils and does not annul all for which mind is striving. Man is the instrument of this conversion by which mind shall discover the supramental being of which it is the broken and deflected radiation, deliver into freedom the power of which Life is the outward stir, realise in a greater sight and being the Spirit of which Matter is a mutable body. To grow into the Godhead which in his progressive becoming is growing within him, is his destiny.

Light, knowledge, supramental gnosis is the power that can effect the conversion, a light that is in its force the primal, original, divine power and the order of a divine harmony. This light is not something belonging only to another world and another plane of existence, it is secret in all the nescience of material Nature and the ignorance of Mind. It is that by which universal existence maintains and develops the law of being in all things from the movement of the atom to the action of the gods. It is the self-knowledge of the self-aware self-existent Being in all which ever evolves itself out of itself and determines everything according to the self-effective idea in the reality of its power of being. In material Nature it operates by what seems an inconscient mechanical force groping towards ends of which it is unaware, but the self-dispositions of that force are inwardly the infallible compulsion.
of this real-idea of the infinite self-conscient Being working through self-imposed limitations. In Mind its rays begin to emerge and to light up the outward obscurity, enlarging at the same time the power and range of its operations; but because the rays are divided, superficial, still work by a limited and therefore a separated, a diverging and converging operation, they do not meet in the unity of the Light where this ignorance of mind becomes the light of Gnosis. The marshalling and gathering of them into an integral action and illumination is the way of this conversion; for all action of mind, however broken, deflected, distorted, limited, misleading, yet contains within it a truth of the light of being which is by the ideal conversion released from misprision and all is by a mutual enlightenment reconciled in the spiritual harmony. There knowledge is delivered from its conflicts and delivered too from the dissonances between knowledge and will, even as will too is delivered from the war of our desires, emotions and passions. Knowledge and will become one in a harmonious plenitude; for consciousness and force are twin aspects of the Being and are biune in his spiritual realities. But this conversion comes by a transcendence of mind, because the height at which it can be effected, is beyond our present level of consciousness, is, as we say, supraconscient to our normal mentality. Therefore from mind we have to grow into the supermind which is the native light of the Spirit. But this secret supermind is still within and not without us; as it has worked in the nescience and developed from it mind, so when it is ready in man it will develop its own native lustre and action.

Freedom is of the spirit, a free being, a free light of knowledge, a free will and power, free delight of existence. Man seems to be bound and denied all these things or only to attain to partial representations of them; he appears bound by his limited mind, life and body and by all those reactions to the impact of the surrounding force of being
which we call the dualities, bound by his ego, bound by
ignorance, bound by incapacity, bound to suffering, at-
taining always only to a partial being, a partial and doubt-
ful knowledge, a partial capacity and effectivity, a partial,
outward and precarious joy of life and mind. But this is
not because there are two souls, one the free spirit con-
trolling Nature and the other the soul of man bound by
Nature. An eternal spirit is there in man, free always and
fulfilling itself in him by its own spontaneous self-evolu-
tion; for all is a self-aware Existence acting and mani-
ifesting itself by its own power and it is its own free self-
knowledge and will which have determined the law of its
movements. But this inner reality of the spirit's freedom
is held back behind the veil and is covered up by the
ignorance which is in its cause and nature a superficial li-
ving in finite mind, life and body. The Divine is Sachchi-
dananda, an infinite existence and an infinite conscious-
ness and power and an infinite delight, and infinity is
freedom. To live consciously in the finite alone is to live
in limitation and therefore in bondage: finite conscious
being brings in ego, finite mind imposes ignorance, finite
will incapacity, finite life entails suffering, finite body death
and dissolution. But this is only superficial and persists on-
ly by the soul's absorption in the outward which puts our rea-
lar being behind us and by bringing self-forgetfulness puts
a veil between the finite and the infinite. By drawing back
again from that ignorant absorption we can recover amply
our own infinite spiritual being, its consciousness and de-
light, and dwell within unaffected by our limitations of
mind, life and body; but by conversion of mind into super-
mind we can bring too the power of the spirit to change the
values of mind, life and body, so that the finite in which
outwardly we live becomes more and more a conscious
representation of the divine being. Thus we can arise out
of our apparent bondage into our real freedom, a double
aspect, self-existent freedom and integral self-possession
and mastery, svārājya, sāmrājya.

Immortality is this status in the infinite spiritual consciousness. It is the realised immortality of our being, while survival of death is only the result of that immortality in the becoming. Both are eternal truths of our nature, the one a timeless truth, the other an appearance of its truth in time. What we call life and death, are only two gates of our passage through the becoming by which we constantly enter into terrestrial life from other planes of existence and pass out of it again to a different poise in other realms of our being. This recurring movement is supposed by many to be the whole knot of our bondage and the escape from it the whole sense of freedom and real immortality. But the real immortality like the real freedom is a change of consciousness and has nothing to do with assuming or not assuming a body,—even as the Infinite is always free and immortal even though it assumes innumerable bodies and finite appearances. The becoming, the worlds, the assumption of birth are not a bondage to him because he is eternally aware of his own timeless infinite being; only by our living in the surface separative consciousness of the finite alone do these things become in seeming a bondage. But the spirit within all is eternal and immortal and regards its becoming only as its temporal manifestations; to attain to this consciousness is in itself immortality, the assumption of birth becomes then only a temporal manifestation of the spirit, a play of the infinite with finite values, ignorance itself only an indulgence of its self-knowledge in temporal self-limitation. It has no binding power upon the soul in its freedom.

To arrive at this divinity, light, freedom, immortality is to break out of the narrow prison of the ego. Ego is only a limiting mental misrepresentation of the divine Individual; it persists so long as we identify our being, consciousness and delight of being with its outward signs of separative mind, life and body. Being is the transcendent
Sachchidananda who is self-manifest in universal harmonies of his existence through his own multiplicity. The divine individual mirrors this truth of Sachchidananda in his nature, possesses it in his spirit. But in our present nature it is concealed, clouded over by our separation of mind from self-knowledge. Ego is the self-formulation of our consciousness in this settled ignorance; so long as we live in ego, we cannot possess the truth of our being in the Divine. We have to raise our inner existence out of the egoistic formulation in which we now live and become the divine individual who arrives at a oneness with the transcendent Divinity and by that oneness finds himself too one being with all, universalised, not separated at any point of his being from the universal or at strife with it, as we now feel ourselves to be, but a centre and a continent of all the universal harmony. For in ego itself, as in all these provisional errors of mind, there is a truth; it is the truth of the divine individual, the self-assertion of the One in the many: only the separative formulation of it is an error. Therefore the condition of immortality and freedom is neither a disappearance of the individual into the universality of being nor an annihilation in some indeterminate existence: it is the possession of Sachchidananda in oneself and the expression of him in the universe. That is not utterly possible in its fullness on the mental level, for it is the nature of mind to emphasise separation and, where the supporting force of separativeness is taken away from it, it tends to lose itself in indeterminate unity. But supermind is the eternal link between the being of the One and his manifold action in the Many. To be the divine and universal individual living in the light of the supramental gnosis is therefore the foundation of the spiritual perfection. It is that foundation of the Truth of which the Vedic seers have spoken, ritasya budhinam.

But to live in this knowledge and not in the mental ignorance, to possess this large luminous existence which
is our true being, is to change altogether all the values of our life, to develop a new and real harmony of the Spirit and its natural members, which now we altogether miss or glimpse only in very dim partial approximations which, when we rise nearer to the Truth, appear themselves as if far-off shadowy reflections of it, misprisions of its sense, mistranslations of its text of light. It is to live in a greater Truth of being which brings with it right self-knowledge whose every ray is a self-revelation, right power of our being whose every action is a perfect creation, right joy of being whose every throb calls a pure wave of the self-existent bliss. It is the falsehood of the separative mind which is the genesis of all that we call error, sin, discord and suffering. To live in the truth of being is to live in knowledge, light, harmony, joy. It is to live not to ourselves in the ego, but for God in ourselves and for God in man and in the integral harmony of the one universal Spirit. Our present way of living is a false stress upon an outward and partial term of the cosmic being, the outward material, vital, mental movement, which so stressed and exaggerated creates these notes of discord, but brought back into its right place and subordination to the main theme will become instead a recurrent strain in the spiritual harmony. But the long persistence of the discord does not preclude the emergence of the greater and inner concord. Its sense and truth live behind in that which we call the ideal; but this ideal is not a non-existent which has to be created; it is a greater reality than our present actualities which are only at their best an uncertain search for the ideal perfection. It is falsified in our superficial conscious, our external living; there it has to be corrected; it is in the field of the error and the imperfection that the truth has to be found and the perfection accomplished. To do that we have to discover the greater truth of our being and to work it out in our human nature and external living.

This self-discovery and conversion of our nature
seem at first sight so distant from all our actualities that even to the intellectual mind of man the thinker and still more to the material mind of man the animal they appear either impossible to our nature or so difficult and remote as to amount to a practical impossibility. But this conversion is not impossible; as we have seen, it is a necessary consequence of the nature of being and of our being; especially it is not impossible to man because he is that growing self-conscious soul on earth which is on the verge of the secret. If by a certain part of his nature, the lower man, he is constantly a prisoner of his imperfection, by another part of it, the higher manhood, he is as persistently the pilgrim of perfection. If he is bound by his lower nature, he is rather self-prisoned than imprisoned by any ineluctable necessity. All that is highest, all that must eventually become strongest in him by the accumulative force of his urge of evolution, demands and tends towards an ideal perfection, a true existence, a divine living. All his intellectual being seeks after a perfect and integral truth, all his ethical being after a divine nature and ideal life, all his aesthetic being after a universal and integral beauty; all that is best in his emotional being gropes after love, joy and unity and knows that so only can it find its perfect satisfaction; even his outward dynamic and vital being knows dimly that it must strive after a greater, a more perfect, a more harmonious individual and communal life. To find the way and the whole way, still more to tread it entirely and faithfully is his difficulty. But there is in him always a religious being, a spiritual power of his nature which contains in itself the secret and can develop the faith and the will that he needs for the discovery and the execution.

Difficulty there is, because of man's complexity and infinity which, if it contains in itself the integral possibility of the goal, multiples also the possibilities of deviation upon the way. But in the end the difficulty resolves
itself into two adverse tendencies, one of his lower nature, a downward attraction to what he has been and still partially is, one of his higher nature, too much attachment to what he has become and satisfaction with partial achievements. It is the joys of the way, useful in themselves as a support to his strength on the journey, that hold him, when clung to with too much attachment, back from the splendour of his goal. To know himself for a pilgrim of the heights called on to press ever upwards, to know the principle of his life as a constant self-becoming and self-exceeding of which each step is a present form out of which something higher than it has to be delivered, is the sign of his election. This constant upward will is his true heroism, his true greatness, his sane and sound asceticism. To discover more and more highly and widely the goal and the way his complex and ascending powers of knowledge were given him, to follow it more and more strenuously and indomitably his force of will and infinite aspiration. The spirit within him supports him by its universal delight, by its growing largeness in his consciousness, by its inexhaustible treasuries of will and capacity, by all the vastness of its infinite being. When he tears away the veils of the spirit, when he sees God and delivers his outward nature into the hands of the divinity within, what is now impossible will be revealed as his one possibility and his eternal certainty; his obscure and difficult journey will become a rapid and luminous ascension. Then will he climb to that fulfilment of the apparent and discovery and possession of the real Man which is the meaning of supermanhood.
Essays on the Gita

WORKS, DEVOTION AND KNOWLEDGE.

The Divine is supracosmic, the eternal Parabrahman who supports with his timeless and spaceless being all this cosmic manifestation of his own being and nature in Space and Time; he is the supreme spirit who ensouls the forms and movements of the universe, Paramatman; he is the supernal Person of whom all self and nature, being and becoming, are the self-conception and self-energising, Purushottama; he is the ineffable Lord of all existence who by his spiritual control of his manifested Power in Nature unrolls the cycles of the world and the natural evolution of beings in the cycles, Parameshwara. From him the Jiva, individual spirit, soul in Nature, existent by his being, conscious by the light of his consciousness, empowered to knowledge, to will and to action by his will and power, enjoying existence by his divine enjoyment of the cosmos, has come here into the cosmic rounds.

The inner soul in man is a partial self-manifestation of the Divine, self-limited for the works of his Nature in the universe, prakritir jiva-bhūta. In his spiritual essence he is one with the Divine; in the works of the divine Nature he is one with him, yet has a difference and relations with God in Nature and with God above cosmic Nature;
in the works of the lower appearance of Nature he seems by ignorance and egoistic separation to be other than he and to think, will, act, enjoy in his own separate being and consciousness for his own egoistic enjoyment of his existence in the universe and its relations with other embodied beings. But in fact all his being, thinking, willing, action and enjoyment are only a reflection,—egoistic and perverted so long as he is in the ignorance,—of the Divine's being, thought, will, action, enjoyment of Nature. To get back to this truth of himself is his means of salvation, his door of escape from subjection to the lower Nature. Since he is a spirit, a soul with a nature of reason and mind, of will, of emotion, sensation, seeking for the delight of being, it is by turning all these powers Godwards that this return to the truth of himself can be made entirely possible. By the knowledge of the supreme Self and Brahman, by love and adoration of the supreme Person, by subjection of his will and works to the supreme Lord of existence, he passes from the lower to the divine Nature, casts from him the thought and will and works of the ignorance, thinks, wills, works in his divine being as soul of that Soul, power and light of that Spirit, enjoys the existence of the Divine and no longer only these outward touches, masks, appearances. So divinely living, so directing his whole being Godwards, he is taken up into the truth of the supreme existence.

To know Vasudeva as all and live in that knowledge is the secret. He knows him as the Self, immutable, containing all as well as immanent in all things, and he draws back from the confused and perturbed whirl of the lower nature to dwell in the immutable calm and light of the self-existent spirit. There he realises a constant unity with the self of the Divine present in all beings and supporting all cosmic movement and action and phenomenon, looks upward from the eternal unchanging spiritual hypostasis of the mutable universe to the eternal supracosmic Rea-
lity. He knows him as the divine Inhabitant in all beings, the Lord in the heart of man, and removes the veil between his natural being and this inner spiritual Master of his being; so he makes his will, thought, action one in knowledge and an ever present realisation with that of the indwelling Divinity, sees and adores him in all, changes the whole action of his human to the highest meaning of the divine nature. He knows him as the source and the substance of all that is around him in the universe; all things that are he sees as at once in their appearance the veils and in their secret trend the means of self-manifestation of that one unthinkable Reality, everywhere he sees that oneness, Brahman, Purusha, Atman, Vasudeva, the Being that has become all these existences; therefore too all his own inner existence comes into tune, harmony, unity with the Infinite who is now self-revealed in them and all his outer existence turns into an instrumentation of its divine cosmic purpose. From the Self he looks up to the Parabrahman whose self here is the one existence; from the divine Inhabitant in all he looks up to that supernal Person who in his supreme status is beyond all habitation; from the Lord manifested in the universe he looks up to the Supreme who exceeds all his manifestation. Through this knowledge and upward vision and aspiration he arises to that to which he thus turns with an all-compelling integrality.

From this integral turning of the soul Godwards arises the Gita’s synthesis of knowledge, works and devotion. To know God thus integrally is to know him as One in the self and all manifestation and beyond all manifestation; but even so to know him is not enough unless it is accompanied by an uplifting of the heart and soul Godwards, a one-pointed and at the same time an all-embracing love and adoration and aspiration. Indeed the knowledge which is not accompanied with this uplifting, is no true knowledge, for it can be only an intellectual
seeing and appreciation: the vision of God brings infallibly the adoration and passionate seeking of the Divine, of the Divine in his self-existent being, of the Divine in ourselves, of the Divine in all beings. To know with the intellect is simply to understand and may be an effective starting-point,—or, too, may not be, if there is no sincerity in the knowledge, no urge towards inner realisation, no power upon the soul: for that means that the brain has externally understood, but inwardly the soul has seen nothing. True knowledge is to know with the being, and when the being is touched by the light, then it arises to embrace that which is seen, to possess, to shape that in itself and itself to it, to become one with it. Knowledge in this sense is an awakening to identity and since being realises itself by consciousness and delight, by love, by possession and oneness with whatever of itself it has seen, knowledge awakened must have an inevitable impulse towards this realisation. Here that which is known is not an externalised object, but the divine Purusha, self and lord of all that we are. Therefore an all-seizing delight in him and love and adoration of him must be the inevitable result and is the very soul of this knowledge. Yet this adoration is no isolated seeking of the heart, but an offering of the whole being; therefore it takes also the form of a sacrifice, a giving of all our works to him, a surrender of all our active inward and outward being in its every subjective, as too in its every objective movement. All the subjective workings move in him and seek him, the Lord and Self, as their source and goal; all the objective workings move out towards him in the world and make him their object,—a service of God in the world of which the controlling power is the Divinity within in whom we are one self with all in the world, both world and self, Nature and the soul in her enlightened by the consciousness of the transcendent Purushottama. So comes the synthesis of mind and heart and will in the one self and spi-
rit, of knowledge, love and works in this integral union, this embracing God-realisation, this divine Yoga.

But to arrive at this movement at all is difficult for the ego-bound soul, to arrive at its victorious and harmonious integrality is not easy even when we have set finally our feet on the way. Mortal mind is bewildered by its ignorant reliance upon veils and appearances; it sees only the outward human body, human mind, human way of living; it catches no glimpse of the Divinity who is lodged in the human form. It ignores the divinity within itself and cannot see it in other men, not even though the Divine manifest himself in humanity in Avatar and Vibhuti; it is still blind, ignores or despises the veiled Godhead, *avajánanti mām mūḍhā mānushām tanum áciritam*. And if it ignores it in the living creature, still less can it see it in the objective world which it looks on outside its prison of separative ego through the barred windows of the finite mind. It does not see God in the world, does not know of the supreme Divinity who is master of all this world of existences and dwells within them, by the vision of whom all in this world becomes divine and the soul itself awakens to its own inherent divinity. What it does see readily and what it attaches itself to with passion is only the life of the ego hunting after finite things for their own sake and for the satisfaction of the earthly hunger of the intellect, body, senses. Those who have given themselves up to this outward drive of the mentality, fall into the hands of the lower nature, cling to it and make it their foundation. They become a prey to the nature of the Rakshasa in man who sacrifices everything to a violent and inordinate satisfaction of his separate ego and who makes that the dark godhead of his will and thought and action and enjoyment: or they are hurried onward in a fruitless cycle by the arrogant self-will, self-sufficient thought, self-regarding action, self-satisfied and yet ever unsatisfied appetite of enjoyment of the Asuric nature. But to live persis-
tently in this separative ego consciousness and make that ever the centre of all our activities is to miss altogether the true self-awareness. The charm it throws upon the misled instruments of our being is an enchantment which chains life to a profitless circling; all its hope, action, knowledge are vain things when judged by the divine and eternal standard, for it shuts out the great hope, excludes the liberating action, the illuminating knowledge. It is a knowledge which sees the phenomenon but misses the truth of the phenomenon, a blind hope which chases after the transient but misses the eternal which alone gives the transient its value, an action whose every profit is soon annulled by loss and amounts to a perennial labour of Sysiphus.*

The great-souled who open themselves to the light and largeness of the diviner nature of which man is capable, are alone on the path that leads to liberation and perfection. The growth of the god in man is man's proper business, and the steadfast turning of this lower Asuric and Rakhsatic into the divine nature the meaning of human life. As this growth increases, the soul comes to see the greater, the real truth of its existence. The eye opens to the Godhead in man, the Godhead in the world, it sees and comes to know the infinite Spirit, the imperishable being from whom all existences originate and who exists in all and by him and in him all exist. Therefore when this seeing, this knowledge seizes on the soul, its whole life aspiration becomes a love and adoration of the Infinite, the Divine, in which the mind attaches itself singly to the eternal, the spiritual, the living universal Reality, values nothing but for its sake, delights only in the all-blissful Being. All the word and all the thought become a hymning of the universal greatness, Light, Beauty, Power, Truth that has revealed itself to the human spirit and a worship of the one supreme Soul and Person; all the
stress of the inner being becomes a form now of spiritual endeavour and aspiration to possess the Divine in the soul and realise the Divine in the nature; all life becomes a constant Yoga and unification of the Divine and the human being. This is the manner of the integral devotion, a single uplifting of the whole being and nature through sacrifice by the dedicated heart to the eternal Purushottama. *

Those who lay a greater stress on knowledge, arrive to the same point by the increasing power of the vision of the Divine on the soul; theirs is the sacrifice of knowledge and by knowledge they come to the adoration of the Purushottama, jñāna-yajnena yajanto mām upāsato. This knowledge is a knowledge filled with Bhakti, because it is an integral knowledge, not a knowing of the Supreme merely as an abstract unity or an indeterminable Absolute; it is a seeking and knowing of the Supreme and the Universal, of the Infinite in his infinity and of the Infinite in all that is finite, of the One in his oneness and of the One in all his several principles, forces, forms, here there, everywhere, timelessly and in time, multiply, multitudinously, in all aspects of his Godhead, in all beings, with all his million universal faces fronting us through the world, ekatwena prthaktwena bahudhā viśvatomukham. This knowledge becomes an adoration, a devotion, a self-giving, an integral self-offering to that which is known, because it is the knowledge of a Spirit, a Being, a supreme and universal Soul which claims all that we are even as it lavishes on us when we approach it all the treasures of its infinite delight of being. †

So too the way of works becomes an adoration, a devotion, a self-giving because it becomes an entire sacrifice of all the activities of our being to the one Purushottama. The outward Vedic sacrifice is a powerful symbol, effec-

* IX 13.14
† IX 15
tive for slighter though still for divine aims, but the real sacrifice is the inner giving in which the Divine himself becomes the ritual action, the sacrifice and every single circumstance of the sacrifice, because all its working and forms are the self-ordinance and self-expression of the Divine in its own power mounting by our aspiration towards the source of that power; the Divine himself becomes the flame and the offering, because the flame is the Godward will and in that will is God himself within us, and the offering too is form and force of the Divine in our nature and being and all that has been thus received from him is given up to the service and the worship of its own Reality,—the Divine himself becomes the sacred mantra, because it is the Light of his being that expresses itself in the thought directed Godward and is effective in the revealing word that enshrines the thought and in the rhythm that repeats for man the rhythms of the Eternal. For here the Divine himself is the Veda and that which is made known by the Veda; he is both the knowledge and the object of the knowledge; the Rik, the Sama, the Yajur, the word of illumination which lights up the mind with the rays of knowledge, the word of the power in the right ordaining of works, the word of the calm attaining of the fulfilled divine desire of the spirit, are themselves the Brahman, the Godhead; for they are the divine consciousness revealing its Light, the divine Power effecting its will, the divine Ananda bringing the equal fulfilment of the spiritual delight of being. All word and thought are outflowering of the great OM, the Eternal manifested in the form of sensible things, manifested in that conscious play of creative self-conception of which they are the shapes, manifest behind in a self-gathered superconscious power of that Infinite which compels all the rest and is their original unity, self-existent above all manifestation in supernal being. This sacrifice is therefore at once works and adoration and knowledge. *

* IX 16, 17
To the soul that thus knows, adores, offers up all its workings in the great self-giving of its being to the Eternal, God is all and all is God. It knows God as the Father of this world who nourishes and cherishes and watches over his children; it knows God as the divine Mother who holds us in her bosom, lavishes upon us the sweetness of her love and fills the universe with her forms of beauty. It knows him as the first Creator from whom has originated all that originates and creates in space and time; it knows him as the Master and ordainer of all universal and of every individual dispensation. For him who thus knows and gives himself to the Eternal, the world and fate and eventuality have no terrors and cannot bewilder him with the aspect of suffering and evil. God to the soul that sees is his path and God is his goal, a path in which there is no self-losing and a goal to which his guided steps are surely arriving. He is the master of all being, the upholder of his nature, husband of the Nature-Soul, lover, cherisher, the witness of all his thoughts and works; he is his house and country, the refuge of all his seekings and desires, the wise and close and benignant friend of all beings. All birth and status and destruction of apparent existences is to him the one Divine bringing forward, maintaining and withdrawing his temporal self-manifestations; he is the imperishable seed and origin of all that seem to be born and perish and their eternal resting-place in their non-manifestation. It is he that burns in the heat of the sun and the flame; it is he who is the power of the giving of the plenty of the rain and of its withholding; he is all this physical Nature and her workings. Death is his mask and immortality is his self-revelation. All that we call existent is he and all that we look upon as non-existent still is in the Infinite and is the Divine.
Nothing but the highest knowledge and adoration and an entire self-giving to this Highest who is all, will bring us to the Highest. Other religion, other worship, other knowledge, other seeking has always its fruits, but there are transient and limited to the enjoyment of divine symbols and appearances. There are always open for our following according to the balance of our mentality an outer and an inmost knowledge, an outer and an inmost seeking. Outward religion seeks an outward deity; its devotees purify their conduct from sin and attain to an active ethical righteousness in order to satisfy the fixed law, the Shastra, the external dispensation; they perform the ceremonial symbol of the outer communion; but their object is to secure after the mortal pleasure and pain of earthly life the bliss of heavenly worlds, a greater happiness than earth can give but still a personal and mundane enjoyment though in a larger world than the field of this limited and suffering terrestrial being. What they aspire to, to that they attain; for material existence and earthly being are not the whole scope of our personal becoming or the whole formula of the cosmos. Other worlds there are of a larger felicity, swargarlokam viçālam. Thus the Vedic ritualist of old learned the exoteric sense of the triple Veda, purified himself from sin, drank the wine of communion with the gods and sought by sacrifice and good deeds the rewards of heaven. This firm belief in and seeking of a diviner existence beyond secures to the soul in its passing the strength to attain to the joys of heaven on which its faith and seeking were centred; but the return to mortal existence imposes itself because the true aim of that existence has not been found and realised. Here and not elsewhere the highest Godhead has to be found, the soul's divine nature developed out of the imperfect physical human nature and through unity with God and man and universe the whole large truth of being discovered and lived. That completes the long cycle of our becoming and admits
us to a supreme being; that is the opportunity given to
the soul by the human birth and, until that is accom-
plished, it cannot cease. The God-lover advances constantly
towards this ultimate necessity of our being through a con-
centrated love and adoration by which he makes the supre-
me and universal Divine the whole object of his living,—
not either egoistic terrestrial satisfaction or the celestial
worlds,—and the whole object of his thought and his
seeing. To see nothing but the Divine, to be in every mo-
ment in union with him, to love him in all beings and have
the delight of him in all things is the whole condition of his
spiritual existence. This God-vision does not divorce from
life, nor does he miss anything of the fullness of life; for
God himself becomes the spontaneous bringer to him of
all good, yoga-kṣema vahāmyaham. Joy of heaven and the
joy of earth are only a small shadow of his possessions;
for as he grows into the Divine, the Divine too flows out
upon him with all the light, power and joy of infinite
existence.*

Ordinary religion is a sacrifice to partial godheads,
other than the integral Divinity. Taking its direct examples
from the old Vedic religion on its exoteric side as it then
had developed, the Gita describes this outward worship as
a sacrifice to other godheads, anvya-devatāḥ, to the gods,
or to the divinised Ancestors, or to elemental powers and
beings, devān, pitrīn, bhūtāni. Men consecrate their life
and works ordinarily to partial powers or aspects of the
Divine as they see or conceive them ensouling things in
Nature and man or else reflecting their own humanity. If
they do this with faith, then their faith is justified; for the
Divine accepts whatever symbol, form or conception of
himself is present to the mind of the worshipper, yam
yāṁ tanum śraddhayā archati, as it is said elsewhere,—
and meets him according to his faith. All sincere religious
faith and practice is really a seeking after the one supreme and universal Being; for he is the master of all man's sacrifice and askesis and enjoyer of his effort and aspiration. However small or low the form of the worship, however limited the idea of the godhead, however restricted the giving, the faith, the effort to get behind the veil of one's own ego-worship and limitation by material Nature, it yet forms a thread of connection between the soul of man and the All-soul and there is a response. Still the response, the fruit of the adoration and offering is according to the knowledge, the faith and the work, and from the point of view of the greater God-knowledge, which alone gives the entire truth of being and becoming, this inferior offering is not given according to the true and highest law of the sacrifice. It is not founded on a knowledge of the supreme Godhead in his integral being and principles of self-manifestation, but attaches itself to external and partial appearances,—na nam abhijānanti tat-twatah. Therefore its sacrifice too is limited in aim, largely egoistic in motive, partial and mistaken in its action and giving, yajanti avidhi-pūrvakam. An entire seeing of the Divine is the condition of an entire conscious self-giving; the rest attains to partial things, but has to fall back from them and return to enlarge itself in a wider God-experience and a greater seeking. But to seek the Divine alone and utterly is to attain to all knowledge and result to which others attain, but not limited by any aspect, though finding the truth of him in all aspects; it takes in all divine being on its way to reach the supreme Purushottama.

This absolute and one-minded self-giving is the devotion which the Gita makes the crown of its synthesis. All action and effort are by this devotion turned into an offering to the supreme and universal Divine; “whatever thou doest, whatever thou enjoyest, whatever thou sacri-

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* IX 23-25
ficest, whatever thou givest, whatever energy of tapasya, of the soul's will or effort, thou puttest forth, make it an offering to Me." Here the least, the slightest circumstance of life, the most insignificant gift out of oneself or what one has, the smallest action assumes divine significance and it becomes an acceptable offering to the Godhead who makes it a means of his possession of the soul and life of the God-lover. The distinctions made by desire and ego disappear; as there is no straining after the good result of one's action, no shunning of unhappy result, but all action and result are given up to the Supreme to whom all work and fruit in the world belong, there is no farther bondage of works: for by an absolute self-giving all egoistic desire disappears from the heart and there is a perfect union between the Divine and the individual soul through an inner renunciation, sannyāśa, of its separate living. All will, all action, all result become that of the Godhead working divinely through the purified and illumined nature and they no longer belong to the limited personality. The finite nature thus self-given becomes a free channel of the Infinite and the soul in its spiritual being returns, uplifted out of the ignorance and the limitation, to its oneness with the Divine. The Divine is the inhabitant in all existences, equal in all, the equal friend, father, mother, creator, lover, supporter of all beings; he is the enemy of none and he is the partial lover of none; none has he cast out, none has he eternally condemned, none has he favoured by any despotism of arbitrary caprice; all at last equally come to him through their circlinings in the ignorance. But it is this adoration which makes the indwelling of God in man and man in God a conscious thing and an engrossing and perfect union. Love and self-giving are the straight and swift way to this divine unity."
The equal Divine present in all of us makes no other preliminary condition, if once this integral self-giving is made in faith, in sincerity, with completeness. All have access to this gate; our mundane distinctions disappear in the temple of the All-lover. There the virtuous man is not preferred, nor the sinner shut out: by this road the Brahman pure of life and exact in observance of the law and the outcaste born from a womb of sin and sorrow and rejected of men have an equal, an open access to the supreme liberation and highest dwelling in the Divine. Man and woman find their equal right before God, for the divine Spirit is no respecter of persons or of social distinctions and restrictions, and can go straight to him without intermediary or shackling condition. "If" says the divine Teacher "even a man of very evil conduct turns to me with a sole and entire love, he must be regarded as a saint, for the settled will of endeavour in him is a right and complete will. Swiftly he becomes a soul of righteousness and obtains the eternal peace." In other words a will of entire self-giving opens wide at once the gates of the spirit and brings in response an entire self-giving of the Divine to the human soul, which at once reshapes it to the law of divine being by a rapid transformation of the lower into the spiritual nature. This will of self-giving by its power forces away the veil between God and man. Those who aspire in their human strength by effort of knowledge or effort of virtue or effort of laborious self-discipline, grow with much anxious difficulty towards the Divine; but when the soul gives up its ego and its works to the Divine, God himself comes to them and takes up their burden. To the ignorant he brings the light of the divine knowledge, to the feeble the power of the divine will, to the sinner the liberation of the divine purity, to the suffering the infinite spiritual joy. Their weakness and the stumblings of their human strength make no difference. "This is my word of promise" cries the voice of
the Godhead to Arjuna, "that he who loveth me shall not perish." Previous effort and preparation, the purity and the holiness of the Brahmin, the enlightened strength of the king-sage great in works and knowledge, have their value, because they make it easier for the imperfect human creature to arrive at this wide seeing and self-giving, but even without this preparation all who take refuge in the divine Lover of man, the Vaishya once preoccupied with the narrowness of wealth-getting and the labour of production, the Shudra hampered by a thousand hard restrictions, woman shut in in her growth by the close circle society has drawn around her self-expansion, those too on whom their past karma has imposed even the very worst of births, the outcaste, the Pariah, the Chandala, find at once the gates of God opening before them. In the spiritual life all the distinctions of which men make so much because they appeal with an oppressive force to the outward mind, cease in the divine equality.

The earthly world preoccupied with the dualities and bound to the immediate transient relations of the hour and the moment, is for man, so long as he dwells here attached to these things and while he accepts the law they impose on him for the law of his life, a world of struggle and sorrow and suffering. The way to liberation is to turn from the outward to the inward, from the appearance created by the material life which lays its burden on the mind, to the divine Reality which waits to manifest itself through the freedom of the spirit. Love of the world, the mask, must change into the love of God, the Truth. Once this secret and inner Godhead is known and is embraced, the whole being and the whole life will undergo a change. In place of the ignorance of the lower Nature absorbed in its outward works and appearances the eye will open to the vision of God everywhere, to the spiritual unity and universality;
sorrow and pain will disappear in the bliss of the All-blissful; weakness and sin will be changed into the all-embracing and all-transforming strength and purity. To make the mind one with the divine consciousness and to make the whole of our emotional being one love of God, to make all our works one sacrifice to the Lord of existence and all our worship and aspiration one adoration of him and self-surrender, to direct the whole self Godwards in an entire union is the way to rise out of a mundane into a divine existence. This is the Gita’s teaching of divine love and devotion, in which knowledge, works and emotional longing become one in a supreme unity.
The Synthesis of Yoga

THE YOGA OF SELF-PERFECTION

CHAPTER L

THE INTEGRAL PERFECTION

A divine perfection of the human being is our aim. We must know then first what are the essential elements that constitute man's total perfection; secondly, what we mean by a divine as distinguished from a human perfection of our being. That man as a being is capable of self-development and of some approach at least to an ideal standard of perfection which his mind is able to conceive, fix before it and pursue, is common ground to all thinking humanity, though it may be only the minority who concern themselves with this possibility as providing the one most important aim of life. But by some the ideal is conceived as a mundane change, by others as a religious conversion.

The mundane perfection is sometimes conceived of as something outward, social, a thing of action, a more rational dealing with our fellow-men and our environment, a better and more efficient citizenship and discharge of duties, a better, richer, kindlier and happier way of living, with a more just and more harmonious associated en-
joyment of the opportunities of existence. By others again a more inner and subjective ideal is cherished, a clarifying and raising of the intelligence, will and reason, a heightening and ordering of power and capacity in the nature, a nobler ethical, a richer aesthetic, a finer emotional, a much healthier and better-governed vital and physical being. Sometimes one element is stressed, almost to the exclusion of the rest; sometimes, in wider and more well-balanced minds, the whole harmony is envisaged as a total perfection. A change of education and social institutions is the outward means adopted or an inner self-training and development is preferred as the true instrumentation. Or the two aims may be clearly united, the perfection of the inner individual, the perfection of the outer living.

But the mundane aim takes for its field the present life and its opportunities; the religious aim on the contrary fixes before it the self-preparation for another existence after death, its commonest ideal is some kind of pure sainthood, its means a conversion of the imperfect or sinful human being by divine grace or through obedience to a law laid down by a scripture or else given by a religious founder. The aim of religion may include a social change, but it is then a change brought about by the acceptance of a common religious ideal and way of consecrated living, a brotherhood of the saints, a theocracy or kingdom of God reflecting on earth the kingdom of heaven.

The object of our synthetic Yoga must, in this respect too as in its other parts, be more integral and comprehensive, embrace all these elements or these tendencies of a larger impulse of self-perfection and harmonise them or rather unify, and in order to do that successfully it must seize on a truth which is wider than the ordinary religious and higher than the mundane principle. All life is a secret Yoga, an obscure growth of Nature towards the discovery and fulfilment of the divine principle hidden in her which becomes progressively less obscure, more self-con-
scient and luminous, more self-possessed in the human being by the opening of all his instruments of knowledge, will, action, life to the Spirit within him and in the world. Mind, life, body, all the forms of our nature are the means of this growth, but they find their last perfection only by opening out to something beyond them, first, because they are not the whole of what man is, secondly, because that other something which he is, is the key of his completeness and brings a light which discovers to him the whole high and large reality of his being.

Mind is fulfilled by a greater knowledge of which it is only a half-light, life discovers its meaning in a greater power and will of which it is the outward and as yet obscure functioning, body finds its last use as an instrument of a power of being of which it is a physical support and material starting-point. They have all themselves first to be developed and find out their ordinary possibilities; all our normal life is a trying of these possibilities and an opportunity for this preparatory and tentative self-training. But life cannot find its perfect self-fulfilment till it opens to that greater reality of being of which by this development of a richer power and a more sensitive use and capacity it becomes a well-prepared field of working.

Intellectual, volitional, ethical, emotional, aesthetic and physical training and improvement are all so much to the good, but they are only in the end a constant movement in a circle without any last delivering and illuminating aim, unless they arrive at a point when they can open themselves to the power and presence of the Spirit and admit its direct workings. This direct working effects a conversion of the whole being which is the indispensable condition of our real perfection. To grow into the truth and power of the Spirit and by the direct action of that power to be made a fit channel of its self-expression,—a living of man in the Divine and a divine living of the Spirit in humanity,—will therefore be the principle and the
whole object of an integral Yoga of self-perfection.

In the process of this change there must be by the very necessity of the effort two stages of its working. First, there will be the personal endeavour of the human being, as soon as he becomes aware by his soul, mind, heart of this divine possibility and turns towards it as the true object of life, to prepare himself for it and to get rid of all in him that belongs to a lower working, of all that stands in the way of his opening to the spiritual truth and its power, so as to possess by this liberation his spiritual being and turn all his natural movements into free means of its self-expression. It is by this turn that the self-conscious Yoga aware of its aim begins: there is a new awakening and an upward change of the life motive. So long as there is only an intellectual, ethical and other self-training for the now normal purposes of life which does not travel beyond the ordinary circle of working of mind, life and body, we are still only in the obscure and yet unillumined preparatory Yoga of Nature; we are still in pursuit of only an ordinary human perfection. A spiritual desire of the Divine and of the divine perfection, of a unity with him in all our being and a spiritual perfection in all our nature, is the effective sign of this change, the precursory power of a great integral conversion of our being and living.

By personal effort a precursory change, a preliminary conversion can be effected; it amounts to a greater or less spiritualising of our mental motives, our character and temperament, and a mastery, stilling or changed action of the vital and physical life. This converted subjectivity can be made the base of some communion or unity of the soul in mind with the Divine and some partial reflection of the divine nature in the mentality of the human being. That is as far as man can go by his unaided or indirectly aided effort, because that is an effort of mind and mind cannot climb beyond itself permanently: at most it arises to a spiritualised and idealised mentality. If it shoots up
beyond that border, it loses hold of itself, loses hold of life, and arrives either at a trance of absorption or a passivity. A greater perfection can only be arrived at by a higher power entering in and taking up the whole action of the being. The second stage of this Yoga will therefore be a persistent giving up of all the action of the nature into the hands of this greater Power, a substitution of its influence, possession and working for the personal effort, until the Divine to whom we aspire becomes the direct master of the Yoga and effects the entire spiritual and ideal conversion of the being.

This double character of our Yoga raises it beyond the mundane ideal of perfection, while at the same time it goes too beyond the loftier, intenser, but much narrower religious formula. The mundane ideal regards man always as a mental, vital and physical being and it aims at a human perfection well within these limits, a perfection of mind, life and body, an expansion and refinement of the intellect and knowledge, of the will and power, of ethical character, aim and conduct, of aesthetic sensibility and creativeness, of emotional balanced poise and enjoyment, of vital and physical soundness, regulated action and just efficiency. It is a wide and full aim, but yet not sufficiently full and wide, because it ignores that other greater element of our being which the mind vaguely conceives as the spiritual element and leaves it either undeveloped or insufficiently satisfied as merely some high occasional or added derivatory experience, the result of the action of mind in its exceptional aspects or dependent upon mind for its presence and persistence. It can become a high aim when it seeks to develop the loftier and the larger reaches of our mentality, but yet not sufficiently high, because it does not aspire beyond mind to that of which our purest reason, our brightest mental intuition, our deepest mental sense and feeling, strongest mental will and power or ideal aim and purpose are only pale radiations. Its aim besides is
limited to a terrestrial perfection of the normal human life.

A Yoga of integral perfection regards man as a divine spiritual being involved in mind, life and body; it aims therefore at a liberation and a perfection of his divine nature. It seeks to make an inner living in the perfectly developed spiritual being his constant intrinsic living and the spiritualised action of mind, life and body only its outward human expression. In order that this spiritual being may not be something vague and indefinable or else but imperfectly realised and dependent on the mental support and the mental limitations, it seeks to go beyond mind to the supramental knowledge, will, sense, feeling, intuition, dynamic initiation of vital and physical action, all that makes the native working of the spiritual being. It accepts human life, but takes account of the large supraterrrestrial action behind the earthly material living, and it joins itself to the divine Being from whom the supreme origination of all these partial and lower states proceeds so that the whole of life may become aware of its divine source and feel in each action of knowledge, of will, of feeling, sense and body the divine originating impulse. It rejects nothing that is essential in the mundane aim, but enlarges it, finds and lives in its greater and its truer meaning now hidden from it, transfigures it from a limited, earthly and mortal thing to a figure of infinite, divine and immortal values.

The integral Yoga meets the religious ideal at several points, but goes beyond it in the sense of a greater wideness. The religious ideal looks, not only beyond this earth, but away from it to a heaven or even beyond-all heavens to some kind of Nirvana. Its ideal of perfection is limited to whatever kind of inner or outer mutation will eventually serve the turning away of the soul from the human life to the beyond. Its ordinary idea of perfection is a religioethical change, a drastic purification of the active and the emotional being, often with an ascetic abrogation and re-
jection of the vital impulses as its completest reaching of excellence, and in any case a supraterrestrial motive and reward or result of a life of piety and right conduct. In so far as it admits a change of knowledge, will, aethesisis, it is in the sense of the turning of them to another object than the aims of human life and eventually brings a rejection of all earthly objects of aethesisis, will and knowledge. The method, whether it lays stress on personal effort or upon divine influence, on works and knowledge or upon grace, is not like the mundane a development, but rather a conversion; but in the end the aim is not a conversion of our mental and physical nature, but the putting on of a pure spiritual nature and being, and since that is not possible here on earth, it looks for its consummation by a transference to another world or a shuffling off of all cosmic existence.

But the integral Yoga founds itself on a conception of the spiritual being as an omnipresent existence, the fullness of which comes not essentially by a transference to other worlds or a cosmic self-extinction, but by a growth out of what we now are phenomenally into the consciousness of the omnipresent reality which we always are in the essence of our being. It substitutes for the form of religious piety its completer spiritual seeking of a divine union. It proceeds by a personal effort to a conversion through a divine influence and possession; but this divine grace, if we may so call it, is not simply a mysterious flow or touch coming from above, but the all-pervading act of a divine presence which we come to know within as the power of the highest Self and Master of our being entering into the soul and so possessing it that we not only feel it close to us and pressing upon our mortal nature, but live in its law, know that law, possess it as the whole power of our spiritualised nature. The conversion its action will effect is an integral conversion of our ethical being into the Truth and right of the divine nature, of our intellectual into the
illumination of divine knowledge, our emotional into the
divine love and unity, our dynamic and volitional into a
working of the divine power, our aesthetic into a plenary
reception and a creative enjoyment of divine beauty, not
excluding even in the end a divine conversion of the vital
and physical being. It regards all the previous life as an
involuntary and unconscious or half conscious preparatory
growing towards this change and Yoga as the voluntary and
conscious effort and realisation of the change, by which
all the aim of human existence in all its parts is fulfilled,
even while it is transfigured. Admitting the supracosmic
truth and life in worlds beyond, it admits too the terres-
trial as a continued term of the one existence and a change
of individual and communal life on earth as a strain of its
divine meaning.

To open oneself to the supracosmic Divine is an essen-
tial condition of this integral perfection; to unite oneself
with the universal Divine is another essential condition.
Here the Yoga of self-perfection coincides with the Yo-
gas of knowledge, works and devotion; for it is impos-
sible to change the human nature into the divine or to
make it an instrument of the divine knowledge, will and
joy of existence, unless there is a union with the supre-
me Being, Consciousness and Bliss and a unity with its
universal Self in all things and beings. A wholly separative
possession of the divine nature by the human individual,
as distinct from a self-withdrawn absorption in it, is not
possible. But this unity will not be an inmost spiritual one-
ness qualified, so long as the human life lasts, by a separa-
tive existence in mind, life and body; the full perfection is
a possession, through this spiritual unity, of unity too with
the universal Mind, the universal Life, the universal Form
which are the other constant terms of cosmic being. More-
over, since human life is still accepted as a self-expression
of the realised Divine in man, there must be an action of
the entire divine nature in our life; and this brings in the
need of the supramental conversion which substitutes the native action of spiritual being for the imperfect action of the superficial nature and spiritualises and transfigures its mental, vital and physical parts by the spiritual ideality. These three elements, a union with the supreme Divine, unity with the universal Self, and a supramental life action from this transcendent origin and through this universality, but still with the individual as the soul-channel and natural instrument, constitute the essence of the integral divine perfection of the human being.
The Eternal Wisdom

BOOK II

III

THE CONQUEST OF SELF

THE MASTERY OF THOUGHT

1. They had gained this supreme perfection, to be totally masters of their thoughts.
2. To control the mind! How difficult that is! It has been compared, not without good reason, to a mad monkey.
3. Hard is the mind to restrain, light, running where it pleases; to subjugate it is a salutary achievement; subjugated it brings happiness.
4. The mind is restless, strong, insistent, violently disturbing; to control it I hold to be as difficult as to control the wind.
5. Just as a fly settles now on an unclear sore in the body, now on the offerings consecrated to the gods.

* 1) The Lotus of the Good Law.— 2) Vivekananda.— 3) Dhammapada.— 4) Bhagavad Gita VI. 34.— 5) Ramakrishna.
so the mind of a worldly man stops for a moment upon religious ideas, but the next it strays away to the pleasures of luxury and lust.

6 On the vacillating, the mobile mind so difficult to hold in, so difficult to master the man of intelligence imposes a rectitude like the direct straightness which the arrow-maker gives to an arrow.

7 So long as the mind is inconstant and inconsequent, it will avail nothing, even though one have a good instructor and the company of the saints.

8 Like a chariot drawn by wild horses is the mind, the man of knowledge should hold it in with an unswerving attention.—Each time that the mobile and inconstant mind goes outward, it should be controlled, brought back into oneself and made obedient.—An evil thought is the most dangerous of all thieves.—We hear it said and taught over the whole surface of the earth, “Be good, be good.” There is hardly anywhere a child, wherever he is born, to whom one does not say, “Do not steal, do not lie” ... But we can only be really helpful to him by teaching him to dominate his thoughts.

12 A big tree is at first a slender shoot; a nine-storied tower is raised by first placing a few small bricks; a journey of a thousand leagues begins with a step. Be careful of your thoughts; they are the beginning of your acts.—Let not worldly thoughts and anxieties disturb the mind.—Think no evil thoughts.

15 whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, what-

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soever things are of good report, if there be any virtue and if there be any praise, think on these things.

16 — When a thought of anger or cruelty or a bad and unwholesome inclination awakes in a man, let him immediately throw it from him, let him dispel it, destroy it, prevent it from staying with him.—When the disciple regarding his ideas sees appear in him bad and unwholesome thoughts, thoughts of covetousness, hatred, error, he should either turn his mind from them and concentrate on a healthy idea, or examine the fatal nature of the thought, or else he should analyse it and decompose it into its different elements, or calling up all his strength and applying the greatest energy suppress it from his mind: so bad and unwholesome thoughts withdraw and disappear, and the mind becomes firm, calm, unified, vigorous.

18 We cannot prevent birds from flying over our heads but we can prevent them from making their nests there. So we cannot prevent evil thoughts from traversing the mind, but we have the power not to let them make their nest in it so as to hatch and engender evil actions.

19 Let us keep watch over our thoughts.

20 When a thought rises in us, let us see whether it has not its roots in the inferior worlds.—So let us accomplish what we know to be upright, let us keep watch over our thoughts so as not to suffer ourselves to be invaded by any pollution. As we sow, so we shall reap.

22 Labour to purify thy thoughts. If thou hast no evil thoughts, thou shalt commit no evil deeds.

If thou wouldst not be slain by them, thou shouldst make free from offence thy own creations, the children of thy invisible and impalpable thoughts, whose swarms keep wheeling around mankind and who are the descendants and heirs of man and of his terrestrial leavings.

Be master of thy thoughts, O thou who strivest for perfection.

Each of our good thoughts tears the veil behind which appears the pure, the infinite, God, our self.

THE MASTERY OF SELF.'

The self is the master of the self, what other master wouldst thou have? A self well-controlled is a master one can get with difficulty.

The self is the master of the self, what other master of it canst thou have? The wise man who has made himself the master of himself, has broken his chains, he has rent the ties of his bondage.

The self is the master of the self, what other master of it canst thou have? The wise man who has made himself the master of himself, is a world-illuminating beacon.

Good is mastery of the body, good the mastery of the speech, good too the mastery of the thought, good the perfect self-mastery.

Good is the mastery of the body, good the mastery of the speech, good too the mastery of the mind, good the perfect self-mastery. The disciple who is the master of himself, shall deliver his soul from every sorrow.

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31) Dhammapada.— 2) Udanavarga.— 3) id.— 4) Maggima Nikaya.— 5) Dhammapada.
The true treasure is self-mastery; it is the secret wealth which cannot perish.

Life is not short if it is filled. The way to fill it is to compel the soul to enjoy its own wealth and to become its own master.—Our intelligence ought to govern us as a herdsman governs his goats, cows and sheep, preferring for himself and his herd all that is useful and agreeable.

A man who cannot command himself, should obey. But there are too those who know how to command themselves, but yet are very far from knowing how also to obey.

The body of man is a chariot, his mind the driver, his senses the horses. The man of intelligence who keeps watch over himself, travels on his way like an owner of a chariot, happy and contented, drawn by well-trained horses.—Self-control brings calm to the mind, without it the seed of all the virtues perishes—Self-control which lies on a man like a fine garment, falls away from him who negligently gives himself up to slumber.

He that hath no rule over his own spirit, is like a city that is broken down and without walls.—One should guard oneself like a frontier citadel well defended—without and within.

Difficult is union with God when the self is not under governance; but when the self is well-subjected, there are means to come by it.—When the thought of a man is without attachment, when he has conquered himself and is rid of desire, by that renunci-

ation he reaches a supreme perfection of quietude.—

17 In union by a purified understanding, controlling himself by a firm perseverance, abandoning the objects of the senses, putting away from him all liking and disliking, when one resorts to solitude, lives on little, masters speech and mind and body, ever in meditation and fixed in withdrawal from the desires of the world, when he has loosened from him egoism and violence and pride and lust and wrath and possession, then calm and without thought of self, he is able to become one with the Eternal.

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18 By virile activity, by vigilant effort, by empire over himself, by moderation, the sage can make himself an island which the floods shall not inundate.

19 He is the wise man who, having once taken up his resolve, acts and does not cease from the labour, who does not lose uselessly his days and who knows how to govern himself.

20 The sage should be figured in the image of a robust athlete whom long exercise has hardened, one who can baffle the efforts of the most obstinate enemy.—

21 He is the perfect athlete who surmounts temptations and the incline of his nature towards sin and exercises over his mind domination and empire.

22 Who is the wise man? Whosoever is constantly learning something from one man or another. Who is the rich man? Whosoever is contented with his lot. Who is the strong man? Whosoever is capable of self-mastery.

If holiness can be compared to any other quality, it is only to strength.—Strength of character primes strength of intelligence — True strength is to have power over oneself.

When the spirit has command over the soul, that is strength.

The soul spiritual should have command over the soul of sense.—All souls have within them something soft, cowardly, vile, nerveless, languishing, and if there were only that element in man, there would be nothing so ugly as the human being. But at the same time there is in him, very much to the purpose, this mistress, this absolute queen, Reason, who by the effort she has it in herself to make, becomes perfect and becomes the supreme virtue. One must, to be truly a human being, give it full authority over that other part of the soul whose duty it is to obey the reason.

Be master of thy soul, O seeker of eternal verities, if thou wouldst attain thy end.—Be master of thyself by taming thy heart, thy mind and thy senses; for each man is his own friend and his own enemy. Thy soul cannot be hurt in thee save by reason of thy ignorant body; direct and master them both.

All things are lawful to me, but all things are not expedient; all things are lawful to me, but I will not be brought under the power of any.

"Is India Civilised"

(2)

The question which has raised this greater issue, at once shifts from its narrow meaning as soon as that issue comes into light; it disappears into a much larger problem. Does the future of humanity lie in a culture founded upon reason and science, upon the effort of a human mind, a continuous collective mind constituted by an ever changing sum of transient individuals, emerged from the darkness of an inconscient material universe, long stumbling about in it in search of some clear light, some sure support amid its difficulties and problems? Does civilisation consist in its effort to find that light and support in a rationalised knowing and living, an ordered knowledge of the powers, forces, possibilities of physical Nature and of the psychology of man as a mental and physical being, and in an ordered use of that knowledge for a progressive social efficiency and wellbeing, which will make the brief life of man more tolerable, comfortable, happier, better appointed, more luxuriously enriched with the pleasures of the mind, life and body? Is all our philosophy, religion,—supposing religion has not been outgrown and rejected,—all our science, thought, art, social structure, law and institution to found itself upon this idea of existence and to serve this aim, as rationally it should do if that be
the whole truth of our being? That is the formula which European civilisation has accepted and is still labouring to bring into some kind of realisation; it is the formula of a rational and an intelligently mechanised civilisation. Or is the truth of our being rather that of a Soul in Nature seeking to know itself, to find itself, to enlarge its consciousness, to progress spiritually and grow into the full light of self-knowledge and some divine perfection? Are religion, philosophy, science, thought, art, society, life itself only means of this growth, instruments of the spirit and to be used for its service or at least with this spiritual aim as their dominant preoccupation? That is the ancient idea of life and being,—the knowledge of it, as she claims,—for which India has stood till yesterday and still strives to stand with all that is most persistent and powerful in her nature. It is the formula of a spiritual civilisation.

Whether, then, the future hope of the race lies in a rational and an intelligently mechanised or in a spiritual, intuitive, religious civilisation and culture,—in the widest sense of the word, religion,—is the important issue. When the rationalist critic denies that India is or ever has been civilised, when he declares the Upanishads, the Vedanta, Buddhism, Hinduism, ancient Indian art and poetry a mass of barbarism, the vain production of a persistently barbaric mind, what he means is simply that civilisation and the cult of the materialistic reason are synonymous and identical terms and that anything which falls below or goes above that standard does not deserve the name of culture. A too metaphysical philosophy, a too religious religion,—if not indeed all pure metaphysics and all religion,—any too idealistic and all mystical thought and art, all that refines and probes beyond the limited purview of the reason dealing with the physical universe and seems therefore to it bizarre, over-subtle, excessive, unintelligible, all that responds to the sense of the Infinite, all that is obsessed
with the idea of the eternal, and a society which is much
governed by ideas born of these things and not solely by
intellectual clarity and the pursuit of a material develop-
ment and efficiency, are not the products of civilisation,
but the offspring of a crudely subtle barbarism. But this
thesis obviously proves too much; most of the great past
of humanity would fall under its condemnation; even
ancient Greek culture would not escape it; much of the
thought and art of modern European civilisation itself
would in that case have to be damned as at least semi-
barbarous. Evidently, we cannot without falling into
exaggeration and absurdity so narrow the sense of the
word and impoverish the significance of the past strivings
of humanity. Indian civilisation has been and must be
recognised as a great culture, quite as much as the Graeco-
Roman, the Christian, the Islamic, the later Renaissance
civilisation of Europe.

But still the essential question remains open. A
more moderate and perspicacious rationalistic critic would
admit the past value of India’s achievements, would not
condemn Buddhism and Vedanta and all Indian art and
philosophy and social ideas as barbarous, but would still
contend that not there lies any future good for the race;
it lies in European modernism, in the mighty works of
Science, in the great modern adventure of humanity, an
effort well founded not upon speculation and imagination
but on ascertained and tangible scientific truth and on a
laboriously increased foundation of sure and firmly tested
scientific organisation. But an Indian mind faithful to its
ideals would contend on the contrary, that while reason
and science and all other auxiliaries have their place in
the human effort, the real truth goes beyond them, the
secret of our ultimate perfection is to be discovered
deeper within, in spiritual self-knowledge and self-perfe-
tion and in the founding of life on that self-knowledge.

When the issue is so stated, we can at once see that
the gulf between East and West, India and Europe is now much less profound and unbridgeable than it was thirty or forty years ago. True, the basic difference still remains unmodified; the life of the West is still chiefly governed by a rationalistic and a materialistic idea and preoccupation. But at the summits of thought and steadily penetrating more and more downward through art and poetry and music and general literature a great change is in progress. There is a reaching towards deeper things, an increasing return of seekings which had been banished, an urge towards higher experience yet unrealised, an admission of ideas long foreign to the Western mentality. Aiding this process and aided by it there has been a certain infiltration of Indian and Eastern notions, even here and there some recognition of the high value or superior greatness of the ancient spiritual ideal. This infiltration began at a very early stage of the near contact between the farther Orient and Europe of which the English occupation of India was the opportunity. But at first it was slight, superficial or only an intellectual influence on a few superior minds; an interest of scholars and thinkers in Vedanta, Sankhya, Buddhism, an admiration of the subtlety and the largeness of Indian philosophic idealism, the stamp left by the Upanishads and the Gita on great intellects like Schopenhauer and Emerson and on lesser thinkers of some contemporary influence. This impression did not go very far and the little effect it might conceivably have produced was likely for a time to be counteracted and destroyed by the great flood of scientific materialism which submerged the whole life-view of the later nineteenth century.

But meanwhile other movements have arisen. Philosophy has taken a sharp curve away from rationalistic materialism. On the one hand in the seeking for a larger thought and vision of the universe Indian Monism has taken a subtle but powerful hold on many minds, though often in strange disguises. On the other hand new philo-
sophies have arisen which are indeed more vitalistic and pragmatic than directly spiritual, but yet by their greater subjectivity are already nearer to Indian ways of thinking. The old limits of scientific interest have begun to break down, and various forms of psychical research and novel departures in psychology, even an interest in psychism and occultism, have come into increasing vogue, though still largely barred both by orthodox religion and orthodox science. Theosophy with its comprehensive combination and its appeal to ancient spiritual and psychic systems, has everywhere exercised an influence far beyond the circle of its professed adherents. Though long opposed with the weapons of ridicule and obloquy, it has done much to spread the belief in Karma, reincarnation, other planes of existence, the evolution of the embodied soul through intellect and psyche to spirit, ideas which once accepted must change the whole attitude towards life. Even Science itself is constantly arriving at conclusions which only repeat upon the physical plane and in its language truths which ancient India had already affirmed from the standpoint of spiritual knowledge in the tongue of the Veda and Vedanta. Every one of these advances leads directly or in its intrinsic meaning towards a nearer approach between the mind of East and West and to that extent to a likelihood of a better understanding of Indian thought and ideals.

In some directions the change of attitude has gone remarkably far; it seems too to be constantly increasing. A Christian missionary quoted by Sir John Woodroffe is "amazed to find the extent to which Hindu Pantheism has begun to permeate the religious conceptions of Germany, of America, even of England" and he considers its cumulative effect an imminent "danger" to the next generation. Another writer cited by him goes so far as to attribute all the highest philosophical thought of Europe to the previous thinking of the Brahmans and affirms even that all modern solutions of intellectual problems will be found antici-
ed in the East. A distinguished French psychologist recently told an Indian visitor that India had already laid down all the large lines and main truths, the broad schema, of a genuine psychology and all that Europe can now do is to fill them in with exact details and scientific verifications. These utterances are the extreme indications of a growing change of which the drift is unmistakable. Not only in philosophy and the higher thinking is this turn visible. European art is in certain directions moving away from its old moorings; it is developing a new eye and opening in its own way to motives which untill now were held in honour only in the East: Eastern art too, has begun to be widely appreciated. Poetry had for some time commenced to speak uncertainly a new language, and since the world-wide fame of Tagore which would have been unthinkable thirty years ago,—one often finds the verse even of ordinary writers teeming with thoughts and expressions which could formely have found few parallels outside Indian, Buddhistic and Sufi literature. Even in general literature there are some first preliminary signs of a similar phenomenon. Many seekers of new truth too now find their spiritual home in India or else owe to it much of their inspiration. If this turn continues to accentuate its drive, and there is little chance of a reversion, the spiritual and intellectual gulf between East and West will be, if not filled up, at least bridged and the defence of Indian culture and ideals will stand in a stronger position.

But then, it may be said, if there is this certainty of an approximative understanding, what is the need of an aggressive defence of Indian culture or of any defence at all? Indeed, what is the need for the continuance of any distinctive Indian culture in the future? East and West meeting from two opposite sides will merge in each other and found a common world-culture for a united humanity; in that all previous cultures will fuse and find their fulfilment. But the problem is not so easy, not so harmoni-
ously simple. To begin with, we are as yet very far from any such secure and satisfying consummation,—even if we could assume that in a united world-culture there would be no spiritual need and no vital utility for strong distinctive variations. The subjective and spiritual turn of all the more advanced modern thought is still confined to a minority, it has only very superficially coloured the general intelligence of Europe. Moreover, it is still a movement of the thought only; the great life-motives of European civilisation stand as yet where they were, except for the greater pressure of certain idealistic elements in the proposed reshaping of human relations. It is precisely at this critical moment and in these conditions that the whole human world, India included, is about to be forced into the stress and travail of a swift general transformation. The danger is that the pressure of dominant European ideas and motives, the temptations of the political needs of the hour, the velocity of rapid inevitable change leaving no time for the growth of sound thought and spiritual reflection may strain to bursting-point the old Indian cultural and social system no longer in its present form capable of answering to the national and the environmental necessity, and shatter the ancient civilisation before India has had time to readjust herself mentally and find a firm basis for a swift evolution in the sense of her own spirit and ideals. In that event a rationalised and westernised India might emerge from the chaos, keeping some elements only of her ancient thought to modify, but no longer to shape and govern her total existence. Like other countries she would have passed into the mould of occidental modernism; ancient India would have perished.

Certain minds would find in this contingency no disastrous change, but rather a desirable consummation. It would mean, in their view, that India had given up her spiritual separation, undergone a much needed change and entered into the world-comity. As for the passing
of ancient India, since in this new world-comity there would enter an increasing spiritual and subjective element and much perhaps of India’s own religious and philosophical thought would be appropriated by its culture, that would be no absolute loss; it would have passed like ancient Greece, leaving its contribution to a new and more largely progressive life of humanity. But even the absorption of the Graeco-Roman culture by the later European world, though now its elements survive in a larger and broader civilisation, was attended with serious diminutions and a loss of all its high and clear intellectual order and cult of beauty which even now after so many centuries have not been really recovered. A much greater diminution would result from the disappearance of the distinctive Indian civilisation, because there is a much more central difference between its standpoint and that of European modernism.

The tendency of the normal western mind is to live from below upward, to take its whole foundation in the vital and material being and admit,—invoke, as it has been said,—higher powers only to modify and partially uplift the natural terrestrial life. India’s constant effort has been to find a basis of living in the higher spiritual truth and to live from the spirit outwards,—as the old Vedic seers put it, “our divine foundation is above with its rays reaching downward, out through our inner being,” nīchīnāh sthur upari buddhna eshām, asme antar nihitāh ketalavah syuh. Now that difference is no unimportant subtlety, but of a great and penetrating practical consequence,—as we can see from Europe’s treatment of Christianity, which she never really accepted as the rule of her life, but only admitted and used to chasten and give some spiritual colouring to the vital vigour of the Teuton and the intellectual clarity and sensuous refinement of the Latins. Very probably she would use any new spiritual development she accepted in the same way and to a like purpose, if there is no more insistent living culture in the world challenging this lesser ideal. Per-
haps both tendencies are necessary for the entire completeness of humanity. But if the spiritual ideal points the true final way of the human harmony, then it is all-important for India not to lose hold of the truth, not to give up the highest she knows and barter it away for a perhaps more readily practicable but still lower ideal alien to her true and constant nature, a *paradharma*. It is important too for humanity that a great collective effort to realise this highest ideal,—however imperfect it may have been, into whatever confusion and degeneration it may temporarily have fallen,—should not cease, but continue, always recovering its force and enlarging its expression. A new creation of the old Indian *swadharma*, not a transmutato some western law of being,* is the best way in which we can serve the total human progress.

We come back then to the necessity of a defence and a strong aggressive defence; for, as I have said, only an aggressive defence can be effective in the conditions of the modern struggle. But here we find ourselves brought up against an opposite turn of mind and its stark obstructive difficulty. For there are plenty of Indians now who are for a stubbornly static defence; what aggressiveness they put into it, consists in a rather vulgar and unthinking cultural Chauvinism which holds that whatever is is good because it is Indian or even that whatever is in India, is best, because it is the creation of the Rishis,—as if all the later developments were laid down by those much misused, much misapplied and often very much forged great founders of our culture. But the question is whether a static defence is of any effective value. I hold that it is of no value, because

* While, echoing English critics, certain Indian politicians and reformers would have us anglicise ourselves, making English institutions our standard, one notes that now there are some too touched by admiration of American strenuousness, who are all for americanisation,—so ready are we in the absence of a clear Indian creative idea to lay hold on secondhand things. Why not japanise ourselves too while we are about it?
it is inconsistent with the truth of things and doomed to failure. It amounts to an attempt to sit stubbornly still while the Shakti in the world is rapidly moving on,—and not only the Shakti in the world, but the Shakti in India also. It is a determination to live on our past cultural capital, to eke it out, small as it has grown in our wasteful and incompetent hands, to the last anna: but to live on our capital is to end in bankruptcy and pauperism. The past has to be used always as mobile and current capital for some larger profit, acquisition and development, and to gain we must spend; we must part with something in order to grow and live more richly,—that is the universal law of our existence. Otherwise the life within will stagnate and perish. It is too a false confession of impotence; it is to hold that the Indian creative capacity in religion and in philosophy came to an end with Shankara, Ramanuja, Madhwa and Chaitanya, in social construction with Vidyaranya and with Raghunandan, to rest in art and poetry either in a blank and uncreative void or in a vain and lifeless repetition of beautiful but spent forms and motives.

The objection to any large change,—for it is a large and bold change that is needed, no peddling will serve our purpose,—can most plausibly be shaped to the contention that the forms of a culture are the right rhythm of its spirit and in breaking the rhythm we may expel the spirit and dissipate the whole harmony. Yes, but though the Spirit is eternal in its essence and in the fundamental principles of its harmony immutable, the actual rhythm of its self-expression in form is ever mutable; immutable in being and in the powers of its being, but richly mutable in life, that is the very nature of the spirit's manifested existence. Moreover, we have to see whether the actual rhythm of the moment is still a harmony, whether it has not become in the hands of an inferior and ignorant orchestra a discord and no longer expresses rightly or sufficiently the ancient spirit. To recognise defect is not to
bring in discouragement or deny the inherent spirit; it is the condition for moving onward to the greater amplitude of a future realisation. Whether we find that greater expression and concord, depends on our own selves, on our capacity of responding to the eternal Power and Wisdom, on the illumination of the Shakti within us: it depends on the skill which comes by unity with the eternal spirit we are in the measure of our light expressing,—yogah karmasu kauçalam.

This is from the standpoint of Indian culture itself, the intrinsic standpoint; but there is also the standpoint of the pressure of the Time Spirit upon us: that too is the action of the universal Shakti on humanity and cannot be ignored, held at arm’s length, forbidden entrance. Here too the policy of new creation imposes itself; even if to stand still and stiff within our well-defended gates were desirable, it is no longer possible. We can no longer take our solitary station apart in humanity, isolated like a solitary island in the desert ocean, neither going forth nor allowing to enter in,—if indeed we ever did it. For good or for ill the world is with us, the flood of modern ideas and forces are pouring in and will take no denial. There are two ways before us of meeting them, either to offer a forlorn and hopeless resistance or to seize on and subjugate them. If we merely resist passively, they will come in on us, partly breaking down our defences where they are weakest, sapping them where they are stiffer, and where they can do neither, still stealing in unknown to us or ill-apprehended by underground mine and tunnel. Entering unassimilated they will break in as disruptive forces, and it will be only partly by outward attack, but much more by an inward explosion that this ancient Indian civilisation will be shattered to pieces. Ominous sparks are already beginning to run about which nobody knows how to extinguish, and if we could extinguish them, we should be no better off, for we should yet have to deal with the source
from which they are starting. Even the rigidest defenders
of the present in the name of the past show in their every
word how strongly they have been affected by new ways of
thinking. Especially, many if not most are calling passion-
nately, calling inevitably for innovations in certain fields,
changes European in spirit and method, which, though
they do not seem to see it, once admitted without some
radical assimilation and indianisation, will end by break-
ing up the whole social structure they are defending. That
arises from a confusion of thought and an incapacity of
power: because we are unable to think and create in those
fields, we are obliged to borrow without assimilation or
with only an illusory pretence of assimilation. Because
we cannot see the whole sense of what we are doing from
a high inner and commanding point of vision, we are busy
bringing together disparates without a saving reconcili-
ation; combustion and explosion are likely to be the end
of our efforts.

An aggressive defence implies a new creation from
such an inner and commanding vision, a bringing of what
we have to greater force of form, but also an effective assi-
milation of whatever is useful for our new life and can be
made harmonious with our spirit. Battle, shock and strug-
gle themselves are no vain destruction, they are a violent
cover for Time’s interchange. Even the most successful vic-
tor receives much from the vanquished, sometimes approp-
riates it, but sometimes is taken prisoner by it. The west-
ern attack is not confined to a breaking down of the forms
of eastern culture; there is at the same time a large, subtle
and silent appropriation of much that is valuable in the
East for the enrichment of occidental culture. Therefore
to bring forward the glories of our past and scatter on
Europe and America as much of its treasures as they
will receive, will not save us; it will enrich and strengthen
them, but for us it only serves to give a greater self-confi-
dence which will be useless and even misleading if it is
not made a force of will for a greater creation. What we have to do, is, first, to front the attack with new powerful formations which will not only throw it back, but even where it is possible and helpful to humanity, carry the war into the assailant's country; secondly, to take whatever answers to our own needs and responds to the Indian spirit, but in the Indian spirit, by a strong creative assimilation,—as with the right use of science or the application of the ideals of liberty and equality to the social and political life of the community. In certain directions, as yet all too few, we have begun both these movements; in others we are simply creating an unintelligent mixture or else taking over rash, crude and undigested borrowings. Merely to borrow the assailant's engines and methods may be temporarily useful, but by itself it is only another way of being conquered; stark appropriation is not enough, successful assimilation to the Indian spirit is the needed process. The problem is one of immense difficulty and of stupendous proportions, nor are we yet approaching it with wisdom and insight. All the more pressing is the need to awaken to the situation and meet it with an original thinking and a sure action.
The Future Poetry

THE MOVEMENT OF MODERN LITERATURE

Poetry as the fullness of imaginative self-expression of the entirely modernised mind begins with the writers of the later eighteenth and the early nineteenth century. They are the free, impetuous but often narrow sources of these wider flowings. We see the initial tendencies which undergo a rapid growth of meaning and changes of form in the subsequent decades, until now all their sense and seeking have reached in the early twentieth a subtle intensity, refinement and variety of motives, a tense straining on many lines to find some last truth and utterance which must end either in a lingering decadence or in a luminous and satisfied self-exceeding. From the beginning this modern movement, in literature as in thought, takes the form of an ever widening and deepening intellectual and imaginative curiosity, a passion for knowledge, a passion for finding, an eye of intelligence awakened to all the multiform possibilities of new truth and discovery. The Renascence was an awakening of the life spirit to wonder and curiosity and reflection and the stirred discovery of the things of the life and the mind; but the fullness of the modern age has been a much larger comprehensive awakening of the informed and clarified intellect to a wider curiosity, a much more extensive adventure of discovery and
an insistent need to know and possess the truth of Nature and man and the universe and whatever may lie hidden behind their first appearances and suggestions. A long intellectual search for truth that goes probing always deeper into the physical, the vital and subjective, the action of body and life, mind and emotion and sensation and thought is now beginning to reach beyond these things or rather through their subtlest and strongest intensities of sight and feeling towards the truths of the Spirit. The soul of the Renascence was a lover of life and an amateur of knowledge; the modern spirit is drawn by the cult of a clear, broad and minute intellectual and practical Truth; knowledge and a power of life founded on the power of knowledge are the dominating necessities of its being. Poetry in this age has followed intellectually and imaginatively the curve of this great impulse.

Continental literature displays the mass of this movement with a much more central completeness and in a stronger and more consistent body and outline than English poetry. In the Teutonic countries the intellectual and romantic literature of the Germans at the beginning with its background of transcendental philosophy, at the end the work of the Scandinavian and Belgian writers with their only apparently opposite sides of an intellectual or a sensuous realism and a sentimental or a psychological mysticism, the two strands sometimes separate, sometimes mingled, among the Latins the like commencement in the work of Rousseau, Chateaubriand, Chénier, Hugo, the intermediate artistic development of most of the main influences by the Parnassians, the like later turn towards the poetry of Mallarmé, Verlaine, D'Annunzio, stigmatised by some as the beginning of a decadence, give us a distinct view of the curve. In English poetry the threads are more confused, the work has on the whole a less clear and definite inspiration and there is in spite of the greatness of individual poets an inferior total effectiveness; but at the beginning and the end it has one higher note, a lifting of sight beyond the stress of the intellect
and the senses, which is reached either not at all or much less directly realised with a less pure vision in the more artistically sound and sufficient poetry of the Continent. Still the principal identical elements are distinguishable, sometimes very strongly pronounced and helped to some fullest expression by the great individual energy of imagination and force of character which are the most distinct powers of the English poetic mind. Often they thus stand out all the more remarkable by the magnificent narrowness of their self-concentrated isolation.

Earliest among these many new forces to emerge with distinctness is an awakening of the eye to a changed vision of Nature, of the imagination to a more perfect and intimate visualisation, of the soul to a closer spiritual communion. An imaginative, scrutinising, artistic or sympathetic dwelling on the details of Nature, her sights, sounds, objects, sensible impressions is a persistent characteristic of modern art and poetry; it is the poetic side of the same tendency which upon the intellectual has led to the immeasurable development of the observing and analysing eye of Science. The older poetry directed an occasional objective eye on Nature, turning a side glance from life or thought to get some colouring or decorative effect or a natural border or background for life or something that illustrated, ministered to or enriched the human thought or mood of the moment, at most for a casual indulgence of the imagination and senses in natural beauty. But the intimate subjective treatment of Nature, the penetrated human response to her is mostly absent or comes only in rare and brief touches. On the larger scale her subjective life is realised not with an immediate communion, but through myth and the image of divine personalities that govern her powers. In all these directions modern poetry represents a great change of our mentality and a swift and vast extension of our imaginative experience. Nature now lives for the poet as an independent presence, a greater or equal power dwelling side by side with him or embracing and dominating his existence. Even the objec-
tive vision and interpretation of her has developed, where it continues at all the older poetic method, a much more minute and delicate eye and touch in place of the large, strong and simply beautiful or telling effects which satisfied an earlier imagination. But where it goes beyond that fine outwardness, it has brought us a whole world of new vision; working sometimes by a vividly suggestive presentation, sometimes by a separation of effects and an imaginative reconstruction which reveals aspects the first outward view had hidden in, sometimes by a penetrating impressionism which in its finest subtleties seems to be coming back by a detour to a sensuously mystical treatment, it goes within through the outward and now not so much presents as recreates physical Nature for us through the imaginative vision*. By that new creation it penetrates through the form nearer to the inner truth of her being.

But the direct subjective approach to Nature is the most distinctly striking characteristic turn of the modern mentality. The approach proceeds from two sides which constantly meet each other and create between them a nexus of experience between man and Nature which is the modern way of responding to the universal Spirit. On one side there is the subjective sense of Nature herself as a great life, a being, a Presence, with impressions, moods, emotions of her own expressed in her many symbols of life and stressing her objective manifestations. In the poets in whom this turn first disengages itself, that is a living conscious view of her to which they are constantly striving to give expression whether in a large sense of her presence or in a rendering of its particular impressions. On the other side there is a sensitive human response, moved in emotion or thrilling in sensation or stirred by sheer beauty or responsive in mood, a response of satisfaction and possession or of dissatisfied yearning and seeking, in the whole an attempt to relate or harmo-

* I am speaking here of Western literature. Oriental art and poetry at any rate in the Far East had already in a different way anticipated this more intimate and imaginative seeing
nise the soul and mind and sensational and vital being of the human individual with the soul and mind and life and body of the visible and sensible universe. Ordinarily it is through the imagination and the intellect and the soul of sensibility that this approach is made; but there is also a certain endeavour to get through these instruments to a closer spiritual relation and, if not yet to embrace Nature by the Spirit in man, to harmonise and unite the spiritual soul of man with the spiritual Presence in Nature.

Another widening of experience which modern poetry renders much more universally and with a constant power and insistence is a greater awakening of man to himself, to man in this warp and weft of Space and Time and in the stress of the universe, to all that is meant by his present, his past and his future. Here too we have a parallel imaginative movement in poetry to the intellectual movement of thought and science with its large and its minute enquiry into the origins and antiquity and history of the race, into the sources of its present development, into all its physical, psychological, sociological being and the many ideal speculations and practical aspirations of its future which have arisen from this new knowledge of the human being and his possibilities. Formerly, the human mind in its generality did not go very far in these directions. Its philosophy was speculative and metaphysical, but with little actuality except for the intellectual and spiritual life of the individual, its science explorative of superficial phenomenon rather than opulent both in detail and fruitful generalisation; its view of the past was mythological, traditional and national, not universal and embracing, its view of the present limited in objective scope and, with certain exceptions, of no very great subjective profundity; an outlook on the future was remarkable by its absence. The constant self-expansion of the modern mind has broken down many limiting barriers; a vast objective knowledge, an increasingly subtle subjectivity, a vivid living in the past, present and future, a universal view of man as of Nature are its strong innovations. This change
has found inevitably its vivid reflections in the wider many-sided interests, the delicate refinements, fine searchings, large and varied outlook and profound inlook of modern poetry.

The first widening breadth of this universal interest in man, not solely the man of today and our own country and type or of the past tradition of our own culture, but man in himself in all his ever-changing history and variety, came in the form of an eager poetic and romantic valuing of all that had been ignored and put aside as uncouth and barbarous by the older classical or otherwise limited type of mentality. It sought out rather all that was unfamiliar and attractive by its unlikeness to the present, the primitive, the savage, mediaeval man and his vivid life and brilliant setting, the Orient very artificially seen through a heavily coloured glamour, the ruins of the past, the life of the peasant or the solitary, the outlaw, man near to Nature undisguised by conventions and uncorrupted by an artificial culture or man in revolt against conventions, a willed preference for these strange and interesting aspects of humanity, as in Nature for her wild and grand, savage and lonely scenes or her rich and tropical haunts or her retired spots of self-communion. On one side a sentimental or a philosophic naturalism, on the other a flamboyant or many-hued romanticism, superficial mediaevalism, romanticised Hellenism, an interest in the fantastic and the supernatural, tendencies of an intellectual or an ideal transcendentalism, are the salient constituting characters. They make up that brilliant and confusedly complex, but often crude and unfinished literature, stretching from Rousseau and Chateaubriand to Hugo and taking on its way Goethe, Schiller and Heine, Wordsworth, Byron, Keats and Shelley, which forms a hasty transition from the Renascence and its after-fruits to the modernism of today which is already becoming the modernism of yesterday. Much of it we can now see to have been ill-grasped, superficial and tentative much, as in Chateaubriand and in Byron, was artificial, a poise and affectation; much as in the French
Romanticists merely bizarre, overstrained and overcoloured; a later criticism condemned in it a tendency to inartistic excitement, looseness of form, an unintellectual shallowness or emptiness, an ill-balanced imagination. It laid itself open certainly in some of its more exaggerated turns to the reproach,—not justly to be alleged against the true romantic element in poetry,—that the stumbling-block of romanticism is falsity. Nevertheless behind this often defective frontage was the activity of a considerable force of new truth and power, much exceedingly great work was done, the view of the imagination was immensely widened and an extraordinary number of new motives brought in which the later nineteenth century developed with a greater care and finish and conscientious accuracy, but with crudities of its own and perhaps with a less fine gust of self-confident genius and large inspiration.

The recoil from these primary tendencies took at first the aspect of a stress upon artistic execution, on form, on balance and design, on meticulous beauty of language and a minute care and finished invention in rhythm. An unimpassioned or only artistically impassioned portraiture and sculpture of scene and object and idea and feeling, man and Nature was the idea that governed this artistic and intellectual effort. A wide, calm and impartial interest in all subjects for the sake of art and a poetically intellectual satisfaction,—this poise had already been anticipated by Goethe,—is the atmosphere which it attempts to create around it. There is here a certain imaginative reflection of the contemporary scientific, historic and critical interest in man, in his past and present, his creations and surroundings, a cognate effort to be unimpassioned, impersonal, scrupulous, sceptically interested and reflective, though in poetry it loses the cold accuracy of the critical intellect and assumes the artistic colour, emphasis, warmth of the constructive imagination. There is amidst a wide atmosphere of sceptical or positive thinking an attempt to enter into the psychology of barbaric and civilised, antique, mediaeval, and modern, occidental and ori-
ental humanity, to reproduce in artistic form the spirit of
the inner truth and outer form of its religions, philoso-
phic notions, societies, arts, monuments, constructions,
to reflect its past inner and outer history and present fra-
mes and mentalities. This movement too was brief in du-
ration and soon passed away into other forms which ar-
ose out of it, though they seemed a revolt against its princi-
pies. This apparent paradox of a development draped in
the colours of revolt is a constant psychological feature
of all human evolution.

In this turn we are struck by its most glaring featu-
re, the vehement waving of the revolutionary red flag of
realism. Realism is in its essence an attempt to see man
and his world as they really are without veils and pre-
tences; it is imagination turning upon itself and trying
to get rid of its native tendency to give a personal turn or
an enhanced colouring to the object, art trying to figure
as a selective process of scientific observation and synthe-
tised analysis. Necessarily, whenever it is art at all, it be-
trays itself in the process. Its natural movement is away
from the vistas of the past to a pre-occupation with the
immediate present, although it began with a double effort,
to represent the past with a certain vividness of hard and
often brutal truth, not in the colours in which the ideally
constructive imagination sees it through the haze of dis-
tance, and to represent the present too with the same
harsh and violent actuality. But success in this kind of
representation of the past is impossible; it carries in it al-
ways a sense of artificiality and willed construction. Rea-
Realism tends naturally to take the present as its field; for
that alone can be brought under an accurate because an
immediate observation. Scientific in its inspiration, it
subjects man's life and psychology to the scalpel and the
microscope, exaggerates all that strikes the first outward
view of him, his littlenesses, imperfections, uglinesses,
morbidities, and comes easily to regard these things as the
whole or the greater part of him and to treat life as if it
were a psychological and physiological disease, a fungoid
growth upon material Nature: it ends, indeed almost begins, by an exaggeration and overemphasizing which betrays its true character, the posthumous child of romanticism perverted by a pseudo-scientific preoccupation. Romanticism also laid a constant stress on the grotesque, diseased, abnormal, but for the sake of artistic effect, to add another tone to its other glaring colours. Realism professes to render the same facts in the proportions of truth and science, but being art and not science, it inevitably seeks for pronounced effects by an evocative stress which falsifies the dispositions and shades of natural truth in order to arrive at a conspicuous vividness. In the same movement it falsifies the true measure of the ideal, which is a part of the totality of human life and nature, by bringing the idealism in man down to the level of his normal daily littlenesses; in attempting to show it as one strand in his average humanity, it reduces it to a pretension and figment, ignoring the justification of the idealistic element in art which is that the truth of the ideal consists essentially in its aspiration beyond the limitations of immediate actuality, in what our strain towards self-exceeding figures and not in the moment's failure to accomplish. Realism on both those sides, in what it ignores and what it attempts, lies open to the reproach aimed at romanticism; its stumbling-block is a falsity which pursues both its idea and its method. Nevertheless this movement too behind its crudities has brought in new elements and motives. It has done very considerable work in fiction and prose drama; in poetry, even, it has brought in some new strains amid the greater powers, but here it could not dominate,—for that would have meant the death of the very spirit of poetry whose breath of life is the exceeding of outward reality. Realism is still with us, but has already evolved out of itself another creative power whose advent announces its own passing.
A PHILOSOPHICAL REVIEW

15th February 1919

CONTENTS

ESSAYS ON THE GITA ..................... Aurobindo Ghose
   The Supreme Word of the Gita

THE SYNTHESIS OF YOGA .............. A. G.
   Ch. LI. The Psychology of Self-Perfection

THE ETERNAL WISDOM ................. Paul Richard
   The Internal Law
   The Good Combat

IS INDIA CIVILISED (3)

THE FUTURE POETRY
   The Movement of Modern Literature (2)

A RATIONALISTIC CRITIC ON INDIAN CULTURE (1)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONTENT</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Project of the New Germany and the Eastern Question</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Principles of the New Germany</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Concept of the New Germany</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Historical Development of the New Germany</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Political Situation in the New Germany</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Economic Conditions in the New Germany</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Social Conditions in the New Germany</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Cultural Conditions in the New Germany</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Military Conditions in the New Germany</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Foreign Policy of the New Germany</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Inner Politics of the New Germany</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Future of the New Germany</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Essays on the Gita

THE SUPREME WORD OF THE GITA

We have now got to the inmost kernel of the Gita's Yoga, the whole living and breathing centre of its teaching. We can see now quite clearly that the ascent of the limited human soul withdrawing from the ego and the lower nature to the immutable Self was only a first step, an initial change: we now see too why the Gita from the first insisted on the Ishwara, the Godhead in the human form, who speaks always of himself, "aham,nam," as of some great secret and omnipresent Being, lord of all the worlds and master of the human soul, who is greater even than that immutable self-existence which is still for ever and for ever untouched by the subjective and objective appearances of the natural universe.

All Yoga is a seeking after the Divine, a turn towards union with the Eternal; but according to the adequacy of our conception of the Divine and the Eternal will be the way of the seeking, the depth and fullness of the union, the integrality of the realisation. Man, the mental being, approaching the Infinite through his finite mind, has to open some near gate of this finite upon that Infinite; he seeks for some conception on which his mind is able to seize, selects some power of his being which by force of
an absolute self-heightening can reach out to and lay its touch on the infinite Truth that in itself is beyond his mental comprehension. Some face of that infinite Truth,—for, being infinite, it has numberless faces, words of its meaning, self-suggestions,—he attempts to see, so that by attaching himself to it he can arrive through direct experience to the immeasurable reality. However narrow the gate may be, he is satisfied if it offers some prospect into the wideness which attracts him, sets him on the way to the fathomless profundity and unreachable heights of that which calls to his spirit. And as he approaches it, so it receives him, ye yathā mām prapadyante.

Philosophic mind attempts to attain to the Eternal by an abstractive knowledge. The business of knowledge is to comprehend and for the finite intellect that means to define and determine; but the only way to determine the indeterminable is by some kind of universal negation, neti neti, by excluding from the conception of the Eternal all that offers itself as limitable by the senses and the heart and the understanding. An entire opposition is made between the self and not-self, between the eternal, immutable, indefinable self-existence and all forms of existence,—between Brahman and Maya, between the ineffable Reality and all that undertakes to express, but cannot express the Ineffable,—between Karma and Nirvana, between the ever continuous but ever impermanent action and conception of the universal Energy and some absolute ineffable supreme Negation of its action and conception which is empty of all life and mentality. That strong drive of knowledge towards the Eternal leads away from everything that is transient; it negates life in order to return to its source, cuts away from all that we seem to be in order to get from it to the nameless and impersonal reality of our being: the desires of the heart, the works of the will and the conceptions of the mind are rejected; even in the end knowledge itself is negated and abolished.
in the Identical and Unknowable. By the way of an increasing quietude ending in an absolute passivity the Maya-created soul or the bundle of associations we call ourselves enters into annihilation of its idea of personality and an end of the lie of living, Nirvana.

But this difficult abstractive method of self-negation, however it may draw to it some exceptional natures, cannot satisfy universally the embodied soul in man, because it does not give an outlet to all the straining of his complex nature towards the perfect Eternal. Not only his abstracting contemplative intellect but his yearning heart, his active will, his positive mind in search of some Truth of which his existence and the existence of the world is a manifold key, have their straining towards the Eternal and Infinite and seek to find in it their divine Source and the justification of their being and their nature. From this need arise the religions of love and works, whose strength is that they satisfy and lead Godwards the most active and developed powers of our humanity,—nor without starting from them can knowledge be effective; even Buddhism with its uncompromising negation both of subjective self and objective being had still to found itself initially on a divine discipline of works and to admit as a substitute for bhakti the spiritualised emotionalism of a universal love and compassion, so only could it become an effective way for mankind, a truly liberating religion; even illusionist Mayavada with its ultralogical intolerance of action and the creations of mentality had to allow a provisional and practical reality to man and the universe and to God in the world in order to have a first foothold and a feasible starting-point; it had to affirm what it denied, so as to give some reality to man's bondage and effort for liberation.

But the weakness of the kinetic and the emotional religions is that they are too much absorbed in the divine Personality and in the divine values of the finite and,
even when they have a conception of the infinite Godhead, they do not give us the full satisfaction of knowledge because they do not follow it out into its most ultimate and supernal tendencies, towards complete absorption in the Eternal and the perfect union by identity,—yet to that identity in some way, if not in the abstractive, since in it all oneness must have its basis, the soul of man must one day arrive. On the other hand, the weakness of a contemplative, too quietistic spirituality is that it arrives at this result by a too absolute abstraction which in the end makes nothing of the human soul whose aspiration was yet all the time the whole sense of this attempt at union, since without the human individual liberation and union could have no meaning: what it recognises of his other powers of existence, it relegates to an inferior preliminary action which never arrives at any full or satisfying realisation in the Eternal and Infinite. Yet these things too which it restricts unduly, the will, the love, the positive and all-embracing intuition of the conscious mental being are from the Divine, represent essential powers of him and must have some justification in their Source and some way of self-fulfilment in him. No God-knowledge can be integral, perfect or universally satisfying which leaves unfulfilled their absolute claim, no wisdom utterly wise which in its intolerant asceticism of search negates or in the pride of pure knowledge belittles their spiritual reality.

The greatness of the central thought of the Gita in which all its threads are gathered up and united, consists in the synthetic value of a conception which recognises the whole nature of the soul of man in the universe and validates by a large and a wise unification its many-sided need of the supreme infinite Truth, Power, Love, Being to which our humanity turns for perfection and immortality. There is an endeavour at a comprehensive spiritual view of God and man and universal existence,—not indeed
that everything without any exception is seized in these eighteen chapters, no spiritual problem left for solution, but still so large a scheme is laid out that we have only to fill in, develop, modify stress, follow out points, work out hint and illuminate adumbration in order to find a clue to any further claim of our intelligence and need of our spirit. The Gita itself does not evolve any quite novel solution out of its own questionings; to arrive at the comprehensiveness at which it aims, it goes back behind the great philosophical systems to the original Vedanta of the Upanishads; for there we have the widest and profoundest extant synthetic vision of spirit and man and cosmos. But what is in the Upanishads undeveloped to the intelligence because wrapped up in a luminous kernel of intuitive seeing and symbolic utterance, the Gita brings out in the light of a later intellectual thinking and distinctive experience.

In the frame of its synthesis it admits the seeking of the abstractive thinkers for the Indefinable, anirdeshyam, the ever unmanifest Immutable, avyaktam aksharam; for those who devote themselves to this search, find the Purushottama, the supreme Divine, mām, the spirit and highest soul and lord of things; for his utmost self-existent way of being is an unthinkable, achiintya-rūpam, a positive, an absolute of all absolutes beyond the determination of the intelligence. The method of passivity, quietude, renunciation of life and works is also admitted and ratified in the Gita's philosophy, but with a minor permissive sanction. But its knowledge approaches the Eternal by one side only of the truth and that side the most difficult to attain for the nature of the human being, kashtam dehavadbhir avapya; and it goes by a highly specialised, even an unnecessarily arduous way, "narrow and difficult to tread as a razor's edge." Not by denying all relations, but through all relations is the Divine naturally approachable to man. This seeing is not the largest
truth that the supreme Being is without any relations with the mental, vital, physical existence of man in the universe, \textit{avyavah\=aryam}, nor that what is described as the empirical truth of things, the truth of relations, \textit{vyavah\=ara}, is altogether the opposite of the supreme spiritual truth, \textit{param\=arth}. On the contrary by a thousand relations the supreme Being is in contact and union with our human existence and by all essential ways of our being and of the world's being, \textit{sarvab\=avana}, can that contact be made sensible and the union real to our soul, heart, will, intelligence, spirit. Therefore is this other way natural and easy for man, \textit{sukham \=aptum}. God does not make himself difficult of approach to us; only one thing is needed, one demand made, the will to break through the veil of ignorance, the whole seeking of the mind and heart and life for that which is near to it, within it, its own soul of being and spiritual essence and secret of its personality and impersonality. This is our one difficulty; but the rest the Master of our being will see and accomplish, \textit{aham tw\=am mokshayishy\=ami \=ma suchah}.

In the very part of its teaching in which the Gita's synthesis leans most towards the side of pure knowledge, we have seen that it constantly prepares for this fuller truth and more pregnant knowledge; indeed, it is implied in the very form the Gita gives to the realisation of the self-existent Immutable. That immutable Self of all existences seems indeed to be without any active relation to the workings of Nature; but it is not void of and remote from all relation. It is witness and supporter, it gives a silent and impersonal sanction, it has even an impassive enjoyment; the action of Nature is still possible even when the soul is poised in that calm self-existence: for the witness is the immutable Purusha, and Purusha has always some relation with Prakriti. But now the reason of this double aspect of silence and of activity is revealed in its entirety,—because the silent all-pervading Self is only
one side of the truth of the divine Being. He who pervades the world as the one unchanging self in all its mutations, is the Godhead in man, the Lord in the heart of every being, conscient cause and master of all his subjective becoming and his inward-taking and his outward-going objectivised action. The Ishwara of the Yogins is one with the Brahman of the seeker of knowledge, one supreme and universal spirit, one supreme and universal Godhead.

This Godhead is not the limited personal God of so many exoteric religions; for these are all only partial and outward statements of the other, the creative and directive, the personal side of his complete truth of existence: this is the one supreme Person, Soul, Being, Purusha of whom all individual personality is a limited development in cosmic Nature. This Godhead is not a particularised name and form of Divinity, ishta-devatā, constructed by the intelligence or embodying the special aspiration of the worshipper; all such names and forms are only aspects of the one Deva who is the universal Lord of all worshippers and all religions: this is that universal Deity. This Ishwara is not a reflection in illusive Maya of the impersonal and indeterminable Brahman: beyond all cosmic being as well as within it he is still the Lord of all existences; Parabrahman who is Parameswara, supreme Lord because he is the supreme Self and Spirit, from his highest original existence he originates and governs the universe, not self-deceived, but with an all-knowing omnipotence. Nor is the working of his divine Nature in the cosmos an illusion whether of his or our consciousness: the only illusive Maya is the ignorance of the lower Prakriti which is not a creator of non-existent things on the background of the sole Existence, but only because of its encumbered and limited working misrepresents to the human mind by the figure of ego the greater sense of existence. It is a supreme, a divine Nature which is the creatrix of the
universe; all existences are becomings of the one divine Being; all life is a working of the power of the one Lord; all nature is a manifestation of his existence. He is the Godhead in man; the Jiva is spirit of his Spirit; he is the Godhead in the universe; this world in Space and Time is his phenomenal self-extension.

In the unrolling of this comprehensive vision of existence and super-existence the Yoga of the Gita finds its unified significance and unexampled amplitude. This supreme Godhead is the one unchanging imperishable Self in all that is, therefore to the spiritual sense of this unchanging imperishable self man has to awake and to unify with it his inner impersonal being. He is the Godhead in man who originates and directs all his workings; therefore man has to awaken to the Godhead within himself, to know the divinity he houses, and to rise beyond all that veils and obscures it and find and become united with this inmost Self of his self, this greater consciousness of his consciousness, this hidden Master of all his will and works, this Being within him who is the fount and object of all his becoming. He is the Godhead whose divine nature, origin of all that we are, is veiled by these lower natural derivations; therefore man has to get back from his lower apparent to his essential divine nature and so arrive at perfection and immortality. This Godhead is one in all existences, the self who lives in all and the self in whom all live and have their being; therefore man has to discover his spiritual unity with all creatures, to see all in the self and the self in all beings, even to see all things and beings as himself, atmanam anyena sarvacitam, and so think, feel, act in all his mind, will and living. This Godhead is the origin of all that is and by his Nature has become all these existences, abhut sarva-bhulani; therefore man has to see and adore the One in all things animate and inanimate, the manifestation in sun and star and flower, in man and every
living creature, in the forms and forces, qualities and powers of Nature, \textit{vasudevah sarvam iti}; he has to make himself by divine seeing and a divine sympathy one universality with the universe. Passive relationless identity excludes action, but this larger and richer oneness fulfils itself by works; it becomes the source and continent and substance and motive and divine purpose of all our action. \textit{Kasmay devāya havishā vidhema}, to what Godhead shall we give all our life and action as an offering? This Godhead is the Lord who claims our sacrifice. Passive relationless identity excludes the joy of love and devotion; but bhakti is the very soul and heart and summit of this richer union; this Godhead is the fulfilment of all relations, father, mother, lover, friend, refuge of the soul of every creature. He is the one supreme and universal Deva, Atman, Purusha, Brahman, Ishwara of the secret wisdom. He has manifested the world in himself in all these ways by his divine Yoga, through which its multitudinous existences are one in him and he is one in them in many aspects; to awaken to the revelation of him in all these ways is man's side of the same divine Yoga.

To make it perfectly and indisputably clear that this is the supreme and entire truth of his teaching, this the integral knowledge which he had promised to reveal, the divine Avatar declares, in a brief reiteration of the upshot of all that he has been saying, that this and no other is his supreme word, \textit{paramam vachah}. "Again hearken to my supreme word" \textit{bhūya eva śrīnu me paramam vachah}. This supreme word of the Gita is, we find, first the declaration that the highest worship and highest knowledge of the Eternal are the knowledge and the adoration of him as the supreme and divine Origin of all that is in existence and the mighty lord of the world and its peoples of whose being all things are the becomings; secondly, the declaration of a unified knowledge and bhakti as the supreme Yoga, the destined and the natural way given to man to
arrive at union with the eternal Godhead. And to point this definition of the way and this highest importance of bhakti founded upon and opening to this knowledge and becoming a basis and motive-power for divinely appointed action, the acceptance of it by the heart and mind of the disciple is made the preliminary to the farther development by which the final command to action comes to be given to the human instrument, Arjuna. "I will speak this supreme word to thee" says the Godhead "from my will for thy soul's good, now that thy heart is taking delight in me," te priyamāṇāya vakṣyāmi. For this delight of the heart in God is the whole condition and essence of true bhakti, bhajanti priti-pūrvakam. As soon as the supreme word is given, Arjuna is made to utter his acceptance of it and to ask for a practical way of seeing God in all things in Nature, from which immediately and naturally develops the vision of the Divine as the Spirit of the universe and arises the tremendous command to the world-action.

The idea of the Divine on which the Gita insists as the secret of the whole mystery of existence, the knowledge of which leads to liberation, is one which bridges the opposition between the cosmic procession in Time and the supracosmic eternity without denying either of them or taking anything from their reality. It harmonises the pantheistic, the theistic and the highest transcendental terms of our spiritual conception and spiritual experience. The Divine is the unborn Eternal who has no origin; there is nothing before him from which he proceeds, because he is timeless and absolute in his being "Neither the gods nor the great Rishis know any birth of Me...He who knows me as the unborn without origin"...are the opening utterances of this supreme word: and it gives the promise that this knowledge—not limiting, not intellectual, for the form and nature, if we can use such language, of this
transcendental Being, his swarupa, are necessarily unthinkable by the mind, achintyarupa, but pure and spiritual,—liberates the mortal being from all ignorance and from all sin, suffering and evil, yo vetti asammud'ah sanartyeshu sarvatapataih pramuchyate. The human soul that can dwell in the light of this supreme spiritual knowledge is lifted beyond the formulations of the universe into the ineffable power of an all-exceeding, yet all-fulfilling identity. The spiritual experience of the transcendental Being goes beyond the limitations of the pantheistic conception of existence, the infinite of a cosmic monism which makes God and the universe one and limits the Divine by his cosmic manifestation or makes that the sole means of knowing him; but this liberates into a timeless and spaceless eternity. Neither the Gods nor the Titans know thy manifestation" cries Arjuna in his reply: the whole universe or even numberless universes cannot manifest him, they cannot contain the ineffably infinite greatness of his being. All other God-knowledge has its truth only by dependence on this transcendent, unmanifested and ineffable reality of the Godhead.

But the divine Transcendence is not a negation, nor is it an Absolute in the sense of being empty of all relation to the universal existence. It is a supreme positive, an absolute of all absolutes, from which all cosmic relation is derived and to which all cosmic existences returning find in it their own absolute existence. "For I am altogether and in every way the origin of the gods and the great Rishis." The gods are the great Powers and Personalities who inform and preside over the subjective and objective forces of cosmic existence; they are spiritual forms of the eternal and original Deity who descend from him into the many processes of the world,—multitudinous, universal, weaving out of the primary principles of being and its thousand complexities the whole web of this diversified existence of the One. All their being and pro-
cess itself proceeds in every way, in every principle, in every strand from the truth of the transcendent Being,—nothing is independently created here or caused self-sufficiently by these divine agents, but everything has its origin, its cause, its first spiritual reason for being in the absolute and supreme Godhead,—*aham ādih sarvaçah.* Nothing in the universe has its real cause in the universe, but all proceeds from this supernal Existence. The great Rishis, called here as in the Veda the seven original Seers, *maharshayah sapta pūrve,* the seven Ancients of the world, are mental powers of that divine Wisdom which has developed all things out of its own self-consciousness, *prajñā purāṇī,* in the seven principles of its being,—the all-upholding all-illumining seven Thoughts of the Veda, *sāpta dhiyāḥ,* so that the Upanishad speaks of all things as being arranged in septettes, *sāpta sāpta.* With them are coupled the four eternal Manus, fathers of man,—for the active nature of the Godhead is fourfold and humanity expresses this nature in its fourfold character,—who also as their name implies, are mental beings, and they act as the creators of all this life that depends on mind for its action. From them are all these living beings in the world; they are their children and offspring, *yesham loka imāh prajāḥ.* But these great Rishis and these Manus are mental becomings of the supreme Soul,* who are born out of his spiritual transcendence into cosmic consciousness,—originators they, but he the origin of all that originates in the universe. Spirit of all spirits, Soul of all souls, Mind of all mind, Life of all life, Substance of all form, this transcendent Absolute is no complete opposite of all we are, but the originating and illuminating absolute of all the principles of our being.

This transcendent Origin of our existence is not separated from it by any gulf, does not disown what

* Madbhāvāḥ mānasā jātāh
derives from him as the figments of an illusion. He is the Being, all are his becomings. He does not create out of a void, out of a Nihil, or out of an unsubstantial matrix of dream; it is out of himself he creates, in himself he becomes, all things are in his being and all is of his being. This truth brings in, but exceeds the pantheistic seeing; Vasudeva is all, \textit{vasudevah sarvam}, but Vasudevah is all that appears in the cosmos because he is too all that does not appear in it, all that is never manifested; his being is in no way limited by his becoming and in no way bound by its relations. Even in becoming all he is still a Transcendence, even in assuming finite forms he is always the Infinite. Nature, Prakriti, in its essence is his spiritual power of being which develops infinite primal quality of becoming, and from that turns into form and action,—for in the essential, secret and divine order of things spiritual truth of being comes first, psychological truth of being is dependent on the spiritual and derives from it, from the psychological the objective truth of being derives and it depends on it for all its presentations of existence to the mind: or in other words the objective fact is only an expression of a sum of soul factors and these go back always to some spiritual cause of their appearance.

Finite becoming is only a phenomenon of the divine Infinite. Nature, secondarily, is a subordinate development of selective combinations evolved out of essential and psychological quality of being and becoming, \textit{svabhāva}, for a quite limited relation and form and mutual experience in the cosmic unity, and in this lower, outward and apparent order of things it is disfigured in fact by the perversions of ignorance and the actually materialised, separative and egoistic mechanism of our experience. But still here also all is from the supreme Godhead, a birth, a becoming, \textit{pravṛitti}, evolution, \textsuperscript{a} process of development in action of being out of the Transcendent.

\textsuperscript{a} Prabhāva, bhāva, pravṛitti.
Aham sarvasya prabhavo mattaḥ sarvam pravartate; "I am the birth of everything, from me all proceeds into development of action and being." Not only is this true of all that we call good, praise and recognise as divine, all that is luminous, sattvic, ethical, peace-giving, spiritually joy-giving, "understanding and knowledge and freedom from the bewilderment of ignorance, asammoha, forgiveness and truth and self-government and calm of inner control, non-injuring and equality, contentment and austerity and giving," but also the oppositions that perplex the mortal mind and bring in the ignorance and its bewilderment, sammoha, "grief and pleasure, coming into being and its destruction, fear and fearlessness, glory and ingloriousness" and all the rest of the interplay of light and darkness and the mixed threads that quiver so painfully and yet with a constant stimulation through the entanglement of our nervous mind and its ignorant subjectivity. All are in their separate diversities subjective becomings of existences in the great Becoming which get their birth and being from Him who transcends them, who knows and originates them, but is not caught as in a web in that diversified knowledge and is not overcome by his creation. We must observe the emphatic collocation of the three words from the verb bhu, to become, bhavanti, bhāvāḥ, bhūtānam; all existences are becomings of the Divine, bhūtāni, all subjective states and movements are their psychological becomings, bhāvāḥ, and these too, the subjective as well as the spiritual, and all their apparent results are becomings from the supreme Being, bhavanti matta eva. The Gita, while it recognises and stresses the distinction between Being and becoming, yet does not turn it into an opposition; for that would be to abrogate the universal unity. The Godhead is one in his transcendence, he

Of the Upanishad, ātmā eva abhūt sarvakhūtāni the Self has become all existences, with this implied significance, the Self-existent has become all these becomings.
is one all-supporting Self of things, and in the unity of his cosmic nature all derives from him and becomes from his being.

But another supreme reality of him contained in this double and unified Truth must also be recognised as an indispensable element of this liberating knowledge, the transcendent as well as the close immanent reality of the divine government of the universe. This Supreme who becomes all creation, yet infinitely transcends it, is not a will-less cause aloof from his creation, who disowns all responsibility for these results of his universal Power of being or who casts them upon an illusive consciousness inferior to his own or leaves them to a mechanical Law or to a Demiurge or to a Manichean conflict of Principles, himself an aloof and indifferent Witness who waits impassively for all to abolish itself or to return to its unmoved original principle. He is the mighty lord of the worlds and peoples, loka-maheswara, governing all not only from within, but from his supreme transcendence; cosmos cannot be governed by a Power that does not transcend cosmos; a divine government means a free mastery and not a force of determinative becoming limited by the apparent nature of the cosmos. This is the theistic seeing of the universe, but it is no shrinking and gingerly theism afraid of the world's contradictions, but one which sees God as the omniscient and omnipotent, the sole original Being who manifests in himself all as stuff of his own existence and governs himself what in himself he has manifested, unaffected by its oppositions, unbound by his creation, exceeding, yet intimately related to this Nature and one with all her beings, their Spirit, Self, highest Soul, Lord, Lover, Friend, Refuge, who is ever leading them through all the mortal appearances of ignorance and suffering and sin and evil, leading each and all through its nature towards a supreme light and bliss and transcendence and immortality. This is the fullness of the liberating knowledge, a know-
knowledge of the Divine within us and in the world as a transcendent, an absolute Being who has become all that is by his divine Nature, by his effective power of existence and governs all from his transcendence, present within every creature and the cause, ruler, director of all cosmic happenings, yet far too great, mighty and infinite to be limited by his creation.

This character of the knowledge is emphasised in three separate verses of promise. "Whosoever knoweth me says the Godhead, as the unborn who is without origin, mighty lord of the worlds and peoples, lives unbewildered among mortals, and he is delivered from all sin and evil. Whosoever knoweth in its right principles this pervading lordship of my being and this my Yoga (the divine Yoga, aiṣṭvāṇa Yoga by which the Transcendent is in unity with all existences and dwells in them and contains them all as becomings of his own Nature,) unites himself to me by an untrembling union of Yoga...The wise hold me for the birth of each and all, and each and all as developing from me its action and being, and so holding they love and adore me...and I give them the Yoga of the understanding by which they come to me and destroy for them the darkness which is born of the ignorance." These results must arise inevitably from the very nature of the knowledge and from the very nature of the Yoga which converts the knowledge into spiritual growth and spiritual experience. For all the perplexity of man's mind and action, the stumbling, insecurity and affliction of his mind, his will, ethical turn, emotional, sensational and vital urgings, arises from the groping and bewildered cognition and volition natural to his sense-obscured mortal mind in the body, saṁmohā. But when he sees the divine Origin of all things, when he looks steadily from the cosmic appearance to its transcendent Reality and back from that Reality to the appearance, he is then delivered from this bewilderment of the mind, will, heart and senses, asummudhah martyeshu.
to everything its supernal and its real and not any longer its apparent value, he finds the hidden links and connections; he consciously directs all his life and action to their high and true object and governs them by the light and power which comes to him from the Godhead within him. So he escapes from the wrong cognition, wrong mental and volitional reaction, wrong sensational reception and impulse which constitute sin and error and cause suffering, sarva-pâpaih pranuchyate. Thus living in the transcendent and universal and seeing his own and other individuality in their greater values he is released from the separative and egoistic cognition and volition. That is always the essence of the spiritual liberation.

This liberated wisdom is not, in the view of the Gita, an abstracted and unrelated impersonality. For the mind and soul of the liberated man are settled in a constant and an integral sense of the pervasion of the world by the actuating and the directing presence of the divine Lord of the universe, etâm vibhûtim mama yo vetti,—of his transcendency of cosmic existence, but also of his oneness with it by the divine Yoga, yogam cha mama; and he sees each aspect of the transcendent, the cosmic and the individual existence in its right relation to the supreme Truth and all in their right place in the unity of the divine Yoga,—not each thing separately, for a separate seeing leaves all unexplained or one-sided to the experiencing consciousness, nor all confusedly, for a confused seeing gives a wrong light and a chaotic action. Secure in the transcendence, he is not affected by the cosmic stress and the turmoil of Time and circumstance; untroubled in the midst of all this creation and destruction of things, his spirit adheres to an unshaken and untrembling Yoga of union with the eternal and spiritual in the universe, sees through all the divine persistence of the Master of the Yoga and acts out of a tranquil universality and oneness with all beings,—which implies no involution of soul and mind in the separative
lower nature, because his basis of spiritual experience is not the inferior phenomenal being, but the supreme Transcendence. He becomes of like nature and law of being with the Divine, sādharyam āgatah, transcendent in universality of spirit, universal even in the individuality of mind, life and body. By this Yoga once perfected and undeviating,—avikampena yogena yujyate, he is able to take up whatever poise of nature, assume whatever human condition, do whatever world-action without ceasing to be in union with the divine Self and communion with the Master of being.

This knowledge translated into the affective, emotional, temperamental being becomes a love and adoration of the original and transcendental Godhead, of the Master of existence, of God in man and God in Nature. It is at first a wisdom of the intelligence, the buddhi, accompanied by a subjective state of the affective nature,† bhāva, which is the beginning of a change of nature, a new inner birth and becoming that prepares for oneness with the supreme object of love and adoration, madbhāvāya. There is a delight of love in the greatness and beauty and perfection of this divine Being now seen everywhere in the world and above it, priti, which assumes the place of the scattered and external pleasure of the mind in existence or rather draws all other delight into it and transforms it by a marvellous alchemy. The whole consciousness becomes full of the Godhead and replete with his answering consciousness; the whole life flows into this one sea of bliss-experience, all the speech and thought of such God-lovers becomes a mutual utterance and understanding of the Divine; in that is concentrated all the play and pleasure, all the contentment of the being; a continual union from moment to moment in the thought and memory, an unbroken continuity of the experience of oneness in the

*Sarvathā varṣamāno'pi sa yogt mayi varṣate. † budhā bhāvān
samavītāh.
spirit. From the moment that this inner state begins, even in the stage of imperfection, the Divine confirms it by the perfect Yoga of the will and intelligence. He uplifts the blazing lamp of knowledge within, destroys the ignorance of the separative mind and will, stands revealed in the human spirit. By the Yoga of the will and intelligence founded on the union of action and knowledge the transition was affected from the lower being to the immutable calm of the witnessing Soul above the active nature; by this greater yoga of the Buddhi founded in the union of love and adoration with an all-comprehending knowledge the soul rises to the whole transcendental truth of the Divinity. The Eternal is fulfilled in the spirit and nature of the individual being; the being itself rises from birth in time to eternity.
The Synthesis of Yoga

THE YOGA OF SELF-PERFECTION

CHAPTER LI

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF SELF-PERFECTION

Essentially, then this divine self-perfection is a conversion of the human into a likeness of and a fundamental oneness with the divine nature, a rapid shaping of the image of God in man and filling in of its ideal outlines. It is what is ordinarily termed sādṛṣya-mukti, a liberation into the divine resemblance out of the bondage of the human seeming, or, to use the expression of the Gita, sādharma-yoga-gati, a coming to be one in law of being with the supreme, universal and indwelling Divine. To perceive and have a right view of our way to such a transformation we must form some sufficient working idea of the complex thing that this human nature at present is in the confused interminglings of its various principles, so that we may see the precise nature of the conversion each part of it must undergo and the most effective means for the conversion. How to disengage from this knot of thinking mortal matter the Immortal it contains, from this mentalised vital animal man the happy fullness of his submerged hints of Godhead, is the real problem of a human being and living. Life develops many first hints of the divinity without completely disengaging them; Yoga is the unravelling of the knot of Life's difficulty.
First of all we have to know the central secret of the psychological complexity which creates the problem and all its difficulties. But an ordinary psychology which only takes mind and its phenomena at their surface values, will be of no help to us; it will not give us the least guidance in this line of self-exploration and self-conversion. Still less can we find the clue in a scientific psychology with a materialistic basis which assumes that the body and the biological and physiological factors of our nature are not only the starting-point but the whole real foundation and regards human mind as only a subtle development from the life and the body. That may be the actual truth of the animal side of human nature and of the human mind in so far as it is limited and conditional by the physical part of our being. But the whole difference between man and the animal is that the animal mind, as we know it, cannot get for one moment away from its origins, cannot break out from the covering, the close chrysalis which the bodily life has spun round the soul, and become something greater than its present self, a more free, magnificent and noble being; but in man mind reveals itself as a greater energy escaping from the restrictions of the vital and physical formula of being. But even this is not all that man is or can be: he has in him the power to evolve and release a still greater ideal energy which in its turn escapes out of the restrictions of the mental formula of his nature and discloses the supramental form, the ideal power of a spiritual being. In Yoga we have to travel beyond the physical nature and the superficial man and to discover the workings of the whole nature of the real man. In other words we must arrive at and use a psycho-physical knowledge with a spiritual foundation.

Man is in his real nature,—however obscure now this truth may be to our present understanding and self-consciousness, we must for the purposes of Yoga have faith in it, and we shall then find that our faith is justified by
an increasing experience and a greater self-knowledge,—a spirit using the mind, life and body for an individual and a communal experience and self-manifestation in the universe. This spirit is an infinite existence limiting itself in apparent being for individual experience. It is an infinite consciousness which defines itself in finite forms of consciousness for joy of various knowledge and various power of being. It is an infinite delight of being expanding and contracting itself and its powers, concealing and discovering, formulating many terms of its joy of existence, even to an apparent obscuration and denial of its own nature. In itself it is eternal Sachchidananda, but this complexity, this knotting up and unravelling of the infinite in the finite is the aspect we see it assume in universal and in individual nature. To discover the eternal Sachchidananda, this essential self of our being within us, and live in it is the stable basis, to make its true nature evident and creative of a divine way of living in our instruments, supermind, mind, life and body, the active principle of a spiritual perfection.

Supermind, mind, life and body are the four instruments which the spirit uses for its manifestation in the workings of Nature. Supermind is spiritual consciousness acting as a self-luminous knowledge, will, sense, aesthetic, energy, self-creative and unveiling power of its own delight and being. Mind is the action of the same powers, but limited and only very indirectly and partially illumined. Supermind lives in unity though it plays with diversity; mind lives in a separate action of diversity, though it may open to unity. Mind is not only capable of ignorance, but, because it acts always partially and by limitation, it works characteristically as a power of ignorance: it may even and it does forget itself in a complete insconscience, or nescience, awaken from it to the ignorance of a partial knowledge and move from the ignorance towards a complete knowledge,—that is its natural action in the human
being,—but it can never have by itself a complete knowledge. Supermind is incapable of real ignorance; even if it puts full knowledge behind it in the limitation of a particular working, yet all its working refers back to what it has put behind it and all is instinct with self-illumination; even if it involves itself in material nescience, it yet does there accurately the works of a perfect will and knowledge. Supermind lends itself to the action of the inferior instruments; it is always there indeed at the core as a secret support of their operations. In matter it is an automatic action and effectuation of the hidden idea in things; in life its most seizable form is instinct, an instinctive, subconscious or partly subconscious knowledge and operation; in mind it reveals itself as intuition, a swift, direct and self-effective illumination of intelligence, will, sense and aesthetic. But these are merely irradiations of the supermind which accommodate themselves to the limited functioning of the obscurer instruments: its own characteristic nature is a gnosis superconscient to mind, life and body. Supermind or gnosis is the characteristic, illumined, significant action of spirit in its own native reality.

Life is an energy of spirit subordinated to action of mind and body, which fulfils itself through mentality and physicality and acts as a link between them. It has its own characteristic operation but nowhere works independently of mind and body. All energy of the spirit in action works in the two terms of existence and consciousness, for the self-formation of existence and the play and self-realisation of consciousness, for the delight of existence and the delight of consciousness. In this inferior formulation of being in which we at present live, the spirit's energy of life works between the two terms of mind and matter, supporting and effecting the formulations of substance of matter and working as a material energy, supporting the formulations of consciousness of mind and
the workings of mental energy, supporting the interaction of mind and body and working as a sensory and nervous energy. What we call vitality is for the purposes of our normal human existence power of conscious being emerging in matter, liberating from it and in it mind and the higher powers and supporting their limited action in the physical life,—just as what we call mentality is power of conscious being awaking in body to light of its own consciousness and to consciousness of all the rest of being immediately around it and working at first in the limited action set for it by life and body, but at certain points and at a certain height escaping from it to a partial action beyond this circle. But this is not the whole power whether of life or mentality; they have planes of conscious existence of their own kind, other than this material level, where they are freer in their characteristic action. Matter or body itself is a limiting form of substance of spirit in which life and mind and spirit are involved, self-hidden, self-forgetful by absorption in their own externalising action, but bound to emerge from it by a self-compelling evolution. But matter too is capable of refining to subtler forms of substance in which it becomes more apparently a formal density of life, of mind, of spirit. Man himself has, besides this gross material body, an encasing vital sheath, a mental body, a body of bliss and gnosis. But all matter, all body contains within it the secret powers of these higher principles; matter is a formation of life that has no real existence apart from the informing universal spirit which gives it its energy and substance.

This is the nature of spirit and its instruments. But to understand its operations and to get at a knowledge which will give to us a power of leverage in uplifting them out of the established groove in which our life goes spinning, we have to perceive that the Spirit has based all its workings upon two twin aspects of its being, Soul and Nature, Purusha and Prakriti. We have to treat them as
different and diverse in power,—for in practice of consciousness this difference is valid,—although they are only two sides of the same reality, pole and pole of the one conscious being. Purusha or soul is spirit cognisant of the workings of its nature, supporting them by its being, enjoying or rejecting enjoyment of them in its delight of being. Nature is power of the spirit, and she is too working and process of its power formulating name and form of being, developing action of consciousness and knowledge, throwing itself up in will and impulsion, force and energy, fulfilling itself in enjoyment. Nature is Prakriti, Maya, Shakti. If we look at her on her most external side where she seems the opposite of Purusha, she is Prakriti, an inert and mechanical self-driven operation, inconscient or conscient only by the light of Purusha, elevated by various degrees, vital, mental, supramental, of his soul-illumination of her workings. If we look at her on her other internal side where she moves nearer to unity with Purusha, she is Maya, will of being and becoming or of cessation from being and becoming with all their results, apparent to the consciousness, of involution and evolution, existing and non-existing, self-concealment of spirit and self-discovery of spirit. Both are sides of one and the same thing, Shakti, power of being of the spirit which operates, whether superconsciously or consciously or subconsciously in a seeming inconscience,—in fact all these motions coexist at the same time and in the same soul,—as the spirit’s power of knowledge, power of will, power of process and action, jnana-shakti, ichchhá-shakti, kriyá-shakti. By this power the spirit creates all things in itself, hides and discovers all itself in the form and behind the veil of its manifestation.

Purusha is able by this power of its nature to take whatever poise it may will and to follow the law and form of being proper to any self-formulation. It is eternal soul and spirit in its own power of self-existence superior to
and governing its manifestations; it is universal soul and spirit developed in power of becoming of its existence, infinite in the finite; it is individual soul and spirit absorbed in development of some particular course of its becoming, in appearance mutably finite in the infinite. All these things it can be at once, eternal spirit universalised in cosmos, individualised in its beings; it can too found the consciousness rejecting, governing or responding to the action of Nature in any one of them, put the others behind it or away from it, know itself as pure eternity, self-supporting universality or exclusive individuality. Whatever the formulation of its nature, soul can seem to become that and view itself as that only in the frontal active part of its consciousness; but it is never only what it seems to be; it is too the so much else that it can be; secretly, it is the all of itself that is yet hidden. It is not irrevocably limited by any particular self-formulation in Time, but can break through and beyond it, break it up or develop it, select, reject, new-create, reveal out of itself a greater self-formulation. What it believes itself to be by the whole active will of its consciousness in its instruments, that it is or tends to become, yo yachchhraddhah sa eva sah: what it believes it can be and has full faith in becoming, that it changes to in nature, evolves or discovers.

This power of the soul over its nature is of the utmost importance in the Yoga of self-perfection; if it did not exist, we could never get by conscious endeavour and aspiration out of the fixed groove of our present imperfect human being; if any greater perfection were intended, we should have to wait for Nature to effect it in her own slow or swift process of evolution. In the lower forms of being the soul accepts this complete subjection to Nature, but as it rises higher in the scale, it awakes to a sense of something in itself which can command Nature; but it is only when it arrives at self-know-
ledge that this free will and control becomes a complete reality. The change effects itself through process of nature, not therefore by any capricious magic, but an ordered development and intelligible process. When complete mastery is gained, then the process by its self-effective rapidity may seem a miracle to the intelligence, but it still proceeds by law of the truth of Spirit,—when the Divine within us by close union of our will and being with him takes up the Yoga and acts as the omnipotent master of the nature. For the Divine is our highest Self and the self of all Nature, the eternal and universal Purusha.

Purusha may establish himself in any plane of being, take any principle of being as the immediate head of his power and live in the working of its proper mode of conscious action. The soul may dwell in the principle of infinite unity of self-existence and be aware of all consciousness, energy, delight, knowledge, will, activity as conscious form of this essential truth, Sat or Satya. It may dwell in the principle of infinite conscious energy, Tapas, and be aware of it unrolling out of self-existence the works of knowledge, will and dynamic soul-action for the enjoyment of an infinite delight of the being. It may dwell in the principle of infinite self-existent delight and be aware of the divine Ananda creating out of its self-existence by its energy whatever harmony of being. In these three poises the consciousness of unity dominates; the soul lives in its awareness of eternity, universality, unity, and whatever diversity there is, is not separative, but only a multitudinous aspect of oneness. It may dwell too in the principle of supermind, in a luminous self-determining knowledge, will and action which develops some coordination of perfect delight of conscious being. In the higher gnosis unity is the basis, but it takes its joy in diversity; in lower fact of supermind diversity is the basis, but it refers back always to a conscious unity and it takes
joy in unity. These ranges of consciousness are beyond our present level; they are superconscious to our normal mentality. That belongs to a lower hemisphere of being.

This lower being begins where a veil falls between soul and nature, between spirit in supermind and spirit in mind, life and body. Where this veil has not fallen, these instrumental powers are not what they are in us, but an enlightened part of the unified action of supermind and spirit. Mind gets to an independent idea of its own action when it forgets to refer back to the light from which it derives and becomes absorbed in the possibilities of its own separative process and enjoyment. The soul when it dwells in the principle of mind, not yet subject to but user of life and body, knows itself as a mental being working out its mental life and forces and images, bodies of the subtle mental substance, according to its individual knowledge, will and dynamis modified by its relation to other similar beings and powers in the universal mind. When it dwells in the principle of life, it knows itself as a being of the universal life working out action and consciousness by its desires under similar modifying conditions proper to a universal life-soul whose action is through many individual life-beings. When it dwells in the principle of matter, it knows itself as a consciousness of matter acting under a similar law of the energy of material being. In proportion as it leans towards the side of knowledge, it is aware of itself more or less clearly as a soul of mind, a soul of life, a soul of body viewing and acting in or acted upon by its nature; but where it leans towards the side of ignorance, it knows itself as an ego identified with nature of mind, of life or of body, a creation of Nature. But the native tendency of material being leads towards an absorption of the soul’s energy in the act of formation and material movement and a consequent self-oblivion of the conscious being. The material universe begins from an apparent inconscience.
The universal Purusha dwells in all these planes in a certain simultaneity and builds upon each of these principles a world or series of worlds with its beings who live in the nature of that principle. Man, the microcosm, has all these planes in his own being, ranged from his subconscious to his superconscious existence. By a developing power of Yoga he can become aware of these concealed worlds hidden from his physical, materialised mind and senses which know only the material world, and then he becomes aware that his material existence is not a thing apart and self-existent, as the material universe in which he lives is also not a thing apart and self-existent, but is in constant relation to the higher planes and acted on by their powers and beings. He can open up and increase the action of these higher planes in himself and enjoy some sort of participation in the life of the other worlds,—which, for the rest, are or can be his dwelling-place, that is to say, the station of his awareness, dhâma, after death or between death and rebirth in a material body. But his most important capacity is that of developing the powers of the higher principles in himself, a greater power of life, a purer light of mind, the illumination of supermind, the infinite being, consciousness and delight of spirit. By an ascending movement he can develop his human imperfection towards that greater perfection.

But whatever his aim, however exalted his aspiration, he has to begin from the law of his present imperfection, to take full account of it and see how it can be converted to the law of a possible perfection. This present law of his being starts from the inconscience of the material universe, an involution of the soul in form and subjection to material nature; and, though in this matter life and mind have developed their own energies, yet they are limited and bound up in the action of the lower material, which is to the ignorance of his practical surface consciousness his original principle. Mind in him, though he is an embodied
mental being, has to bear the control of the body and the physical life and can only by some more or less considerable effort of energy and concentration consciously control life and body. It is only by increasing that control that he can move towards perfection,—and it is only by developing soul-power that he can reach it. Nature-power in him has to become more and more completely a conscious act of soul, a conscious expression of all the will and knowledge of spirit. Prakriti has to reveal itself as shakti of the Purusha.
The Eternal Wisdom

BOOK II

III

THE CONQUEST OF SELF

THE INTERNAL LAW

1. The true law of life is so simple, clear and intelligible that men cannot excuse their bad living under the pretext of ignorance. If men live in contradiction to the law of their true living, they are repudiating reason. And that is in fact what they do.

2. We should follow the law which Nature has engraved in our hearts. Wisdom lies in the perfect observation of her law.

3. What is the true law? It is a right reason invariable, eternal, in conformity with Nature, which is extended in all human being.—Man's duty is to give the guidance of the soul to reason.

4. The man whose understanding is in union with the Spirit, casts from him both good doing and evil doing; get this union, it is the perfect skill in works.

5. —In verity, there exists one law only, the law of

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6. 1) Tolstoi.—2) Seneca.—3) Cicero.—4) Hermes.—5) Bhagavad Gita. II. 50.—6) Anteius the Healer.
our conscience; all truth is there controlled and verified.

7 Our conscience is an inner light which guides us with an infallible security, shows us everywhere the Good and invites us to cooperate in it; but the intelligence snatches it away from us under a veil whose stuff is of the imagination.

8 The sovereign good has its abode in the soul; when that is upright, attentive to its duties, shut in upon itself, it has nothing to desire, it enjoys a perfect happiness.

9 Learn what are the duties which are engraved in the hearts of men as their means of arriving to beatitude.

10 A one and single direction is needed which will conduct us to a one sole end.—Let the soul be submitted within to an upright judge whose authority extends over our most secret actions.

12 Whosoever desireth salvation hath no expectation from man, but from him alone who dwelleth in him inwardly and from within the voice speaketh to him; then is he astonished that such words he hath never heard from any mouth, nor hath ever desired to hear them.

13 Quench not the spirit.

14 That which distinguishes from others the upright man, is that he never pollutes the genius within him which dwells in his heart.—If to thee nothing appears superior to the Genius which dwells in thee and has made itself master of his own tendencies and watches over his own thoughts and if beside him thou

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findest that all the rest is petty and of no worth, then
to no other thing give lodging.
16  Neglect not the gift that is in thee.
17  Hearken unto thy soul in all thy works and be faith-
18  ful unto it.—The soul is its own witness, the soul is
its own refuge. Never despise thy soul, that supreme
witness in men.

THE GOOD COMBAT 00

1  Who has ruder battles to sustain than the man
who labours for self-conquest?
2  He who subdues men is only strong; he who
subdues himself, is mighty.—Better is he that ruleth
his spirit than he that taketh a city.—The greatest
man in the world is not the conqueror, but the man
who has domination over his own being.
3  A man may conquer thousands and thousands of
men in battle, but he is the greatest conqueror who
has mastered himself.—Self-conquest is the most
glorious of victories; it shall better serve a man to
conquer himself than to be master of the whole
world.—When a man has subdued himself and lives
in perfect continence, not god, not Gandharva, not
Mara, not Brahma himself can turn into defeat his
victory.
4  .
5  .
6  All you have to do then is to command yourselves.
7  Keep over your actions an absolute empire; be
8  not their slave, but their master.—If you succeed in
conquering yourself entirely, you will conquer the

16) 1. Timothy. IV. 14.—17) Ecclesiasticus. XXXIII. 17.—
19) Laws of Manu.
00 Imitation of Christ.—2) Lao-Tse.—3) Proverbs XVI. 32.—
4) Schopenhauer.—5) Fo-shu-hing-tsan-king.—6) Dhammapada.—
7) id.—8) Cicero.—9) Imitation of Christ.—10) id
rest with the greatest ease. To triumph over oneself is the perfect victory.

11  He that overcometh shall inherit all things.
12  Wouldst thou that the world should submit to thee?
    Be busy then to fortify thy soul without ceasing.
13  Never be cowardly in the face of sin; say not to
    thyself. "I cannot do otherwise, I am habituated,
    I am weak." As long as thou livest, thou canst al-
    ways strive against sin and conquer it, if not today,
    tomorrow, if not tomorrow, the day after, if not the
    day after, surely before thy death. But if from the
    beginning thou renounce the struggle, thou renoun-
14  cest the fundamental sense of living.—Behold thou
    hast instructed many and thou hast strengthened the
    weak hands, thy words have uphelden him that was
    falling and thou hast strengthened the feeble knees;
    but now it is come upon thee and thou faintest, it
    toucheth thee and thou art troubled.—Be strong and
    of a good courage.
15  Let the Godhead within thee protect there a virile
    being, respect-worthy, a chief, a man self-disciplined.
16  Thyself vindicate thyself.
17  Subject thyself to thee.
18  Control by thy divine self thy lower being.
19  Battle with all thy force to cross the great torrent
    of desire.—Fight the good fight, lay hold on eternal
    life.
20
21
22  Warriors! we call ourselves warriors? But of what

11) Revelation XXI. 7.—12) Omar Khayyam.—13) Tolstoi.
14) Job. IV. 3, 4.—15) Joshua I. 9.—16) Marcus Aurelius.—17) Se-
    —20) Buddhist Texts.—21) I Timothy. VI. 12.—22) Anguttara Ni-
kaya.
fashion of warriors, tell me then, are we? We battle, O disciple, that is why we are called warriors. Why do we battle, O Master? For lofty virtue, for high discernment, for sublime wisdom,—that is why we are called warriors.

23 We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of the world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

24 I strive not against the world, but it is the world which strives against me.—It is better to perish in the battle against evil than to be conquered by it and remain living.

"Is India Civilised"

(3)

But there is yet another point of view from which the question or the challenge thus put before us becomes no longer an issue raised in a conflict of cultural interests and prejudices, but a problem with a meaning, a thought-provoking suggestion in the arresting shape of a query. From the viewpoint of the present, of culture as an acquired contribution to the growth of humanity, we reply that Indian civilisation has been the formed expression of a culture as great as any of the historic civilisations of mankind, great in religion, great in philosophy, great in science, great in thought of many kinds, great in literature, art and poetry, great in craft and trade and commerce, great in the organisation of politics and society. There have been dark spots and positive imperfections: what civilisation has been perfect? It has had considerable lacunae, blind alleys, much uncultured or ill-cultured ground: what civilisation has been without its unfilled parts, its negative aspects? But it can survive the severest comparisons. From the viewpoint of the present juncture in the workings of the Time-Spirit, the existing and the immediately future needs of humanity, we can say that if some of the forms of our civilisation have become inapt and others stand in need of much change and re-
novation,—which, for the rest, can be said of European culture also, for all its recently acquired progressiveness and habit of more rapid self-adaptation,—yet the spirit of Indian culture, its central ideas, its best ideals have not only still their message for humanity, but are capable of developing out of themselves by contact with new need and idea as good and better solutions of the problems before us than those which are offered to us secondhand from western sources. But there is also the view-point of the ideal future, the farther goals towards which humanity is moving, towards which the present is only a crude aspiration and of which the immediate future we see in hope and strive to bring about, is only a crude preparatory stage, there is an unrealised standard of the ideas which to the mind of the moment are Utopias, but to a more developed humanity may be the commonplaces of their daily environment. That point of view demands some consideration.

This is a question of human progress and of the ultimate greater perfectibility of human civilisation. To some minds the very idea of progress is an illusion; they imagine that the race moves constantly in a circle or even that greatness more often than not is to be found in the past and that the line of our movement is a curve of deterioration. But that is an illusion created by looking too much upon the high lights of the past and ignoring its shadows and by gazing too much on the dark spaces of the present and ignoring its powers of light and its aspects of happier promise, created too by a mistaken deduction from the phenomenon of an uneven progress, that rhythm of advance and relapse, day and night, waking and sleep or that temporary pushing of certain results at the expense of others not less desirable for perfection, by which Nature effects her evolutions. Progress admittedly does not march on securely in a straight line like a man sure of his familiar way or an army covering a mapped
and unimpeded terrain; it is very much an adventure through the unknown, an unknown full of surprises and baffling obstacles; it stumbles often, misses its way at many points, cedes here in order to gain there, retraces its steps frequently in order to get more widely forward. Therefore we find that the present does not always compare favourably with the past and even when it is more advanced in the mass, may still be inferior in certain directions. But man does move forward; even in failure there is a preparation for success; our nights carry in them the secret of a greater dawn. That we constantly experience in our individual progress, but it is true also of the human collectivity.

Western civilisation is proud of its continual progress and its successful modernism; but there is much that it has lost in the eagerness of its gains and much which men of old strove towards that it has not even attempted to accomplish, has perhaps flung aside with impatience or scorn to its own great loss, to the injury of its life, the imperfection of its culture. An ancient Greek of the time of Pericles or the philosophers suddenly transported in time to this century would indeed be agreeably astonished by the immense gains of the intellect and the expansion of the mind, the modern many-sidedness of the reason, the miraculous growth of science and its giant discoveries, its abundant power, richness and minuteness of instrumentation; he would be overcome and stupefied rather than agreeably surprised and charmed by the enormous stir and pulsation of modern life. But at the same time he would draw back repelled from its unashamed mass of ugliness and vulgarity, its unchastened external utilitarianism, its vitalistic riot and the morbid exaggeration and unsoundness of many of its growths. He would see in it much ill-disguised evidence of the uneliminated survival of the once triumphant barbarian. If he recognised its intellectuality and the scrupulous application of
the thought and scientific reason to the machinery of life, he would miss in it his own later attempt at the clear and noble application of the ideal reason to the inner life of the mind and the soul. As for the great spiritual seekers of the past, they would experience in all this huge activity of the intellect and the life the sense of an aching void, be affected by a feeling of illusion and unreality because that which is greatest in man and raises him beyond himself had been neglected: the discovery of the laws of physical Nature would not compensate in their eyes for the comparative, long the almost absolute cessation of that greater seeking and finding, the discovery of the freedom of the spirit. But an unbiased view can better be got by regarding this age of civilisation as an evolutionary stage of the human advance. We can then see that great gains have been made which are of the utmost importance to human perfection, not only the greater generalisation of knowledge and of intellectual power and activity, not only the advance of Science and its application to the conquest of our environment, but the development of high ideals and the attempt, however external and therefore imperfect, to bring them to bear upon the working of human society. What has been diminished or lost, can be recovered; then, given a fuller and more rounded application, the inner life of man will find that it has gained in depth and width, while we shall have acquired the salutary habit of a sincere endeavour to shape the outer collective life into an adequate image of our highest ideals. Temporary diminutions will not count before this greater eventual expansion.

If on the other hand an ancient Indian of the time of the Upanishads, of the Buddha or of the later classical age were to be set down in modern India and note that larger part of its life which belongs to the age of decline, it would be to experience a much more depressing sensation, the sense of a national, a cultural debacle, a fall
from the highest summits to discouragingly low levels. He might well ask himself what this degenerate posterity had done with the mighty civilisation of the past, how with so much to inspire, to elevate, spur them to yet greater accomplishment and self-exceeding, they could lapse into this impotent and inert confusion and instead of developing the high motives of Indian culture to yet deeper and wider issues, allowed them to rust and rot and overload themselves with ugly accretions. He would see his race clinging to forms and shells and rags of the past and missing nine-tenths of its nobler meaning. He would compare the spiritual light and energy of the heroic ages of the Upanishads and the philosophies with the later inertia or small and broken fragmentarily derivative activity; after the intellectual curiosity, the scientific development, the creative literary and artistic greatness, the noble fecundity of the classical age he would be amazed by the extent of a later degeneracy, the mental poverty, the immobility, the static repetition, the cessation of science, the long sterility of art, the comparative feebleness of the creative intuition. He would see a prone descent to ignorance, a failing of the old powerfull will and tapasya, almost a volitional impotence. In place of the simpler, more spiritually rational order of old times he would find a bewildering, a chaotic disorganised organisation of things without centre or largely harmonising idea, and even that in a state of half arrested, half hastening putrescence. In place of the great adaptable civilisation which assimilated with power and was able to return tenfold for what it received, he would find a helplessness bearing passively or only with a few ineffectually galvanic reactions the stress of circumstance,—at one time even a loss of faith and self-confidence so considerable as to tempt the intellectuals of the nation to scrap the ancient spirit and ideals for an alien and imported culture. He would note indeed the beginning of a
change, but might perhaps doubt how deep it had gone or whether it was powerful enough to save, forceful enough to upheave the whole nation from its cherished torpor and weakness into a new and robust creative activity.

But here too a better understanding points to hope rather than to despondency. This last age of Indian history has been one example of the local successions of night to day in the evolution; but it was a night at first filled with many and brilliant constellations and even at its thickest it might be characterised as the darkness of Kalidasa's description, *vicheya-tārakā prabhāta-kalpeva ċarvari*, "night preparing for dawn, with its few hardly decipherable stars." Even in the decline, all in the earlier part of it was not loss, there were needed developments, spiritual and other gains of the greatest importance for the future; and in its worst period the spirit was not dead but only torpid, concealed and self-shackled, and it is now emerging in answer to a pressure of constant awakening shocks for a strong self-liberation. So viewed the decline of our past culture may well be regarded as a waning and dying of the old form to make way not only for a new, but, if we will it, a greater creation. For after all it is the will in the being that gives to circumstances their value and the hue of apparent actuality is often a misleading indicator. If the will in a race or civilisation is towards death, if, that is to say, it either clings to the lassitude of decay and the laissez-faire of the moribund or even in strength insists blindly upon the propensities that lead to destruction or cherishes only the powers of dead Time and puts away from it the powers of the future, prefers life that was to life that will be, nothing, not even abundant strength and resources and intelligence, not even many calls to live and constantly offered opportunities will save it from disintegration. If on the contrary there comes a strong faith in itself and a robust will to live open to and willing to seize on the future and, where
it seems adverse, to compel it, we can draw from adversity and defeat a force of invincible victory and from apparent helplessness and decay rise in a mighty flame of renovation.

If we have this faith in life and progress for ourselves and humanity, we must not only recognise the greatness of the ideals of the past, but admit greater ideals for the future or at the very least a greater expansion of what stood behind past endeavour and capacity. But from this point of view of an ideal progress, it is evident that civilisation and barbarism become words of a quite relative significance. We may say even that neither India nor any other race, country or continent of mankind is yet fully civilised, for none has grasped the whole secret of a true and perfect human living or at least none has been yet able to apply it with an entire insight or a perfectly vigilant sincerity. If we define civilisation as a harmony of spirit, mind and body, where has that harmony been entire or altogether real? Where have there not been glaring discords and deficiencies? or where even has the whole secret of the harmony been altogether grasped in all its parts and the complete music of life evolved out of its difficulties into the triumphant ease of quite satisfying and durable or steadily mounting concords. Not only are there everywhere positive and ugly, even "hideous" blots on the life of man, but much that we now accept with equanimity or even take pride in, may well be regarded by a future humanity as barbarism or at least a semi-barbarism. Much that we regard as ideal, will then be condemned as a self-satisfied imperfection; much that we call enlightenment will appear as a demi-light or a darkness. Not only will many forms claiming to be ancient or even eternal, *sanditana*, without beginning or end,—as if that could be said of any form of things,—have to disappear, but the subjective shapes given to our best principles and ideals must undergo expansion, mutation, accept modifi-
cation in a new synthesis, change perhaps beyond recogni-
tion. There is a permanent spirit to which we must 
cling, certain fundamental motives or essential idea-forces 
which cannot be thrown aside, because they are part of 
the vital principle of our being and of our aim of being, 
swadharma; but these motives and idea-forces are, whether 
for nation or for humanity, few, simple in their essence, 
capable of a varying and progressive application. The 
rest belongs to the less internal layers of our being and 
must undergo the changing pressure and satisfy the for-
ward-moving demands of the Time-Spirit. There is the 
permanent spirit in things; there is the persistent swa-
dharma or law of being; there is a less binding system of 
laws of successive formulation,—the last obeying the mu-
tations of the ages, yugadharma. This double principle 
of persistence and mutation the race must obey or bear 
the penalty of decay and deterioration.

We have to make three distinct and yet convergent 
comparisons in order to arrive at a fruitfully guiding judg-
ment, a wholly helpful view of what we were, what we are 
and what we may be. We have to compare our past and 
our present, to distinguish in the first all that was great, 
essential, elevating, vitalising, illuminating, victorious, and 
in that again to separate what was of the permanent, ess-
ential spirit and the persistent law of our cultural being 
from what was temporary and formulative,—for all that 
was great in the past, cannot be preserved as it was or 
repeated; there are new needs, there are other vistas be-
fore us. Secondly, we have to distinguish too what was 
in the past deficient, imperfect, ill-grasped, imperfectly 
formulated or only suited to limiting and unfavourable 
circumstances,—for it is quite idle to pretend that all in 
the past, even at its greatest, was entirely admirable and 
the highest consummate achievement of the human mind 
and spirit. Then in this comparison we have to under-
stand the causes of our decline and seek the remedy, so
that our sense of the greatness of the past may not be, as it is to some, a fatally hypnotising lure to inertia, but rather an inspiration to renewed and greater achievements. In the present we have to note our actual weakness and its roots, but to fix our eyes with a still firmer attention on our elements of strength and impulses of self-renewal.

Our second comparison must be between the West and India. In the past of the West and the past of India, we have to observe with an unbiassed mind what the West succeeded in and brought forward for humanity as well as its gaps or deficiencies, and what ancient India and India of the middle time failed in by comparison as well as what it achieved. We have to scrutinise, without being overcome or misled, the present of the West in its strong success and vitality, but with its many defects, stumblings and dangers, and the present of India in its failure and its new velleities of revival. We have to see what we must inevitably receive from the West and how we can assimilate it to our own spirit and ideals; but we have also to see what founts of native power there are in ourselves from which we can draw greater and fresher streams of the power of life than from anything the West can offer us,—at least in its occidental forms,—greater at any rate for us because more natural to us, more stimulating to our idiosyncracy of nature, more vitally full for us of profound creative suggestions. But our third and most important comparison must be between our present and our ideal of the future. That ideal we must see as a reshaping of the forms of our spirit,—both the outer forms and the subjective directions of the fundamental motives, the thought-forms taken by the guiding idea-forces of our culture and civilisation. We have to recognise the great gulf between what we are and what we may and ought to strive to be, not in any spirit of discouragement, but in order to measure the advance we have to make, fix its lines and find the force to conceive and to execute.
An original truth-seeking thought, a strong and courageous intuition are required, but especially an unflinching spiritual and intellectual rectitude. We should recognise without any sophistical denial or hesitation those things in our creeds of life and social institutions which, apart from all phenomena of decline or deteriorcation, are in themselves mistaken, some indefensible, weakening to our national life or degrading and dishonouring to our civilisation. One need only instance the flagrant example of the treatement of our outcastes. There are those who would excuse it as an unavoidable circumstance of the past and even as the best possible solution then available; but the latter contention is highly disputable and an excuse is no justification. There are others who would justify it and, with whatever modifications, prolong it as necessary to our social synthesis. A solution which condemns one fifth of the nation to permanent ignominy is no solution, it is an acceptance of weakness and a constant wound to the social body and its spiritual, intellectual, moral and material well-being; a social synthesis which can only live by making a permanent rule of the degradation of our fellow-men stands condemned; the evil effects may be kept under and work only by the subtler unobserved action of the law of Karma, but once the light of Truth is let in on these dark spots, to perpetuate them is to maintain a seed of disruption and ruin. Again, we have to look on other forms of our society and culture, to see where they have lost their ancient spirit or real significance, where they are now a fiction and no longer in accordance with the ideas they assume or with the facts of life, where, even if good in themselves or beneficent in their own time, they are no longer sufficient for our growth and have either to be discarded for better formulations or transformed. This will not always be in the direction of a return upon their old significance or the limited truth of a past ideal. For even on our past and present ideals
we have to look with a clear insight and see whether they have not to be surpassed or enlarged or to be brought into consonance with new wider ideals consistent with our spirit so as to give place for or fit into a greater future synthesis. Faith in ourselves and the spirit of our culture is the first requisite of a continued and vigorous life; recognition of defect and of greater possibilities is the second, without which there cannot be a healthy and victorious survival.

One truth we can lay hold on as our best guide in our future effort, a truth seen very clearly by Vivekananda, that while the spirit and ideals of our civilisation were very good and the best part of them in their essence of eternal value and our internal and individual seeking of them earnest and powerful, at least in our leaders in thought and spirit and their following, our application of them to the collective life of society was never sufficiently bold and thoroughgoing and became more and more limited and halting. This defect was not at all peculiar to India, but here the dissonance became especially marked as time went on and put on our society a growing stamp of weakness and failure. At first, there was a large effort at some kind of synthesis between the outer life and inner ideal; but it ended in a static regulation of society, an underlying principle of spiritual idealism, of the maintenance of an elusive unity and fixed forms of mutuality, but with an increasing element of strict bondage, division, fissiparous complexity in the social mass, while the great Vedantic ideals of freedom, unity, the Godhead in man were left to the inner spiritual effort of individuals. Hence an insufficient power of expansion and assimilation which led the society, when powerful and aggressive forces broke in on it from outside, Islam, Europe, to be content only with a limited and a static self-preservation, a mere permission to live in however narrow a form of living, with however restricted an as-
sertion of its spirit. Duration, survival was achieved, but not a really secure and vital duration,—for that is impossible without growth,—not a great, robust and victorious survival. But now survival itself is no longer possible without expansion; and what we have to do is to resume our greater interrupted endeavour and live out boldly and thoroughly in the individual and the society, in spiritual life, philosophy, religion, art, literature, thought, political, economic and social formulation the full and great sense of our highest spirit and knowledge. When we do that, we shall find that all the best of what comes to us draped in occidental forms, is not only already implied in our own ancient knowledge, but has there a greater and profounder sense capable of suggesting nobler and more ideal formations. Only we need to live out thoroughly in life what we always knew in spirit. There lies the secret of the needed harmony between the essential meaning of our culture and the environmental requirements of our future.

That view opens out a prospect beyond the battle of cultures which is the immediate aspect of the present meeting of East and West. The Spirit in man has really one aim before it in all mankind; but different nations approach it from different sides, in a different spirit, with different formulations and, not recognising the underlying unity of the ultimate divine motive, give battle to each other with the claim that theirs alone is the way for mankind, the one real and perfect civilisation. But the real and perfect civilisation yet waits to be discovered. European culture gives the first place to the principle of growth by struggle; by struggle it arrives at some kind of concert, which is itself hardly more than an organisation for growth by battle and aggression and is constantly breaking even within itself into a fresh strife of interests, classes, races, ideas, principles. It is precarious in duration because ill-founded, but vigorous in constant achievement
and able to grow powerfully and assimilate. Indian culture proceeded on the principle of a concert based on unity and itself again basing and reaching towards some large unity; it attempted to minimise the principle of struggle. But it ended by trying to achieve peace and stable arrangement through exclusion, by drawing a magic circle and shutting itself up in it; it lost the power of aggression and weakened in its power of assimilation. We established a too static and limited concert, forgetting that so long as we are in the state of imperfection, concert in its form cannot be anything but imperfect and provisional and can only preserve its vitality and fulfil its ultimate aim by ever adopting and enlarging itself so as to widen towards a broader, more comprehensive, more real unity. Such a larger statement of our culture and civilisation we have now to attempt, a greater expression of spiritual and psychological oneness in our society, and with the rest of humanity, eventually at least, a concert and unity. For, since in our defence and assimilation we shall be only stating more deeply and spiritually according to our own law of nature the best and greatest aims common to all humanity, what now appears as a struggle may well be the necessary step towards the first formulation of that unity of mankind which the West sees only in idea and labours to establish by accommodation of conflicting interests and the force of mechanical institutions. India at least ought to be able to see it in the light of the spirit and from that develop the idea and institution, founding them upon the spiritual reality. So alone can we arrive at the real oneness.
The Future Poetry

THE MOVEMENT OF MODERN LITERATURE

(2)

Out of the period of dominant objective realism what emerges with the strongest force is a movement to quite an opposite principle of creation, a literature of pronounced and conscious subjectivity. There is throughout the nineteenth century an apparent contradiction between its professed literary aim and theory and the fundamental unavoidable character of much of its inspiration. In aim throughout,—though there are notable exceptions,—it professes a strong objectivity. The temper of the age has been an earnest critical and scientific curiosity, a desire to see, know and understand the world as it is: that requires a strong and clear eye turned on the object and it would seem to require also as far as possible an elimination of one's own personality; a strongly personal view of things would appear to be the very contrary of an accurate observation, for the first constructs and colours the object from within, the second would allow it to impress its own colour and shape on the mind,—we have to suppose, of course, that, as the modern intellect has generally held, objects exist in themselves and not in our own consciousness of them. Goethe definitely framed this theory of literary creation when he laid it down that the ideal of art and poetry was to be beautifully objective. With the exception of some of the first initiators and until yesterday, modern creation has followed more or less this line: it has tried to give either a striking, moving and exciting or
an aesthetically sound or a realistically powerful presentation,—all three methods often intermingling or coalescing,—rather than a subjective interpretation; thought, feeling, aesthetic treatment of the object are supposed to intervene upon and arise from a clear or strong objective observation.

But on the other hand an equally strong characteristic of the modern mind is its growing subjectivity, an intense consciousness of the I, the soul or the self, not in any mystic withdrawal within or inward meditation, or not in that preeminently, but in relation to the whole of life and Nature. This characteristic distinguishes modern subjectivism from the natural subjectivity of former times, which either tended towards an intense solitary inwardness or was superficial and confined to a few common though often strongly emphasised notes. Ancient or mediaeval individuality might return more self-assertive or violent responses to life, but the modern kind is more subtly and pervasively self-conscious and the stronger in thought and feeling to throw its own image on things, because it is more precluded from throwing itself out freely in action and living. This turn was in fact an inevitable result of an increasing force of intellectualism; for great intensity of thought, when it does not isolate itself from emotion, reactive sensation and aesthetic response, as in science and in certain kinds of philosophy, must be attended by a quickening and intensity of these other parts of our mentality. In science and critical thought, where this isolation is possible, the objective turn prevailed,—though much that we call critical thought is after all a personal construction, a use of the reason and the observation of things for a view of what is around us which, far from being really disinterested and impersonal, is a creation of our own temperament and a satisfaction of our intellectualised individuality. But in artistic creation where the isolation is not possible, we find quite an opposite phenomenon, the subjec-
tive personality of the poet asserting itself to a far greater extent than in former ages of humanity.

Goethe himself, in spite of his theory, could not escape from this tendency, his work, as he himself recognised, is always an act of reflection of the subjective changes of his personality, a history of the development of his own soul in the guise of objective creation. From the work of a poet like Leconte de Lisle who attempted with the most deliberate conscientiousness a perfect fidelity to the ideal of an impersonal artistic objectiveness, there disengages itself in the mass an almost poignant impression of the strong subjective personality shaping everything into a mask-reflection of its own characteristic moods; the attempt to live in the thoughts and feelings of other men, other civilisations betrays itself as only the multiple imaginative and sympathetic extension of the poet's own psychology. This peculiarity of the age is noticeable even in many creators whose aim is deliberately realistic or their method founded upon a minute psychological observation, Ibsen or Tolstoi and the Russian novelists. The self of the creator very visibly overshadows the work, is seen everywhere like the conscious self of Vedanta both containing and inhabiting all his creations. Shakespeare succeeds, as far as a poet can, in veiling himself behind his creatures; he gives us at least the illusion of mirroring the world around him, a world universally represented rather than personally and individually thought and imaged, and at any rate the Life-spirit sees and creates in him through a faithful reflecting instrument, quite sufficiently universal and impersonal for its dramatic purpose even in his personality. Browning, the English poet who best represented the spirit of the age in its temperament of curious observation and its aim at a certain force of large and yet minute reality, who was eminently a poet of life observed and understood and of thought playing around the observation, as Shakespeare was the
poet of life seen through an identity of feeling with it and of thought arising up out of the surge of life, —Browning, though he seems to have considered this self-concealment especially admirable and the essence of the Shakespearian method of creation, fails himself to achieve it in anything like the same measure. The self-conscious thinking of the modern mind which brings into prominent relief the rest of the mental personality and stamps the whole work with it, gets into his way; everywhere we feel the presence of the creator bringing forward his living puppets, analysing, commenting thinking about them or else about life through a variation of many voices so that they become as much his masks as his creations.

Thus both the subjective personality of the man and the artistic personality of the creator tend to count for much more in modern work than at any previous time; the poet is a much greater part of his work. It is doubtful whether we have not altogether lost the old faculty of impersonal self-effacement in the creation which was so common in the ancient and mediaeval ages when many men working in one spirit could build great universal works of combined architecture, painting and sculpture or in literature the epic or romantic cycles or lyric cycles like the Vedic Mandalas or the mass of Vaishnava poetry. Even when there are definite schools marked by a common method, we do not find, as in the old French romance writers or the Elizabethan dramatists or the poets of the eighteenth century, a spiritual resemblance which overshadows individual differences; in the moderns the technical method may have in all similar motives, but difference of subjective treatment so stresses its values as to prevent all spiritual unity. There is here a gain which more than compensates any loss; but we have to note the cause, a growth of subjectivism, an enhanced force, enrichment and insistence of the inner personality.

This trend, though for some time held back from its
full development by the aim at the objective method, betrays itself in that love of close and minute psychological observation which pervades the work of the time. There too the modern mind has left far behind all the preceding ages. Although most prominent in fiction and drama, the characteristic has laid some hold too on poetry. Compared with its work all previous creation seems psychologically poor both in richness of material and in subtlety and the depth of its vision; half the work of Shakespeare in spite of its larger and greater treatment hardly contains as much on this side as a single volume of Browning. Realism has carried this new trend to the farthest limit possible to a professedly objective method, stressing minute distinctions, forcing the emphasis of extreme notes, but in so doing it has opened to the creative mind of the age a door of escape from realism. For, in the first place, while in the representation of outward objects, of action, of character and temperament thrown out in self-expressive movement we may with success affect the method of a purely objective observation, from the moment we begin to psychologise deeply, we are at once preparing to go back into ourselves. For it is only through our own psychology, through its power of response to and of identification with the mind and soul in others that we can know their inner psychology; for the most part our psychological account of others is only an account of the psychological impressions of them they produce in our own mentality. This we see even in the realistic writers in the strongly personal and limited way in which they render the psychology of their creatures in one or two always recurring main notes upon which they ring minute variations. In the end the creative mind could not fail to become conscious of this self within which was really doing the whole work and to turn to it for a theme or for the mould of its psychological creations, to a conscious intimate subjectivism. Again, the emphasising of extreme notes brings
us to a point where to go farther we have to go within and to make ourselves a sort of laboratory of new psychological experiment and discovery.

This is the turn we get in the poetry of Verlaine which is throughout a straining after an intimate and subtle experience of the senses, vital sensations, emotions pushed beyond ordinary limits into a certain vivid and revealing abnormality, in the earlier work of Maeterlinck which is not so much an action of personalities as the drama of a childlike desire-soul uttering, half inarticulate cries of love and longing, terror and distress and emotion, in the work of Mallarmé where there is a constant seeking for subjective symbols which will reveal to our own soul the soul of the things that we see. The rediscovery of the soul is the last stage of the round described by this age of the intellect and reason. It is at first mainly the perceptions of a desire soul, a soul of sense and sensation and emotion, and an arriving through them at a sort of psychological mysticism, a psychism which is not yet true mysticism, much less spirituality, but is still a movement of the lower self in that direction. The movement could not stop here: the emergence of the higher perceptions of a larger and purer psychical and intuitive entity in direct contact with the Spirit could not but come, and this greater impulse is represented by the work of the Irish poets. It is the sign of the end, now in sight, of a purely intellectual modernism and the coming of a new age of creation, intellectualism fulfilled ceasing by a self-exceeding in a greater motive of intuitive art and poetry.

Thus this wide movement of interests, so many-sided and universal, in man past and present after embracing all that attracts the observing eye in his life and history and apparent nature comes back to a profounder interest in the movements of his deeper self which reveals itself to an extended psychological experience and an intuitive sense. But an insistent interest in future man has been
the most novel, the most fruitfully distinguishing characteristic of the modern mind. Once limited to the far-off dream of religions or the distant speculation of isolated thinkers, the attempt to cast a seeing eye as well as a shaping will on the future is now an essential side of the human outlook. Formerly the human mentality of the present lived in the great shadow thrown on it by its past, nowadays on the contrary it turns more to some image of coming possibility. The colour of this futurism has changed with the changes of modern intellectualism. At first it came in on the wave of a partly naturalistic, partly transcendentalist idealism, a reverie of the perfected individual and the perfected society, and was commonly associated with the passion for civic or the idea of a spiritual and personal liberty. A more sober colouring intervened, the intellectual constructions of positivism, liberalism, utilitarian thought which were soon in their turn followed by broader democratic and socialistic utopias. Touched sometimes with an aesthetic and idealistic colouring, they have grown for a time more scientific, economic, practical with the advance of realism and rationalism. But the new force of subjectivism will have probably the effect of rehabilitating the religious and spiritually idealistic element in our vision of the future of the race. Poetry which has been less able to follow this stream of thought than prose literature, will find its account in the change; for it will be the natural interpreter of this more inner and intuitive vision. The futurist outlook has never been more pronounced than at the present day; on all sides, in thought, in life, in the motives and forms of literary and artistic creation, we are swinging violently away from the past into an unprecedented adventure of new teeming possibilities. Never has the past counted so little for its own sake,—its tradition is still effectual only when it can be made a power or an inspiration for the future, never has the present looked so persistently and creatively forward.
But Nature and man in his active, intellectual and emotional life and physical environment are not the whole subject of man's thought or of his creative presentment of his mind's seeings and imaginings; He has been even more passionately occupied by the idea of things beyond, other worlds and an after life, symbols and powers of that which exceeds him or of his own self-exceeding, the cult of gods of nature and supernature, the belief in or the seeking after God. On this side of the human mind modern literature, though not a blank, has been during the greater part of the nineteenth century inferior in its matter and in its power, because it has been an age of scepticism and of denial or else of a doubtful and tormented, a merely intellectual or a conventional clinging to the residuum of past beliefs. They have not formed a real and vital part of its inner life and what is not real or vital to thought, imagination and feeling cannot be powerfully creative. At first this ebb of positive faith was to some extent compensated for by the ideal element of a philosophic transcendentalism, vague and indefinite but with its own large light and force of inspiration. As scepticism became more positive, this light fades, the most poetic notes of the age which deal with the foundations of life are either the poignant expression of a regretful scepticism, or a defiant atheism exulting in the revolt of the great denial, the hymn of the Void, an eternal Nihil which has taken the place of God, or else the large idea of Nature as a universal entity, the Mother of our being. To Science this is only an inconscient Force; the poetic mind with its natural turn for finding a reality even behind what are to the intellect abstract conceptions, has passed though this conception to a new living sense of the universal, the infinite. It has even evolved from it now and then, a vivid pantheism. The difficult self-defence or reaction of the old faiths against the prevalent scepticism and intellectualism has given too some minor notes; but these are the greater voices of negation and
affirmation in this sphere of poetic thought and creation which have added some novel and powerful strains to poetry. With the return to subjective intuition and a fresh adventuring of knowledge and imagination into the beyond modern poetry, freed from the sceptical attitude, is beginning in this field too to turn the balance in its favour as against the old classical and mediaeval literature. The vision of the worlds beyond which it is gaining is nearer, less grossly human, more supernatural to physical Nature; the symbols it is beginning to create and its reinterpretation of the old symbols are more adequate and more revealing; rid of the old insufficient forms and limiting creeds, it is admitting a near, direct and fearless seeing and experience of God in Nature, God in man, God in the universal and the eternal. From faith it has advanced through the valley of doubt to the heights of a more luminous knowledge. These are the main movements of the modern mind constituting the turns of a psychological evolution of the most rapid and remarkable kind which have dominated the literature of Europe, now more than ever before growing into a single though varied whole. We have to see how they have worked themselves out in English poetry during this period. We shall then be able to form a clearer idea of the dominant possibilities of the future: for though it has been a side stream and not the central current, yet in the end the highest and most significant, though not yet the strongest forces of the future poetry have converged here and given their first clearest and most distinct sounds. The continent is still overshadowed by the crepuscule of the intellectual age sick unto death but unable to die. Here there are some clear morning voices, English precursors, the revived light of Celtic spirituality, not least significant the one or two accents of a more self-assured message which have broken across the mental barrier between East and West from resurgent India.
A Rationalistic Critic on Indian Culture

(1)

When we try to appreciate a culture, and when that culture is the one in which we have grown up or from which we draw our governing ideals and are likely from overpartiality to minimise its deficiencies or from over-familiarity to miss aspects or values of it which would strike an unaccustomed eye, it is always useful as well as interesting to know how others see it,—not in order to change our view-point for theirs, but to get fresh light and help our self-introspection. But there are different ways of seeing. There is the eye of sympathy and intuition and a close appreciative self-identification: that gives us work like Sister Nivedita’s Web of Indian Life or Mr. Fielding’s book on Burma or Sir John Woodroffe’s studies of Tantra. These are attempts to push aside all concealing veils and reveal the soul of a people and the inner sense of its manifestations. We may feel that they do not give us all the hard outward fact, but we are enlightened of something deeper which has its greater reality; we get not the thing as it is in the deficiencies of life, but its ideal meaning. The soul, the essential spirit is one thing, the forms taken in this difficult human actuality another often imperfect or perverted, but neither can be neglected if we would have a total vision. Then there is the eye of the discerning and dispassionate critic who tries to see the thing as it is in its intention and actuality, apportion the light and shade, get the balance of merit and defect, success and failure, mark off that which evokes appreciative sympathy from that which calls for critical censure. We may not always agree; the standpoint is different and by its externality, by failure of intuition and self-identification
it may miss things that are essential, may not get the
whole meaning of that which it praises or condemns: still
we profit, we can add to our sense of shade and tone or
correct our own previous judgment. Finally, there is the
eye of the hostile critic, convinced of the inferiority of the
culture in question, who gives plainly and honestly with-
out deliberate overcharging what he conceives to be sound
reason for his judgment. That too has its use for us;
hostile criticism of this kind is good for the soul and the
intellect, provided we do not allow ourselves to be afflict-
ed, beaten down or shaken from the upholding centre of
our living faith and action. Most things in our human
world are imperfect and it is sometimes well to get a strong
view of our imperfections. Or, if nothing else, we can at
least learn to appreciate opposite standpoints and get at
the source of the opposition; wisdom, insight and sym-
pathy grow by such comparisons.

But hostile criticism to be of any sound value must
be criticism, not slander and false witness, not vitriol-
throwing: it must state the facts without distortion, pre-
serve consistent standards of judgment, observe a certain
effort at justice, sanity, measure. Mr. William Archer’s
recent book, which has attracted in India an attention
quite out of proportion to its intrinsic merits,—it has in-
deed no intrinsic merit except a certain crude force of
journalistic style and phrasing,—is not of this character.
It is not only that it is a wholesale and unsparing con-
demnation; that is a recommendation, for Mr. Archer’s
professed object is to challenge the enthusiastic canonis-
ation of Indian culture by its admirers in the character of
devil’s advocate whose business is to find out and state
in its strongest terms everything that can be said against
the claim; for us too it is useful to have before us an
attack which covers the whole field so that we may see in
one comprehensive view the entire enemy case against
our culture. But there are three vitiating elements in his
statement. First, it has an ulterior, a political object; it
starts with the underlying idea that India must be proved
altogether barbarous in order to destroy or damage her
case for self-government. That sort of extraneous motive
at once pulls his whole pleading out of court; for it means
a constant deliberate distortion in order to serve a mate-
rial interest, foreign altogether to the disinterested intellectual objects of cultural comparison and criticism.

In fact this book is not criticism; it is literary or rather journalistic pugilism. There too it is of a peculiar kind; it is a furious sparring at a lay figure of India which is knocked down at pleasure through a long and exuberant dance of misstatement and exaggeration in the hope of convincing an ignorant audience that the performer has prostrated a living adversary. Sanity, justice, measure are things altogether at a discount: a show-off of the appearance of staggering and irresistible blows is the object held in view, and for that anything comes in handy,—the facts are altogether misstated or clumsily caricatured, the most extraordinary and unfounded suggestions advanced with an air of obviousness, the most illogical inconsistencies permitted if by that an apparent point can be scored. All this is not the occasional freak of a well-informed critic suffering from a fit of biliousness who is impelled to work it off by an extravagant intellectual exercise, an irresponsible fantasia or a hostile war-dance around a subject with which he is not in sympathy. That is a kind of extravagance, which is sometimes permissible and may be interesting and amusing. It is a sweet and pleasant thing, cries the Roman poet, to play the fool in place and right season, dulce est desipere in loco. But Mr. Archer’s constant departures into irrational extravagance are not by any means in loco. We discover very soon,—in addition to his illegitimate motive and his deliberate unfairness this is a third and worst cardinal defect,—that for the most part he knows absolutely nothing about the things on which he is passing his confident dammatory judgments. What he has done is to collect together in his mind all the unfavourable comments he has read about India, eke them out with casual impressions of his own and advance this unwholesome and unsubstantial compound as his original production, although his one genuine and native contribution is the cheery cocksureness of his secondhand opinions. The book is a journalistic fake, not an honest critical production.

Mr. Archer evidently knows nothing about metaphysics which he despises as a misuse of the human mind, yet he lays down the law at length about the values of
Indian philosophy. He is a rationalist to whom religion is an error, a psychological disease, a sin against reason, yet he adjudges between the comparative claims of religions, assigning a *proxime accessit* to Christianity, mainly, it seems, because Christians do not seriously believe in their own religion,—let not the reader laugh, Mr. Archer advances quite seriously this amazing reason,—and bestowing the wooden spoon on Hinduism. He admits his incompetence to speak about music, yet that does not prevent him from relegating Indian music to a position of negligible inferiority. For passing judgment on art and architecture it is evident that his equipment is of the scantiest, yet he is generously liberal of his decisive depreciations. In drama and literature one would expect from him better things; but the astonishing superficiality of his standards and his arguments leaves one wondering how in the world he got his reputation as a dramatic and literary critic: either he must use a very different method in dealing with European literature or else it is very easy to get a reputation of this kind in England. An ill-informed misrepresentation of facts, a light-hearted temerity of judgment on things he has not cared to study, constitute Mr. Archer's title to write on Indian culture and dismiss it authoritatively as a mass of barbarism.

It is not then for a well-informed outside view or even an instructive adverse criticism of Indian civilization that we can go to Mr. William Archer. In the end it is only those who possess a culture who can judge the intrinsic value of its productions, because they alone can enter entirely into its spirit. To the foreign critic we can only go for help in forming a comparative judgment,—which too is indispensable. But if for any reason we had to depend on a foreign judgment for the definitive view of these things, it is evident that in each field it is to men who can speak with some authority that we must turn. It matters very little to me what Mr. Archer or Dr. Gough or Sir John Woodroffe's unnamed English professor may say about Indian philosophy; it is enough for me to know what Emerson or Schopenhauer or Nietzsche, three entirely different minds of the greatest power in this field, or what thinkers like Cousin and Schlegel have to say about it or to mark the increasing influence of some of its con-
ceptions, the great parallel lines of thought in earlier European thinking and the confirmations of ancient Indian metaphysics and psychology which are the results of the most modern research and inquiry. For religion I shall not go to Mr. Harold Begbie or any European atheist or rationalist for a judgment of our spirituality, but see what are the impressions of open-minded men of religious feeling and experience who can alone be judges, a spiritual and religious thinker such as Tolstoi, for instance, or I may study even, allowing for an inevitable bias, what the more cultured Christian missionary has to say about a religion which he can no longer dismiss as a barbarous superstition. In art I shall not turn to the opinion of the average European who knows nothing of the spirit, meaning or technique of Indian architecture, painting and sculpture; for the first I shall consult some recognised authority like Ferguson, for the others, if critics like Mr. Havell are to be dismissed as partisans, I can at least learn something from Okakura or Mr. Laurence Binyon. In literature I shall be at a loss, for I cannot remember that any western writer of genius or high reputation as a critic has had any first-hand knowledge of Sanskrit literature or of the Prakritic tongues, and a judgment founded on translations can only deal with the substance,—and even that in most translations of Indian work is only the dead substance with the whole breath of life gone out of it. Still even here Goethe's well-known epigram on the Shakuntala will be enough by itself to show me that all Indian writing is not of a barbarous inferiority to European creation; we may find too a scholar here and there with some literary taste and judgment, not a too common combination, who will be of help to us. This sort of excursion will certainly not give us an entirely reliable scheme of values, but at any rate we shall be safer than in a resort to the great lowland clan of Goughs, Archers and Begbies.

If I still find it necessary or useful to notice these lucubrations, it is for quite another purpose. Even for that purpose all that Mr. Archer writes is of utility; much of it is so irrational, inconsequent or unscrupulous in suggestion that one can only note and pass on. When for instance he assures his readers that Indian philosophers think that sitting cross-legged and contemplating one's
own navel is the best way of ascertaining the truths of
the universe and that their real object is an indolent im-
mobility and to live upon the alms of the faithful, his
object in thus describing one of the postures of abstracted
meditation is to stamp the meditation itself in the eyes of
ignorant English readers with the character of a bovine
absurdity and a selfish laziness; that is an instance of his
unscrupulousness which helps us to observe the kinks of
his own rationalistic mind, but is useful for nothing else.
When he denies that there is any real morality in Hindu-
ism or affirms that it has never claimed moral teaching
as one of its functions and even goes so far as to say that
Hinduism is the character of the people and it indicates
a melancholy proclivity towards whatever is monstrous
and unwholesome, one can only conclude that truth-speak-
ing is not one of the ethical virtues which Mr. Archer
thinks it necessary to practise, or at least that it need be
no part of a rationalist’s criticism of religion.

But no, after all Mr. Archer does throw a grudging
tribute on the altar of truth; for he admits in the same
breath that Hinduism talks much of righteousness and
allows that there are in the Hindu writings many admir-
able ethical doctrines. But that only proves that Hindu
philosophy is illogical,—the morality is there indeed, but
it ought not to be; its presence does not suit Mr. Archer’s
thesis. Admire the logicality, the rational consistency of
this champion of rationalism! Mark that at the same time
one of his objections to the Ramayana, admitted to be
one of the Bibles of the Hindu people, is that its ideal
characters, Rama and Sita, the effective patterns of the
highest Indian manhood and womanhood, are much too
virtuous for his taste. Rama is too saintly for human na-
ture,—I do not know in fact that Rama is more saintly
than Christ or St. Francis, yet I had always thought they
were within the pale of human nature; but perhaps this
critic will reply that, if not beyond that pale, their exces-
sive virtues are at least like the daily practice of the Hind-
uu cult,—shall we say for example, scrupulous physical
purity and cleanliness and the daily turning of the mind
to God in worship and meditation,—“sufficient to place
them beyond the pale of civilisation.” For he tells us that
Sita, the type of conjugal fidelity and chastity, is so ex-
cessive in her virtue "as to verge on immorality." Meaningless smart extravagance has reached its highest point when it can thus verge on the idiotic,—I am as sorry to use the epithet as Mr. Archer to harp on Indian "barbarism," but there is really no help for it; "it expresses" as he says "the essence of the situation." If all were of this character,—there is too much of it and it is deplorable,—a contemptuous silence would be the only possible reply. But fortunately our Apollo does not always stretch his bow thus to the breaking-point; all Mr. Archer's shafts are not of this wildgoose flight. There is much in his writing that expresses crudely, but still with sufficient accuracy the feeling of recoil of the average occidental mind at its first view of the unique characteristics of Indian culture and that is a thing worth noting and fathoming.

This is the utility I wish to seize on; for it is an utility. It is through the average mind that we get best at the bedrock of the psychological differences which divide from each other great blocks of our common humanity. The cultured mind tends to diminish the force of these prejudices or at least even in difference and opposition to develop points of contact and similarity. In the average mentality we have a better chance of getting them in their crude strength and can appreciate their full force and bearing. Mr. Archer helps us here admirably. Not that we have not to clear away much rubbish to get at what we want. I should have preferred to deal with a manual of misunderstanding which had the same thoroughness of scope, but expressed itself with a more straightforward simplicity and less of vicious smartness and of superfluous ill-will, but none such is available. Let us take Mr. Archer then and dissect some of his prejudices to get at their inner psychology. We shall perhaps find that through all the unpleasant crudity we can arrive at the essence of a historic misunderstanding of continents. An exact understanding of it may even help us towards an approach to some kind of reconciliation.
A PHILOSOPHICAL REVIEW

15th March 1919

CONTENTS

ESSAYS ON THE GITA ................... Aurobindo Ghose
God in Power of Becoming

THE SYNTHESIS OF YOGA .......... A. G.
Ch. LII. The Perfection of the
Mental Being

THE ETERNAL WISDOM .............. Paul Richard
The Root of Evil

A RATIONALISTIC CRITIC ON INDIAN
CULTURE (2)

INDIAN CULTURE AND EXTERNAL
INFLUENCE

REBIRTH, EVOLUTION, HEREDITY

THE FUTURE POETRY
The Poets of the Dawn
Essays on the Gita

GOD IN POWER OF BECOMING

A very important step, a decisive statement of its metaphysical and psychological synthesis has thus been reached in the development of the Gita's gospel of spiritual liberation and divine action. The Godhead has revealed himself in thought to Arjuna, he has made himself visible to the mind's search and the heart's seeing as the supreme and universal Being and supernal and universal Person and the inward-dwelling Master of the being for whom man's knowledge, will and adoration were seeking. There remains only the vision of the multiple Virat Purusa to complete the revelation.

The metaphysical synthesis is complete. Sankhya has been admitted for the separation of the soul from the lower nature by self-knowledge through the discriminating reason and transcendence of the subjection to the three gunas, constituent of that nature, but has then been completed and its limitations exceeded by the revelation of the unity of the supreme Soul and supreme Nature, para purusha, para prakriti. Vedanta of the philosophers has been admitted for the self-effacement of the natural separative personality built round the ego in the unity of the impersonal being of the Self, the unity of the Brahman, and
the vision of all beings in the Self and the Self in all beings; it has been completed by the revelation of the Parabrahman from whom derive both the mobile and the immobile, the mutable and the immutable, the action and the silence; its limitations have been transcended by revealing the greatness of the supreme Soul and Lord who becomes in all Nature, manifests himself in all personality, puts forth the power of his Nature in all action. Yoga has been admitted for the self-surrender of the will, mind, heart, all the psychological being to the Ishwara, the divine Lord of the being; it has been completed by the revelation of the supernal Master of existence as the original Godhead of whom the Jiva is the partial being in Nature; its possible limitations have been exceeded by the seeing of all things as the Lord in the light of the perfect spiritual oneness.

There results the integral vision of the Divine Being, transcendent Reality, supracosmic origin of cosmos, impersonal self of all things and continent of the cosmos, immanent Divinity in all beings and personalities and objects and powers and qualities, constituent self, effective nature and becoming of all existences, The Yoga of knowledge is fulfilled in this integral seeing and knowing. The Yoga of works is crowned by the giving up of all works to their Master, the natural man being now only an instrument of his will. The Yoga of love and adoration is declared, arising from knowledge and works, as the crowning union of soul and Oversoul by which this knowledge is made real to the heart as well as to the intelligence and this sacrifice of self in an instrumental action becomes a free and blissful expression of the union. The whole means of the spiritual liberation has been given; the whole foundation of the divine action has been constructed.

Arjuna accepts the entire knowledge given to him. His mind is already delivered from its doubts and seek-
ings; his heart turned now from the outward, from the
cosmic appearance to its divine sense and origin, is al-
ready released from its sorrow and affliction and touched
with the ineffable gladness of the divine revelation. The
language which he is made to use in voicing his accep-
tance, is such as to emphasise and insist once again on
the integrality of this knowledge, its all-embracing finality.
He accepts the Avatar, the Godhead in man who is speak-
ing to him, first, as the supreme Brahman, the supreme
supracosmic status of absolute being to which the soul
can rise out of the manifestation and this becoming,
param brahma, param dhâma, the supreme purity of the
ever free Existence to which one comes through the ef-
cacement of ego in the self’s immutable impersonality,
pavitram paramam. He accepts him next as the supreme
Soul, divine Purusha, purusham çaçvatam divyam, ac-
claims in him the original Godhead, the unborn who is the
pervading, indwelling, self-extending master of all exis-
tence, âdi-devam ajam vibhum. He accepts him therefore
at once as that which is beyond and exceeds all manifes-
tation and becoming,—“neither the Gods nor the Titans,
O blessed Lord, know thy manifestation,” na hi te bhaga-
vyan vyaktim vidur devâ na dânavâh,—as the lord of all
existences and the divine efficient cause of their becoming,
God of the gods from whom all godheads have sprung,
master of the universe who manifests and governs it by
the power of his supreme and universal Nature,—bhûta-
bhâvana bhûteça devadeva jagatpate,—and as that Vasu-
deva who is all things by virtue of his all-pervading, all-
inhabiting, all-constituting powers of becoming, vibhû-
tayah,—“the powers of becoming by which thou standest
pervading these worlds,” yâbhir vibhûtibhir lokân imâns
twam vyâpya tishthasi.
He has accepted the truth given to him with the adoration of his heart, the submission of his will and the understanding of his intelligence. He is already prepared to act as the divine instrument in this knowledge and with this self-surrender. But a desire for the deeper constant spiritual realisation has been awakened in him. This truth is a wisdom which is evident only to the supreme Soul by its own self-knowledge,—"thou alone, O Purushottama, knowest thyself by thyself," ātmānā ātmānam vettha. The unaided heart, will, intelligence of the natural man cannot arrive at it by their own motion; they can only get at imperfect mental reflections. It is a secret wisdom which one has to hear from the seers who have seen this truth, heard its word and become one with it in self and spirit,—"all the Rishis say this of thee and the divine seer Narada, Asita, Devala, Vyasa,"—or else to receive from within by revelation and inspiration from the Godhead who lifts in us the blazing lamp of knowledge,—swayanchaiva bravīshi me, "thou thyself sayest it to me". Once revealed, it has to be accepted by assent of the mind, the consent of the will, the submission of the heart's faith,—for these are the three elements of the complete faith, ċraddhā,—even as Arjuna has accepted it; "all this that thou sayest, my mind holds for the truth." But still there will remain the need of that deeper possession of it in the very self of our being, the demand for that permanent spiritual realisation, without which there cannot be a complete union.

Now the way to arrive at the realisation has been given; and so far as regards the great self-evident divine principles, idea of the supreme Godhead, experience of the immutable self, perception of the immanent Divinity, concept of the universal Being, one can, once the mind is illumined with the idea, follow readily the way and, with whatever effort to exceed the normal mental perceptions, come to the self-experience of these essential truths of be-
ing, ātmanā ātmanam. One can do it with this readiness because these, once conceived, are evidently divine realities; there is nothing in our mental associations to prevent us from admitting God in these aspects. But the difficulty is to see him in the apparent truths of existence,—in this fact of Nature, in these phenomena of becoming; for here all is opposed to this unifying conception. How can we consent to see the Divine as man and animal being and inanimate object, in both the noble and the low, the sweet and the terrible, the good and the evil? If, assenting to some idea of God extended in the things of the cosmos, we see him in ideal light of knowledge and greatness of power and beneficence of love and largeness of being, how shall we avoid the breaking of the unity by the opposites which in actual fact cling to them and envelop and obscure. And if in spite of the limitations of human mind and nature we can see God in the man of God, how shall we see him in those who oppose him and represent all that we conceive as undivine? If Narayana is without difficulty visible in the sage and the saint, how shall he be easily visible to us in the sinner, the criminal, the harlot, the outcast? To all the differentiations of the world-existence the sage, looking for the supreme purity and oneness, cries out, “not this, not this,” neti neti. Even if to many things in the world we give assent and admit the Divine in the universe, still before most must not the mind cry “Not this, not this”? Here constantly the assent of the understanding, the consent of the will, the heart’s faith become difficult to the human mentality. At least some compelling indications are needed, some supports to the effort at oneness.

Arjuna, though he accepts the revelation which has been given to his understanding, of Vasudeva as all and though his heart is full of the delight of it,—for already he finds it delivering him from the perplexity and stumbling differentiations of his mind which was craving for a clue.
a guiding truth amid the bewildering problems of a world of oppositions, and it is to his hearing the nectar of immortality, amrītam,—yet feels the need of such supports and indices, in the difficulty of the complete and firm realisation. He requires guiding indications, asks even for a complete and detailed enumeration of the powers of the becoming, so that nothing may be left out of the vision, nothing remain to baffle him. "Thou shouldst tell me," he says, "thy divine self-manifestations in the power of becoming, divya ātma-vibhūtīyāh, without exception,—aše-shena, nothing omitted,—by which thou pervadest these worlds and peoples. How shall I know thee, O Yogin, by thinking of thee everywhere at all moments and in what becomings should I think of thee?" This Yoga by which thou art one with all and one in all and all are becomings of thy being, pervading power of thy nature, tell me of it, he cries, in all its detail and extent, and tell me ever more of it; it is nectar of immortality to me, and however much of it I hear, I am not satiated. Here we get an indication in the Gita of something which the Gita itself does not bring out very expressly, but which occurs frequently in the Upanishads, and was developed later on by Vaishnavism and Shaktism, in a greater intensity, man's possible joy of the Divine in the world-existence, the universal Ananda, the play of the Mother, the sweetness and beauty of God's Lila.*

The divine Teacher accedes to the request of the disciple, but with an initial reminder that a full reply is not possible, for God is infinite and the manifestation is infinite; the forms of his becoming are innumerable and each is a symbol of some divine power concealed in it; to the seeing eye each finite carries in it its own revelation of the infinite. Yes, he says, I will tell thee of my divine Vibhutis, but only in some of the principal powers and

* X. 16-18
as an indication, by the example of things in which thou canst readily see the power of the Godhead, \( \text{prādhānyatah, uddeśatah} \); for there is no end of the innumerable detail of my self-extension in the universe, \( \text{nāsti auto vistarasya me} \),—a reminder which, as it begins the passage, so too is repeated at the end for a greater and unmistakable emphasis. And so through the rest of the chapter* we get a summary description of these principal indications, given, as it seems at first, pell-mell, but still there is a certain principle in the enumeration, which, if disengaged, can give a helpful guidance to the significance of the whole conception. The chapter has been called the Vibhuti-Yoga,—an indispensable yoga, by which identifying ourselves with the universal divine Becoming in all its extension we can at the same time realise some ascending evolutionary power in it, some increasing intensity of its revelation in things, which carries us upward towards the large ideal nature of the universal Godhead.

This summary enumeration begins with a statement of the primal principle of the whole power of becoming. It is that in every being God dwells concealed, housed as in a crypt in the mind and heart of every creature, an inner self in the midst of its subjective becoming, who is the beginning and middle and end of all that is, has been, will be; for it is this inner divine Self hidden from the mind and heart which he inhabits, this luminous Inhabitant concealed from the view of the soul in Nature which he has put forth into Nature as his representative, who is all the time evolving the mutations of our personality in Time and our sensational existence in Space,—Time and Space which are the conceptual movement and extension of the Godhead in us,—this self-seeing Soul, this self-representing Spirit. From within all beings, from within all conscient and inconscient existences, this All-cons-
cient develops his manifested being in quality and power, develops it in forms of objects, in the instruments of our subjectivity, in knowledge and word and the creations of the mind and the actions of the doer, in the measures of Time, in the forces of Nature, in cosmic powers and godheads, in plant life, in animal life, in human beings.

If we look at things with this eye of vision unblinded by differentiations of quality and quantity, by difference of values and oppositions of nature, we shall see that all things are in fact and can be nothing but powers of his becoming, vibhutis of this universal Soul and Spirit in Nature, Yoga of this great Yogi, self-creations of this marvellous self-Creator. He is the unborn and the all-pervading Master of his own innumerable becomings, ajo vibhuh; all things are his powers and effectuations, vibhutis. He is the origin of all they are, their beginning; he is their support in their ever-changing status, their middle; he is their end too, the culmination or the disintegration of each created thing in its cessation from manifesting; he brings them out from his consciousness and is hidden in them, he withdraws them into his consciousness and they are hidden in him. What is apparent to us, is only a power of becoming; what disappears from our sense and vision is effect of that power of becoming. All classes, genera, species, individuals are such vibhutis. But since it is through the power of his becoming that he is apparent to us, he is especially apparent in whatever powerful and preeminent force seems to act and, in each kind of being, in those in whom the power of nature of that kind reaches its highest, its leading, its most effectively self-revealing manifestation. These are in a special sense Vibhutis. Yet the highest power and manifestation is only a very partial revelation; even the whole universe is informed by only one degree of his greatness, illumined by one ray of his splendour, glorious with a faint hint of his delight and beauty. This is in sum the gist of the enu-
meration; it is the result we carry away from it, the heart of its meaning.

God is imperishable, beginningless, unending Time; this is his most evident Power of becoming, essence of the whole universal movement. *Aham eva akshayah kilah.* In that movement of Time and Becoming God appears to our conception of him by the evidence of his works as the divine Power who ordains and sets all things in their place in the movement, and in its form of space it is he that fronts us in every direction in each existence; we see his faces on all sides of us. *Dhātā 'ham visvato-mukhah.* For in all these million things simultaneously, *sarva-bhūteshu,* there works his self and thought and force and his divine genius of creation and formation and ordering of relations. He appears to us too in the universe as the universal spirit of Destruction, who creates only to undo his creations,—"I am all-snatching Death," *aham nirityuh sarva-harah*; but the Power of becoming does not cease from his workings, force of new creation keeps pace with force of destruction,—"and I am too birth of all that shall come into being." The divine Self in things is the sustaining Spirit of the present, the withdrawing Spirit of the past, the creative Spirit of the future.

Then among all these living beings, cosmic godheads, superhuman and human and subhuman creatures, and all these objects, the chief, the head, the greatest in quality of each class is a special power of the becoming of the Godhead. I am, says the Godhead, Vishnu among the Adityas, Shiva among the Rudras, Indra among the gods, Prahlada among the Titans, Brihaspati the chief of the high priests of the world, Skanda the wargod, leader of the leaders of battle, Marichi among the Maruts, the lord of wealth among the Yakshas and Rakshasas, the serpent Ananda among the Nagas, Agni among the Vasus, Chitraratha among the Gandharvas, Kandarpa the love-God among the progenitors, Varuna among the peoples
of the sea, Aryaman among the Fathers, Narada among
the divine sages, Yama lord of the Law among those who
maintain rule and law, among the powers of storm the
Wind-God. At the other end of the scale I am the radiant
sun among lights and splendours, the moon among the
stars of night, the ocean among the flowing waters, Meru
among the peaks of the world, Himalaya among the moun-
tain-ranges, Ganges among the rivers, the divine thun-
derbolt among weapons. Among all plants and trees I am
the Aswattha, among horses Indra's horse Uchchhahai-
čravas, Airavata among the elephants, among the birds
Garuda, Vasuki the snake-god among the serpents, Ka-
madhuk the cow of plenty among cattle, the alligator
among fishes, the lion among the beasts of the forest. I
am Margasirsha, first of the months, and spring, the fai-
rest of the seasons.

In living beings, the Godhead tells Arjuna, I am con-
ciousness by which they are aware of themselves and their
surroundings. I am mind among the senses, by which
they receive the impressions of objects and react upon
them. I am their qualities of mind and character and body
and action, glory and speech and memory and intelligence
and steadfastness and forgiveness, the energy of the ener-
getic, the strength of the mighty, resolution and perseve-
rance and victory : I am the sattwic quality of the good,
the gambling of the cunning, the mastery and power of
all who rule and tame and vanquish, the policy of all who
succeed and conquer, the silence of things secret, the
knowledge of the knower, the logic of those who debate,
the letter A among letters, the dual among compounds
the sacred syllable O M among words, the Gayatri among
metres, the Sama-veda among the Vedas and the great
Sama among the mantras, Time the head of all reckon-
ing to those who reckon and measure, spiritual knowledge
among the many philosophies, arts and sciences. I am all
the powers of the human being.
Those in whom my powers rise to the utmost heights of human attainment, are myself, my special Vibhutis. I am among men the king of men, the leader, the mighty man, the hero. I am Rama among warriors, Krishna among the Vrishnis, Arjuna among the Pandavas. The illumined Rishi is my Vibhuti; I am Bhrigu among the great Rishis. The great seer, the inspired poet who sees and reveals the truth by the light of the idea and sound of the word, is myself; I am Ushanas among the seer-poets. The great sage, thinker, philosopher is my power among men; I am Vyasa among the sages. But with whatever variety of degree in manifestation, all beings are in their own way and nature powers of the godhead; nothing moving or unmoving, animate or inanimate in the world can be without me: I am the divine seed of all existences, of that seed they are the branching and flowering, and what is in the seed of self, that only they can develop in Nature. There is no end of my divine Vibhutis, and what I have spoken, is only a summary development; I have given there the light of a few leading indications. Whatever beautiful and glorious creature thou seest in the world, whatever being is mighty and forceful among men and above man and below him, know to be a splendour, light, energy of Me and born of a portion of my existence. But what need is there of a multitude of details for this knowledge? Take it thus, that I am here in this world everywhere, in all, constituting all, I support this entire universe with a single degree and infinitesimal portion of my infinite being.
The Synthesis of Yoga

THE YOGA OF SELF-PERFECTION

CHAPTER LII

THE PERFECTION OF THE MENTAL BEING

The fundamental idea of a Yoga of self-perfection must be, under these conditions, a reversal of the present relations of the soul of man to his mental, vital and physical nature. Man is at present a partly self-conscious soul subject to and limited by mind, life and body, who has to become an entirely self-conscious soul master of his mind, life and body. Not limited by their claims and demands, a perfect self-conscious soul would be superior to and a free possessor of its instruments. This effort of man to be master of his own being has been the sense of a large part of his past spiritual, intellectual and moral strivings.

In order to be possessor of his being with any complete reality of freedom and mastery, man must find out his highest self, the real man or highest Purusha in him, which is free and master in its own alienable power. He must cease to be the mental, vital, physical ego; for that is always the creation, instrument and subject of mental, vital, physical Nature. This ego is not his real self, but an instrumentation of Nature by which it has developed a
sense of limited and separate individual being in mind, life and body. By this instrumentation he acts as if he were a separate existence in the material universe. Nature has evolved certain habitual limiting conditions under which that action takes place; self-identification of the soul with the ego is the means by which she induces the soul to consent to this action and accept these habitual limiting conditions. While the identification lasts, there is a self-imprisonment in this habitual round and narrow action, and, until it is transcended, there can be no free use by the soul of its individual living, much less a real self-exceeding. For this reason an essential movement of the Yoga is to draw back from the outward ego sense by which we are identified with the action of mind, life and body and live inwardly in the soul. The liberation from an externalised ego sense is the first step towards the soul’s freedom and mastery.

When we thus draw back into the soul, we find ourselves to be not the mind, but a mental being who stands behind the action of the embodied mind, not a mental and vital personality,—personality is a composition of Nature,—but a mental Person, manomaya purusha. We become aware of a being within who takes his stand upon mind for self-knowledge and world-knowledge and thinks of himself as an individual for self-experience and world-experience, for an inward action and an outward-going action, but is yet different from mind, life and body. This sense of difference from the vital actions and the physical being is very marked; for although the Purusha feels his mind to be involved in life and body, yet he is aware that even if the physical life and body were to cease or be dissolved, he would still go on existing in his mental being. But the sense of difference from the mind is more difficult and less firmly distinct. But still it is there; it is characterised by any or all of three intuitions in which this mental Purusha lives and becomes by them aware of his own
greater existence.

First, he has the intuition of himself as someone observing the action of the mind; it is something which is going on in him and yet before him as an object of his regarding knowledge. This self-awareness is the intuitive sense of the witness Purusha, sakshi. Witness Purusha is a pure consciousness who watches Nature and sees it as an action reflected upon the consciousness and enlightened by that consciousness, but in itself other than it. To mental Purusha Nature is only an action, a complex action of discriminating and combining thought, of will, of sense, of emotion, of temperament and character, of ego feeling, which works upon a foundation of vital impulses, needs and cravings in the conditions imposed by the physical body. But it is not limited by them, since it can not only give them new directions and much variation, refining and extension, but is able to act in thought and imagination and a mental world of much more subtle and flexible creations. But also there is an intuition in the mental Purusha of something larger and greater than this present action in which he lives, a range of experience of which it is only a frontal scheme or a narrow superficial selection. By this intuition he stands upon the threshold of a subliminal self with a more extended possibility than this superficial mentality opens to his self-knowledge. A last and greatest intuition is an inner awareness of something which he more essentially is, something as high above mind as mind is above the physical life and body. This inner awareness is his intuition of his supramental and spiritual being.

The mental Purusha can at any time involve himself again in the superficial action from which he has drawn back, live for a while entirely identified with the mechanism of mind, life and body and absorbedly repeat its recurrent normal action. But once that separative movement has been made and lived in for some time, he
can never be to himself quite what he was before. The involution in the outward action becomes now only a recurrent self-oblivion from which there is a tendency in him to draw back again to himself and to pure self-experience. It may be noted too that the Purusha by drawing back from the normal action of this outward consciousness which has created for him his present natural form of self-experience, is able to take two other poises. He can have an intuition of himself as a soul in body, which puts forth life as its activity and mind as the light of that activity. This soul in body is the physical conscious being, annamaya purusha, which uses life and mind characteristically for physical experience,—all else being regarded as a consequence of physical experience,—does not look beyond the life of the body and, so far as it feels anything beyond its physical individuality, is aware only of the physical universe and at most its oneness with the soul of physical Nature. But he can have too an intuition of himself as a soul of life, self-identified with a great movement of becoming in Time, which puts forth body as a form or basic sense-image and mind as a conscious activity of life-experience. This soul in life is the vital conscious being, pranamaya purusha, which is capable of looking beyond the duration and limits of the physical body, of feeling an eternity of life behind and in front, an identity with a universal Life-being, but does not look beyond a constant vital becoming in Time. These three Purushas are soul-forms of the Spirit by which it identifies its conscious existence with and founds its action upon any of these three planes or principles of its universal being.

But man is characteristically a mental being. Moreover, mentality is his highest present status in which he is nearest to his real self, most easily and largely aware of spirit. His way to perfection is not to involve himself in the outward or superficial existence, nor is it to place himself in the soul of life or the soul of body, but to in-
sist on the three mental intuitions by which he can lift himself eventually above the physical, vital and mental levels. This insistence may take two quite different forms, each with its own object and way of proceeding. It is quite possible for him to accentuate it in a direction away from existence in Nature, a detachment, a withdrawal from mind, life and body. He may try to live more and more as the witness Purusha, regarding the action of Nature, without interest in it, without sanction to it, detached, rejecting the whole action, withdrawing into pure conscious existence. This is the Sankhya liberation. He may go inward into that larger existence of which he has the intuition and away from the superficial mentality into a dream-state or sleep-state which admits him into wider or higher ranges of consciousness. By passing away into these ranges he may put away from him the terrestrial being. There is even, it was supposed in ancient times, a transition to supramental worlds from which a return to earthly consciousness was either not possible or not obligatory. But the definite and sure finality of this kind of liberation depends on the elevation of the mental being into that spiritual self of which he becomes aware when he looks away and upward from all mentality. That is given as the key to entire cessation from terrestrial existence whether by immersence in pure being or a participation in supracosmic being.

But if our aim is to be not only free by self-detachment from Nature, but perfected in mastery, this type of insistence can no longer suffice. We have to regard our mental, vital and physical action of Nature, find out the knots of its bondage and the loosing-points of liberation, discover the keys of its imperfection and lay our finger on the key of perfection. When the regarding soul, the witness Purusha stands back from his action of nature and observes it, he sees that it proceeds of its own impulsion by the power of its mechanism, by force of continui-
ty of movement, continuity of mentality, continuity of life impulse, continuity of an involuntary physical mechanism. At first the whole thing seems to be the recurrent action of an automatic machinery, although the sum of that action mounts constantly into a creation, development, evolution. He was as if seized in this wheel, attached to it by the ego sense, whirled round and onward in the circling of the machinery. A complete mechanical determinism or a stream of determinations of Nature to which he lent the light of his consciousness, is the natural aspect of his mental, vital and physical personality once it is regarded from this stable detached standpoint and no longer by a soul caught up in the movement and imagining itself to be a part of the action.

But on a farther view we find that this determinism is not so complete as it seemed; action of Nature continues and is what it is because of the sanction of the Purusha. The regarding Purusha sees that he supports and in some way fills and pervades the action with his conscious being. He discovers that without him it could not continue and that where he persistently withdraws this sanction, the habitual action becomes gradually enfeebled, flags and ceases. His whole active mentality can be thus brought to a complete stillness. There is yet a passive mentality which mechanically continues, but this too can be stilled by his withdrawal into himself out of the action. Even then the life action in its most mechanical parts continues; but that too can be stilled into cessation. It would appear then that he is not only the upholding (bhartri) Purusha, but in some way the master of his nature, Ishwara. It was the consciousness of this sanctioning control, this necessity of his consent, which made him in the ego-sense conceive of himself as a soul or mental being with a free will determining all his own becomings. Yet the free-will seems to be imper-
fect, almost illusory, since the actual will itself is a machinery of Nature and each separate willing determined by the stream of past action and the sum of conditions it created,—although, because the result of the stream, the sum, is at each moment a new development, a new determination, it may seem to be a self-born willing, virginally creative at each moment. What he contributed all the while was a consent behind, a sanction to what Nature was doing. He does not seem able to rule her entirely, but only choose between certain well-defined possibilities: there is in her a power of resistance born of her past impetus and a still greater power of resistance born of the sum of fixed conditions she has created, which she presents to him as a set of permanent laws to be obeyed. He cannot radically alter her way of proceeding, cannot freely effect his will from within her present movement, nor, while standing in the mentality, get outside or above her in such a way as to exercise a really free control. There is a duality of dependence, her dependence on his consent, his dependence on her law and way and limits of action, determination denied by a sense of free-will, free-will nullified by the actuality of natural determination. He is sure that she is his power, but yet he seems to be subject to her. He is the sanctioning (anumantri) Purusha, but does not seem to be the absolute lord, Ishwara.

Nevertheless, there is somewhere an absolute control, a real Ishwara. He is aware of it and knows that if he can find it, he will enter into control, become not only the passive sanctioning witness and upholding soul of her will, but the free powerful user and determiner of her movements. But this control seems to belong to another poise than the mentality. Sometimes he finds himself using it, but as a channel or instrument; it comes to him from above. It is clear then that it is supramental, a power of the Spirit greater than mental being which he already
knows himself to be at the summit and in the secret core of his conscious being. To enter into identity with that Spirit must then be his way to control and lordship. He can do it passively by a sort of reflection and receiving in his mental consciousness, but then he is only a mould, channel or instrument, not a possessor or participant in the power. He can arrive at identity by an absorption of his mentality in inner spiritual being, but then the conscious action ceases in a trance of identity. To be active master of the nature he must evidently rise to some higher supramental poise where there is possible not only a passive, but an active identity with the controlling spirit. To find the way of rising to this greater poise and be self-ruler, Swarāt, is a condition of his perfection.

The difficulty of the ascent is due to a natural ignorance. He is the Purusha witness of mental and physical Nature, sākshi, but not a complete knower of self and Nature, jnātri. Knowledge in the mentality is enlightened by his consciousness; he is the mental knower; but he finds that this is not a real knowledge, but only a partial seeking and partial finding, a derivative uncertain reflection and narrow utilisation for action from a greater light beyond which is the real knowledge. This light is the self-awareness and all-awareness of Spirit. The essential self-awareness he can arrive at even on the mental plane of being, by reflection in the soul of mind or by its absorption in spirit, as indeed it can be arrived at by another kind of reflection or absorption in soul of life and soul of body. But for participation in an effective all-awareness with this essential self-awareness as the soul of its action he must rise to supermind. To be lord of his being, he must be knower of self and Nature, jnātā īcvara. Partially this may be done on a higher level of mind where it responds directly to supermind, but really and completely this perfection belongs not to the mental being, but
to the ideal or knowledge Soul, *vijñānamaya purusha.* To draw up the mental into the greater knowledge being and that into the Bliss-Self of the spirit, *anandamaya purusha,* is the uttermost way of this perfection.

But no perfection, much less this perfection can be attained without a very radical dealing with the present nature and the abrogation of much that seems to be the fixed law of its complex nexus of mental, vital and physical being. The law of this nexus has been created for a definite and limited end, the temporary maintenance, preservation, possession, aggrandisement, enjoyment, experience, need, action of the mental ego in the living body. Other resultant uses are served, but this is the immediate and fundamentally determining object and utility. To arrive at a higher utility and freer instrumentation this nexus must be partly broken up, exceeded, transformed into a larger harmony of action. The Purusha sees that the law created is that of a partly stable, partly unstable selective determination of habitual, yet developing experiences out of a first confused consciousness of self and not-self, subjective being and external universe. This determination is managed by mind, life and body acting upon each other, in harmony and correspondence, but also in discord and divergence, mutual interference and limitation. There is a similar mixed harmony and discord between various activities of the mind in itself, as also between activities of the life in itself and of the physical being. The whole is a sort of disorderly order, an order evolved and contrived out of a constantly surrounding and invading confusion.

This is the first difficulty the Purusha has to deal with, a mixed and confused action of Nature,—an action without clear self-knowledge, distinct motive, firm instrumentation, only an attempt at these things and a general relative success of effectuality,—a surprising effect of adaptation in some directions, but also much distress of inade-
quacy. That mixed and confused action has to be mended; purification is an essential means towards self-perfection. All these impurities and inadequacies result in various kinds of limitation and bondage: but there are two or three primary knots of the bondage,—ego is the principal knot,—from which the others derive. These bonds must be got rid of; purification is not complete till it brings about liberation. Besides, after a certain purification and liberation has been effected, there is still the conversion of the purified instruments to the law of a higher object and utility, a large, real and perfect order of action. By the conversion man can arrive at a certain perfection of fullness of being, calm, power and knowledge, even a greater vital action and more perfect physical existence. One result of this perfection is a large and perfected delight of being, Ananda. Thus purification, liberation, perfection, delight of being are four constituent elements of the Yoga,—suddhi, mukti, siddhi, bhakti.

But this perfection cannot be attained or cannot be secure and entire in its largeness if the Purusha lays stress on individuality. To abandon identification with the physical, vital and mental ego, is not enough; he must arrive in soul also at a true, universalised, not separative individuality. In the lower nature man is an ego making a clean cut in conception between himself and all other existence; the ego is to him self, but all the rest not self, external to his being. His whole action starts from and is founded upon this self-conception and world-conception. But the conception is in fact an error. However sharply he individualises himself in mental idea and mental or other action, he is inseparable from the universal being, his body from universal force and matter, his life from the universal life, his mind from universal mind, his soul and spirit from universal soul and spirit. The universal acts on him, invades him, overcomes him, shapes itself in him at every
moment; he in his reaction acts on the universal, invades, tries to impose himself on it, shape it, overcome its attack, rule and use its instrumentation.

This conflict is a rendering of the underlying unity, which assumes the aspect of struggle by a necessity of the original separation; the two pieces into which mind has cut the oneness, rush upon each other to restore the oneness and each tries to seize on and take into itself the separated portion. Universe seems to be always trying to swallow up man, the infinite to resume this finite which stands on its self-defence and even replies by aggression. But in real fact the universal being through this apparent struggle is working out its purpose in man, though the key and truth of the purpose and working is lost to his superfluous conscious mind, only held obscurely in an underlying subconscious and only known luminously in an overruling superconscious unity. Man also is impelled towards unity by a constant impulse of extension of his ego, which identifies itself as best it can with other egos and with such portions of the universe as he can physically, vitally, mentally get into his use and possession. As man aims at knowledge and mastery of his own being, so also he aims at knowledge and mastery of the environmental world of nature, its objects, its instrumentation, its beings. First he tries to effect this aim by egoistic possession, but, as he develops, the element of sympathy born of the secret oneness grows in him and he arrives at the idea of a widening cooperation and oneness with other beings, a harmony with universal Nature and universal being.

The witness Purusha in the mind observes that the inadequacy of his effort, all the inadequacy in fact of man's life and nature arises from the separation and the consequent struggle, want of knowledge, want of harmony, want of oneness. It is essential for him to grow out of separative individuality, to universalise himself, to make
himself one with the universe. This unification can be done only through the soul by making our soul of mind one with the universal Mind, our soul of life one with the universal Life-soul, our soul of body one with the universal soul of physical Nature. When this can be done, in proportion to the power, intensity, depth, completeness, permanence with which it can be done, great effects are produced upon the natural action. Especially there grows an immediate and profound sympathy and immixture of mind with mind, life with life, a lessening of the body's insistence on separateness, a power of direct mental and other intercommunication and effective mutual action which helps out now the inadequate indirect communication and action that was till now the greater part of the conscious means used by embodied mind. But still the Purusha sees that in mental, vital, physical nature, taken by itself, there is always a defect, inadequacy, confused action, due to the mechanically unequal interplay of the three modes or gunas of Nature. To transcend it he has in the universality too to rise to the supramental and spiritual, to be one with the supramental soul of cosmos, the universal spirit. He arrives at the larger light and order of a higher principle in himself and the universe which is the characteristic action of the divine Sachchidananda. Even, he is able to impose the influence of that light and order, not only on his own natural being, but, within the radius and to the extent of the Spirit's action in him, on the world he lives in, on that which is around him. He is swarāt, self-knower, self-ruler, but he begins to be also through this spiritual oneness and transcendence samrāt, a knower and master of his environing world of being.

In this self-development the soul finds that it has accomplished on this line the object of the whole integral Yoga, union with the Supreme in its self and in its
universalised individuality. So long as he remains in the world-existence, this perfection must radiate out from him,—for that is the necessity of his oneness with the universe and its beings,—in an influence and action which help all around who are capable of it to rise to or advance towards the same perfection, and for the rest in an influence and action which help, as only the self-ruler and master man can help, in leading the human race forward spiritually towards this consummation and towards some image of a greater divine truth in their personal and communal existence. He becomes a light and power of the Truth to which he has climbed and a means for others’ ascension.
The Eternal Wisdom

BOOK II

THE DISCOVERY AND REALISATION IN ONESelf OF
THE ONE WHO IS IN ALL.

IV

THE VICTORY OF THE DIVINE

THE ROOT OF EVIL

1 It is the Blessed One, the sole Being, thou sayest, who dwells in every soul: whence then come the misery and sorrow to which he is condemned by his

2 presence in the heart of the soul of man?—The Eternal is in every man, but all men are not in the Eternal; there lies the cause of their suffering.

3-4 Sorrow is the daughter of evil.—The perfection of evil is to be ignorant of the Divine.

5 This is the noble way in regard to the origin of suffering; its origin is that thirst made up of egoistic desires which produces individual existence and

1) Bhagavat Purana.— 1) Ramakrishna,— 3) Dhammapada.—
4) Hermes.— 5) Buddhist Texts.
which now here, now there hunts for its self-satisfaction, and such is the thirst of sensation, the thirst of existence, the thirst of domination and well-being.

6 The consciousness which is born of the battle of the sense-organs with their corresponding objects, man finds agreeable and takes pleasure in it; it is in that pleasure that this thirst takes its origin, is developed and becomes fixed and rooted. The sensations which are born of the senses, man finds agreeable and takes pleasure in them; it is in that pleasure that this thirst takes its origin, is developed and becomes fixed and rooted. The perception and the representation of the objects sensed by the senses, man finds agreeable and takes pleasure in them; it is in that pleasure that this thirst takes origin, is developed and becomes fixed and rooted.

7 It is in the foundation of our being that the conditions of existence have their root. It is from the foundation of our being that they start up and take form.—The action of man made of desire, dislike and illusion starts from his own being, in himself it has its source and, wherever it is found, must come to ripeness, and wherever his action comes to ripeness, man gathers its fruits whether in this or some other form of life.—Desire is the profoundest root of all evil; it is from desire that there has arisen the world of life and sorrow.—Like burning coals are our desires; they are full of suffering, full of torment and a yet heavier distressfulness.

11 No living being possessed by desire can escape from sorrow. Those who have full understanding of this truth, conceive a hatred for desire.—The man who has conquered his unreined desires, offers no

6) id.—7) id.—8) id.—9) Pali Canon.—10) Buddhist Texts.—11) Fo-shu-hing-tsan-king.—12) Buddhist Texts.
hold to sorrow; it glides over him like water over the leaves of the lotus.

13 They have sown the wind and they shall reap the whirlwind.

14 Every action a man performs in thought, word and act, remains his veritable possession. It follows him and does not leave him even as a shadow separates not by a line from him who casts it.

15 The fruit of coveting and desire ripens in sorrow; pleasant at first it soon burns, as a torch burns the hand of the fool who has not in time cast it from him.

16 Such a fire, such an endless burning, that is Hell. It is not kindled by any devil, but it is within the heart that the mind incessantly lights, feeds and keeps it in being.—Hell has not been created by any one, but when a man does evil, he lights the fires of hell and burns in his own fire.

17 The essential spiritual being is so noble that even the damned cannot wish to cease from being. But sins form a partition and provoke so great a darkness and dissimilarity between the forces and the being in whom God lives that the spirit cannot unite itself to its own essence.

19 If I regard myself as a martyr, I must think too of myself as that martyr’s executioner; for we suffer only by the imagination of evil which is in us.

A Rationalistic Critic on Indian Culture

It is best to start with a precise idea of the species of critic from whom we are going to draw our estimate of oppositions. What we have before us are the ideas of an average and typical occidental mind on Indian culture, a man of sufficient education and wide reading, but no genius or exceptional capacity, rather an ordinary successful talent, with no wide flexibility or sympathy of mind, but of pronounced and rigidly held opinions backed up and given an appearance of weight by the habit of using to good effect a varied though not always sound information. This is in fact the mind and standpoint of an average Englishman of some ability formed in the habit of journalism. That is precisely the kind of thing we want in order to seize the nature of the antagonism which led Mr. Rudyard Kipling,—himself a super-journalist and "magnified non-natural" average man, the average lifted up, without ceasing to be itself, by the glare of a kind of crude and barbaric genius,—to affirm the eternal incompatibility of the East and the West. Let us see what strikes such a mentality as unique and abhorrent in the Indian mind and
its culture: if we can put aside all sensitiveness of personal feeling and look dispassionately at this phenomenon, we shall find it an interesting and illuminative study.

A certain objection may be advanced against taking a rationalistic critic with a political bias, a mind belonging at best to the today which is already becoming yesterday, in this widely representative capacity. The misunderstanding of continents has been the result of a long-standing and historic difference, and this book gives us only one phase of it which is of a very modern character. But it is in modern times, in an age of scientific and rationalistic enlightenment, that the difference has become most pronounced, the misunderstanding most aggressive and the sense of cultural incompatibility most conscious and self-revealing. An ancient Greek, full of a disinterested intellectual curiosity and a flexible aesthetic appreciation, was in spite of his feeling of racial and cultural superiority to the barbarian much nearer to the Indian mind than a typical modern European; not only could a Pythagoras or a philosopher of the Neo-platonist school, an Alexander or a Menander understand with a more ready sympathy the root ideas of Asiatic culture, but an average man of ability, a Megasthenes for instance, could be trusted to see and understand, though not inwardly and perfectly, yet in a sufficient measure. The mediaeval European, for all his militant Christianity and his prejudice against the infidel and paynim, yet resembled his opponent in many characteristic ways of seeing and feeling to an extent which is no longer possible to an average European mind, unless it has been imbued with the new ideas which are once more lessening the gulf between the continents. It was the rationalising of the occidental mind, the rationalising even of its religious ideas and sentiments, which made the gulf so wide as to appear unbridgeable. Our critic represents this increased hostility in an extreme form, a shape given to it by the unthinking free-
thinker, the man who has not thought out originally these difficult problems, but imbibed his views from his cultural environment and the intellectual atmosphere of the period. He will exaggerate enormously the points of opposition, but by his very exaggeration he will make them more strikingly clear and intelligible. He will make up for his want of correct information and intelligent study by a certain sureness of instinct in his attack upon things alien to his mentality.

It is this sureness of instinct which has led him to direct the real gravamen of his attack against Indian philosophy and religion. The culture of a people may be roughly described as the expression of a consciousness of life which formulates itself in three aspects. There is a side of thought, ideal, upward will and the soul's aspiration, a side of creative self-expressive and appreciative aesthetic, intelligence and imagination, and a side of practical and outward formulation. Philosophy gives us the thought's purest, largest and most general formulation of this consciousness of life and its view of existence, religion the most intense form of its upward will, of the soul's aspirations towards the fulfilment of its highest ideal and impulse. Art, poetry, literature provide for us the creative expression and impression of its intuition, intelligence, imagination. Society and politics provide in their forms an outward frame in which the more external life works out what it can of the ideal under the difficulties of the environment or takes, let us say, the crude material of living and shapes as much of it as possible by some reflection of this guiding consciousness. They may not, any of them, express the whole spirit adequately, but they derive from it their main ideas and their cultural character, and they make up together its soul, mind and body. In Indian civilisation philosophy and religion, philosophy made dynamic by religion, religion enlightened by philosophy have led, the rest follow as best they can; this is in-
deed its first distinctive character, which it shares with the more developed Asiatic peoples, but has carried to an extraordinary degree of thoroughgoing pervasiveness. It is what we mean when we speak of it as a Brahminical civilisation. That does not mean any domination of sacerdotalism, though in some lower aspects of it the sacerdotal mind has been only too prominent, but that its main motives have been shaped by its philosophic thinkers and religious minds,—not by any means all of them of Brahmin birth. The fact that a class has been developed whose business was to preserve the spiritual traditions, knowledge, sacred law of the race,—this and not a mere priest trade was the proper occupation of the Brahmin,—and that this class has for thousands of years maintained in the greatest part the keeping of the national mind and conscience,—though this function it has never altogether monopolised,—and the direction of the society, is only a characteristic indication. The fact behind is that Indian culture has been from the beginning and remained a religio-philosophical culture: everything else in it has derived from or else been in some way dependent on or subordinate to that one central and original peculiarity.

Our critic has felt the importance of this central point and directed upon it his most unsparing attack; in other quarters he may make concessions, allow attenuations, here he will make none. All here must be bad and harmful, or if not deleterious, then ineffective, by the very nature of the central ideas and motives, for any real good. This is a significant attitude. Of course there is the polemical motive. That which is claimed for the Indian mind and its civilisation is a high spirituality, high on all the summits of thought and religion, permeating art and literature and religious practice and social ideas and affecting even the ordinary man's attitude to life. If the claim is conceded, as it is conceded by all sympathetic and dis-
interested inquirers even when they do not accept the Indian view of life, then Indian culture stands, its civilisation has a right to live. More, it has a right even to throw a challenge to rationalistic modernism and say, "Attain first my level of spirituality before you claim to destroy and supersede me or call on me to modernise myself entirely in your sense. No matter if I have myself latterly fallen from my own heights or if my present forms cannot meet all the requirements of the future mind of humanity; I can reascend, the power is there in me; and I may even be able to develop a spiritual modernism which will help you in your effort to exceed yourself and arrive at a larger harmony." The hostile critic feels that he must deny this claim at its roots. He tries to prove Indian philosophy to be unspiritual and Indian religion to be an irrational animistic cult of monstrosity. In this effort which is an attempt to stand Truth on her head and force her to see facts upside down, he lands himself in a paradoxical absurdity and inconsistency which destroy his case by sheer overstatement. Still there arise even from this farrago two quite genuine issues, whether the spiritual, the religio-philosophical view of life and the government of civilisation by its ideas and motives or the rationalistic and external view of life and the satisfaction of the vital being governed by the intellectual and practical reason give the best lead to mankind, but also, whether the expression given to the spiritual conception of life by Indian culture is the best and most helpful to the growth of humanity. That is the real question between this Asiatic or ancient and the European or modern mentality.

The typical occidental mind, which prolongs still the mentality of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, has been almost entirely fashioned by the second view; it has grown into the mould of the vitalistic rational idea. Its attitude to life has never been governed by a philosophic conception of existence except during a brief period of
Graeco-Roman culture and then only in a small class of thinking and highly cultivated minds; it is dominated by environmental necessity and the practical reason. It has left behind it too the ages in which spiritual and religious conceptions which invaded it from the East, strove to impose themselves on the vitalistic and rational tendency; its religion is the religion of life, a religion of earth and of terrestrial humanity, an ideal of intellectual growth, vital efficiency, physical health and enjoyment, a rational ordering of society. This mind confronted by Indian culture is at once repelled, first, by unfamiliarity, then, by a sense of abnormality, by the total difference and, as it seems, diametrical opposition of standpoints, finally, by the abundance of forms which seem to it to teem with the supranatural,—therefore, as it thinks, the false,—and the unnatural, with a persistent departure from the common norm, from right method and sound device, by a frame of things in which everything, to use Mr. Chesterton’s expression, is of the wrong shape. From the orthodox Christian point of view, a thing of hell, an abnormal creation of demons, from the orthodox rationalistic standpoint this culture is a nightmare not only irrational, but antirational, a monstrosity, an out-of-date anomaly. That is no doubt an extreme attitude,—it is Mr. Archer’s,—but incomprehension and distaste are the rule. One continually finds traces of them even in minds which try to understand and sympathise, but to the average occidental content with his first raw natural impressions all is a repellent confusion. Indian philosophy is an incomprehensible, subtly unsubstantial cloud-weaving, Indian religion meets his eye as a mixture of absurd asceticism and an absurd gross and superstitious polytheism. He sees in Indian art a riot of crudely distorted or conventional forms and an impossible seeking after suggestions of the infinite—whereas all true art should be a beautiful and rational reproduction or imaginative representation of the natural and finite. He
condemns in Indian society an anachronistic and semi-barbaric survival of old-world and medieval ideas and institutions. This view, which has recently undergone some modification and is less loud and confident in expression, but still subsists, is the whole foundation of Mr. Archer's philippic.

This is evident from the nature of all the objections he brings against Indian civilisation. When you strip them of their journalistic rhetoric, you find that they amount simply to this natural antagonism of the half rationalised vital and practical man to a culture which subordinates reason to a supra-rational spirituality and life and action to a feeling after something which is greater than life and action. Philosophy and religion are the soul of Indian culture, inseparable from each other and interpenetrative. The whole objective of Indian philosophy, its entire \textit{raison d'être}, is the knowledge of the spirit, the experience of it and the right way to a spiritual existence, which is the highest significance also of religion. Indian religion draws all its characteristic value from the spiritual philosophy which illumines its highest aspiration and colours even most of what is drawn from an inferior range of religious experience. What are Mr. Archer's objections, first to Indian philosophy? Well, his first objection simply comes to this that it is philosophical; his second is that even as that worthless thing, metaphysical philosophy, it is too metaphysical; his third, the most positive and plausible, that it is enervating and kills the personality and the will-power by false notions of pessimism, asceticism, karma and reincarnation. If we take his criticism under each of these heads, we shall see that it is really not intellectual criticism, but the exaggerated expression of a fundamental difference of temperament and standpoint.

Mr. Archer cannot deny,—the denial would go beyond even his unequalled capacity for affirming absurdities,—that the Indian mind has displayed an unparalleled
activity and fruitfulness in philosophical thinking; he cannot deny that a familiarity with metaphysical conceptions and the capacity of discussing with some subtlety a metaphysical problem is much more wide-spread in India than in any other country,—even an ordinary Indian intellect can understand and deal with questions of this kind where an occidental mind of corresponding culture and attainments would be as hopelessly out of its depth as is Mr. Archer in these pages. But he denies that this familiarity and this subtlety are any proof of great mental capacity—"necessarily," he adds, I suppose in order to escape the charge of having suggested that Plato, Spinoza or Berkeley did not show a great mental capacity. Perhaps it is not "necessarily" such a proof, but it does show in one great order of questions, in one large and especially difficult field of the mentality a remarkable and unique general development. The European journalist's capacity for discussing with some show of acumen questions of economy and politics or, for that matter, art, literature and drama, is not "necessarily" proof of a great mental capacity, but it does show a great development of the European mind in general, a wide-spread information and normal capacity in these fields of activity. The crudity of the opinions and the treatment may sometimes seem a little "barbaric" to an outsider, but the thing itself is a proof that there is a culture, a civilisation, great intellectual and civic achievement and a sufficient wide-spread interest in the achievement. Mr. Archer has to avoid a similar conclusion in another field about India. He does it by denying that philosophy is of any value; this activity of the Indian mind is for him only an unequalled diligence in knowing the unknowable and thinking about the unthinkable. Why so? Well, because philosophy deals with a region where there is no possible "test of values" and in such a region thought itself, since it is simply unverifiable speculation, can be of little or no value.
There we come to a really interesting and characteristic opposition of standpoints, more, of the grain of the mentality. As stated, it is the sceptical argument of the atheist and agnostic, but after all that is only the extreme logical statement of an attitude common to the average European mind which is inherently a positivist attitude. Philosophy has been pursued in Europe with great and noble intellectual results by the highest minds, but very much as a pursuit apart from life, a thing high and splendid, but ineffective. It is remarkable that while in India and China philosophy has seized hold on life, has had an enormous practical effect on the civilisation and got into the very bones of current thought and action, it has never at all succeeded in achieving this importance in Europe. In the days of the Stoics and Epicureans it got a grip, but only among the highly cultured; at the present day, too, we have some renewed tendency of the kind, Nietzsche has had his influence, certain French thinkers also in France, the philosophies of James and Bergson have attracted some amount of public interest, but it is a mere nothing compared with the effective power of Asiatic philosophy. The average European draws his guiding views not from the philosophic, but from the positive and practical reason. He does not absolutely disdain philosophy like Mr. Archer, but he considers it, if not a "man-made illusion," yet a rather nebulous, remote and ineffective kind of occupation. He honours the philosophers, but he puts their works on the highest shelf of the library of civilisation, not to be taken down or consulted except by a few minds of an exceptional turn. He admires, but he distrusts them. Plato's idea of philosophers as the right rulers and best directors of society seems to him the most fantastic and unpractical of notions; the philosopher, precisely because he moves among ideas, must be without any hold on real life. The Indian mind holds on the contrary that the Rishi, the thinker, the seer of spiritual truth
is the best guide not only of the religious and moral, but the practical life, the natural director of society; to the Rishis he attributes the ideals and guiding intuitions of his civilisation, even today he is very ready to give the name to anyone who can give a spiritual truth which can help his life or a formative idea and inspiration which influences religion, ethics, society.

This is because the Indian believes that the ultimate truths are truths of the spirit and that truths of the spirit are the most fundamental and most effective truths of all being, powerfully creative of the inner, salutarily reformative of the outer life. To the European the ultimate truths are more often truths of the ideative intellect, the pure reason, but, whether intellectual or spiritual, they belong to a sphere beyond the ordinary action of the mind, life and body where alone there are any daily verifying "tests of values" such as are given by living experience and the positive and practical reason; they are in fact speculations and their proper place is in the world of ideas, not in the world of life. That brings us to a difference of standpoint which is the essence of Mr. Archer's second objection. He believes that all philosophy is speculation and guessing; the only verifiable truth, we must suppose, is that of the normal fact, the outward world and our responses to it, truth of physical science and a psychology founded on physical science. He reproaches Indian philosophy for having taken its speculations seriously, for presenting speculation in the guise of dogma, for the un-spiritual habit which mistakes groping for seeing, guessing for knowing,—in place, I presume, of the very spiritual habit which holds the physically sensible for the only knowable and takes the knowledge of the body for the knowledge of the soul and spirit. He waxes bitterly sarcastic over the idea that philosophic meditation and Yoga are the best way to ascertain the truth of Nature and the constitution of the universe. Mr. Archer's descriptions of
Indian philosophy are a grossly ignorant misrepresentation of its idea and spirit, but in their essence they represent the view inevitably taken by the normal positivist mind of the Occident.

In fact, Indian philosophy abhors mere guessing and speculation. That word is constantly applied by European critics to the thoughts and conclusions of the Upanishads, of the philosophies, of Buddhism; but Indian philosophers would reject it altogether as at all a valid description of their method. If our philosophy admits an ultimate unthinkable and unknowable, it does not concern itself with any positive description or analysis of that,—the absurdity the rationalist ascribes to it; it concerns itself with whatever is thinkable and knowable to us at the highest term as well as on the lower ranges of our experience. If it has been able to make its conclusions articles of religious faith,—dogmas, as they are here called,—it is because it has been able to base them on an experience verifiable by any man who will take the necessary means and apply the only possible tests. The Indian mind does not admit that the only possible test of values or of reality is the scientific, the test of a scrutiny of physical Nature or the everyday normal facts of our psychology. What are the tests of these more ordinary or objective values? Evidently, experience, experimental analysis and synthesis, reason, intuition,—for I believe the value of intuition is admitted nowadays by modern philosophy and science. The tests of this other order of truths are the same, experience, experimental analysis and synthesis, reason, intuition; only, since these things are truths of the soul and spirit, it must necessarily be a psychological and spiritual experience, a psychological and psycho-physical experimentation, analysis and synthesis, a larger intuition which looks into higher realms, realities, possibilities of being, a reason which admits something beyond itself, looks upward to the supra-rational, tries to give as far as may be an account of it to the
human intelligence. Yoga, which Mr. Archer invites us so pressingly to abandon, is itself nothing but a well-tested means of opening up this greater realm of experience.

Mr. Archer and minds of his type cannot be expected to know these things; they are beyond the range of the knowledge which is to them the whole arc of knowledge. But even if he knew, it would make no difference to him, he would reject the very idea with scornful impatience, without any degrading of his immense rationalistic superiority by any sort of examination. In this attitude he would have the average positivist mind with him. To that mind such notions seem in their very nature absurd and incomprehensible,—much worse than Greek and Hebrew, languages which have very respectable and credit-worthy professors; but these are hieroglyphs which can only be upheld as decipherable signs by Indians and Theosophists and mystical thinkers,—a disreputable clan. It can understand dogma and speculation about spiritual truth, a priest, a Bible,—whether disbelieving them or giving them a conventional acceptance,—but profoundest verifiable spiritual truth, firmly ascertainable spiritual values! The idea is foreign to this mentality and sounds to it like jargon. It can understand, even when it dismisses, an authoritative religion, an "I believe because or although it is rationally impossible," but deepest mystery of religion, highest truth of philosophical thinking, farthest discovery of psychological experience and a systematic and ordered experimentation of self-search, self-analysis, constructive inner possibility of self-perfection, all arriving at the same result, assenting to each other’s conclusions, reconciling spirit and reason and the whole psychological being, this great ancient and persistent research and triumph of Indian culture baffles and offends the average positivist mind of the West. It is bewildered by the possession of a knowledge which the West never more than fumbled after and ended by missing; it is irritated by, it refuses to reco-
gnise the superiority of such a harmony to its own lesser
culture of a religious seeking and experience at war with
science and philosophy and oscillating between irrational
belief and a troubled or else a self-confident scepticism. In
Europe philosophy has been sometimes the handmaid—
not the sister—of religion, but more often it has turned
its back on religious belief in hostility or in a disdainful
separation. The war between religion and science has
been almost the leading phenomenon of European cultu-
re. Even philosophy and science have been unable to
agree; they too have quarrelled and separated. They still
coexist, but they are not a happy family.

No wonder that the positivist mind to which this
seems the natural order of things, should turn from a way
of thinking and knowing in which there is a harmony,
consensus, union between philosophy, religion and a sys-
tematised well-tested psychological experience, or that it
should escape from the challenge of this alien form of
knowledge by readily dismissing the psychology as a jungle
of self-hypnotic hallucinations, the religion as a rank growth
of antirational superstitions, the philosophy as a remote
cloud-land of unsubstantial speculation. It is unfortunate
for the peace of mind which this self-satisfied attitude
brings with it and for the effect of Mr. Archer's facile and
devastating method of criticism that the West too has re-
cently got itself into paths of thinking and discovery which
seem dangerously likely to justify all this mass of unpleas-
ant barbarism and to bring Europe herself nearer to so
monstrous a way of thinking. It is becoming more and
more clear that Indian philosophy has anticipated in its
own way most of what is being thought out in metaphys-
ical speculation. One finds even scientific thought some-
times repeating its generalisations from the other end of
the scale of research. Indian psychology which Mr. Ar-
cher dismisses, along with Indian cosmology and physiolo-
gy as baseless classification and ingenious guessing,— it
is anything but that, for it is based rigorously on experience, —is being justified by all the latest psychological discoveries. The fundamental idea of Indian religion looks perilously like becoming the prominent thought and sentiment of a new and universal religious mentality. Who can say that the psycho-physiology of Indian Yoga may not be justified if certain lines of "groping and guessing" in the West are pushed farther and even perhaps the Indian cosmological idea that there are other planes of being than this kingdom of Matter, rehabilitated? But the positivist mind may yet be of good courage: its hold is still strong, it has still the claim of intellectual orthodoxy and the prestige of the right of possession; many streams must swell and meet together before it is washed under and this tide of uniting thought sweeps over humanity.
Indian Culture and External Influence

In considering Indian civilisation and its renaissance, I suggested that a powerful new creation in all fields was our great need, the meaning of the renaissance and the one way of preserving the civilisation. Confronted with the huge rush of modern life and thought, invaded by another dominant civilisation almost her opposite or inspired at least with a very different spirit to her own, India can only survive by confronting this raw, new, aggressive, powerful world with fresh diviner creations of her own spirit, cast in the mould of her own spiritual ideals. She must meet it by solving its greater problems,—which she cannot avoid, even if such avoidance could be thought desirable,—in her own way, through solutions arising out of her own being and from her own deepest and largest knowledge. In that connection I spoke of the acceptance and assimilation from the West of whatever in its knowledge, ideas, powers was assimilable, compatible with her spirit, reconcilable with her ideals, valuable for a new statement of life. This question of external influence and new creation from within is of very considerable importance; it calls for more than a passing mention. Especially it is necessary to form some more precise idea of what we mean by acceptance and of the actual effect of
assimilation; for this is a problem of pressing incidence in which we have to get our ideas clear and fix firmly and seeingly on our line of solution.

But it is possible to hold that while new creation—and not a motionless sticking to old forms—is our one way of life and salvation, no acceptance of anything western is called for, we can find in ourselves all that we need; no considerable acceptance is possible without creating a breach which will bring pouring in the rest of the occidental deluge. That, if I have not misread it, is the sense of a comment on these articles in a Bengali literary periodical* which holds up the ideal of a new creation to arise from within entirely on national lines and in the national spirit. The writer takes his stand on a position which is common ground, that humanity is one, but different peoples are variant soul-forms of the common humanity. When we find the oneness, the principle of variation is not destroyed but finds rather its justification; it is not by abolishing ourselves, our own special temperament and power, that we can get at the living oneness, but by following it out and raising it to its highest possibilities of freedom and action. That is a truth which I have myself insisted on repeatedly, with regard to the modern idea and attempt at some kind of political unification of humanity, as a very important part of the psychological sense of social development, and again in this question of a particular people's life and culture in all its parts and manifestations. I have insisted that uniformity is not a real but a dead unity: uniformity kills life while real unity, if well founded, becomes vigorous and fruitful by a rich energy of variation. But the writer adds that the idea of taking over what is best in occidental civilisation, is a false notion without a living meaning; to leave the bad and take the good sounds very well, but this bad

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and this good are not separable in that way: they are the inextricably mingled growth of one being, not separate blocks of a child's toy house set side by side and easily detachable,—and what is meant then by cutting out and taking one element and leaving the rest? If we take over a western ideal, we take it over from a living form which strikes us; we imitate that form, are subjugated by its spirit and natural tendencies, and the good and bad intertwined in the living growth come in upon us together and take united possession. In fact, we have been for a long time so imitating the west, trying to become like it or partly like it and have fortunately failed, for that would have meant creating a bastard or twy-natured culture; but twy-natured, as Tennyson makes his Lucretius say, is no-natured and a bastard culture is no sound, truth-living culture. An entire return upon ourselves is our only way of salvation.

There is much to be said here, it seems to me, both in the way of confirmation and of modification. But let us be clear about the meaning of our terms. That the attempt in the last century which still in some directions continues,—to imitate European civilisation and to make ourselves a sort of brown Englishmen, to throw our ancient culture into the dust-bin and put on the livery or uniform of the West was a mistaken and illegitimate endeavour, I heartily agree. At the same time a certain amount of imitation, a great amount even, was, one might almost say, a biological necessity, at any rate a psychological necessity of the situation. Not only when a lesser meets a greater culture, but when a culture which has fallen into a state of comparative inactivity, sleep, contraction, is faced with, still more when it receives the direct shock of a waking, active, tremendously creative civilisation, finds thrown upon it novel and successful powers and functionings, sees an immense succession and development of new ideas and formations, it is impelled by the very ins-
tinct of life to take over these ideas and forms, to annex, to enrich itself, even to imitate and reproduce, and in one way or in another take large account and advantage of these new forces and opportunities. That is a phenomenon which has happened repeatedly in history, in a greater or a lesser degree, in part or in totality. But if there is only a mechanical imitation, if there is a subordination and servitude, the inactive or weaker culture perishes, it is swallowed up by the invading leviathan. And even short of that, in proportion as there is a leaning towards these undesirable things, it languishes, is unsuccessful in its attempt at annexation, loses besides the power of its own spirit. To recover its own centre, find its own base and do whatever it has to do in its own strength and genius is certainly the one way of salvation. But even then a certain amount of acceptance, of forms too,—some imitation, if all taking over of forms must be called imitation,—is inevitable. We have, for instance, taken over in literature the form of the novel, the short story, the critical essay among a number of other adoptions, in science not only the discoveries and inventions, but the method and instrumentation of inductive research, in politics the press, the platform, the forms and habits of agitation, the public association. I do not suppose that anyone seriously thinks of renouncing or exiling these modern additions to our life,—though they are not all of them by any means unmixed blessings,—on the ground that they are foreign importations. But the question is what we do with them and whether we can bring them to be instruments and by some characteristic modification moulds of our own spirit. If so, there has been an acceptance and an assimilation; if not there has been merely a helpless imitation.

But the taking over of forms is not the heart of the question. When I speak of acceptance and assimilation, I am thinking of certain influences, ideas, energies brought forward with a great living force by Europe, which can
awaken and enrich our own cultural activities and cultural being if we succeed in dealing with them with a victorious power and originality, if we can bring them into our characteristic way of being and transform them by its shaping action. That was in fact what our own ancestors did, never losing their originality, never effacing their uniqueness, because always vigorously creating from within, with whatever knowledge or artistic suggestion from outside they thought worthy of acceptance or capable of an Indian treatment. But I would certainly repel the formula of taking the good and leaving the bad as a crudity, one of those facile formulas which catch the superficial mind but are unsound in conception. Obviously, if we “take over” anything, the good and the bad in it will come in together pell-mell. If we take over for instance that terrible, monstrous and compelling thing, that giant Asuric creation, European industrialism,—unfortunately we are being forced by circumstances to do it,—whether we take it in its form or its principle, we may under more favourable conditions develop by it our wealth and economic resources, but assuredly we shall get too its social discords and moral plagues and cruel problems, and I do not see how we shall avoid becoming the slaves of the economic aim in life and losing the spiritual principle of our culture.

But, besides, these terms good and bad in this connection mean nothing definite, give us no help. If I must use them, where they can have only a relative significance, in a matter not of ethics, but of an interchange between life and life, I must first give them this general significance that whatever helps me to find myself more intimately, nobly, with a greater and sounder possibility of self-expressive creation, is good; whatever carries me out of my orientation, whatever weakens and belittles my power, richness, breadth and height of self-being, is bad for me. If the distinction is so understood, it will be evident, I
think, to any serious and critical mind which tries to fathom things, that the real point is not the taking over of this or that formal detail, which has only a sign value, for example, widow remarriage, but a dealing with great effective ideas, such as are the ideas, in the external field of life, of social and political liberty, equality, democracy. If I accept any of these ideas it is not because they are modern or European, which is in itself no recommendation, but because they are human, because they present fruitful viewpoints to the spirit, because they are things of the greatest importance in the future development of the life of man. What I mean by acceptance of the effective idea of democracy,—the thing itself, never fully worked out, was present as an element in ancient Indian as in ancient European polity and society,—is that I find its inclusion in our future way of living, in some shape, to be a necessity of our growth. What I mean by assimilation, is that we must not take it crudely in the European forms, but must go back to whatever corresponds to it, illumines its sense, justifies its highest purport in our own spiritual conception of life and existence, and in that light work out its extent, degree, form, relation to other ideas, application. To everything I would apply the same principle, to each in its own kind, after its proper dharma, in its right measure of importance, its spiritual, intellectual, ethical, aesthetic, dynamic utility.

I take it as a self-evident law of individual being applicable to group-individuality, that it is neither desirable nor possible to exclude everything that comes in to us from outside. I take it as an equally self-evident law that a living organism, which grows not by accretion, but by self-development and assimilation, must recast the things it takes in to suit the law and form and characteristic action of its biological or psychological body, reject what would be deleterious or poisonous to it,—and what is that but the non-assimilable?—take only what
can be turned into useful stuff of self-expression. It is, to use an apt Sanskritic phrase employed in the Bengali tongue, *ātmāsat-karana*, an assimilative appropriation, a making the thing settle into oneself and turn into characteristic form of our self-being. The impossibility of entire rejection arises from the very fact of our being a term of diversity in a unity, not really separate from all other existence, but in relation with all that surrounds us, because in life this relation expresses itself very largely by a process of interchange. The undesirability of total rejection, even if it were entirely possible, arises from the fact that interchange with the environment is necessary to a healthy persistence and growth; the living organism which rejects all such interchange, would speedily languish and die of lethargy and inanition.

Mentally, vitally and physically I do not grow by a pure self-development from within in a virgin isolation; I am not a separate self-existent being proceeding from a past to a new becoming in a world of its own where no one is but itself, nothing works but its own inner powers and musings. There is in every individualised existence a double action, a self-development from within which is its greatest intimate power of being and by which it is itself, and a reception of impacts from outside which it has to accommodate to its own individuality and make into material of self-growth and self-power. The two operations are not mutually exclusive, nor is the second harmful to the first except when the inner genius is too weak to deal victoriously with its environmental world; on the contrary the reception of impacts stimulates in a vigorous and healthy being its force for self-development and is an aid to a greater and more pronouncedly characteristic self-determination. As we rise in the scale we find that the power of original development from within, of conscious self-determination increases more and more, while in those who live most powerfully in themselves it reaches striking,
attack. It may act as a stimulus, awakening a new action of the self-consciousness and a sense of fresh possibility,—by comparison, by suggestion, by knocking at locked doors and arousing slumbering energies. It may come in as a possible material which has then to be reshaped to a form of the inner energy, harmonised with the inner being, reinterpreted in the light of its own characteristic self-consciousness. In a great change of environment or a close meeting with a mass of invading influences all these processes work together and there is possibly much temporary perplexity and difficulty, many doubtful and perilous movements, but also the opportunity of a great self-developing transformation or an immense and vigorous renaissance.

The group-soul differs from the individual only in being more self-sufficient by reason of its being an assemblage of many individual selves and capable within of many group variations. There is a constant inner interchange which may for a long time suffice to maintain the vitality, growth, power of developing activity, even when there is a restricted interchange with the rest of humanity. Greek civilisation,—after growing under the influence of Egyptian, Phoenician and other Oriental influences,—separated itself sharply from the non-Hellenic "barbarian" cultures and was able for some centuries to live within itself by a rich variation and internal interchange. There was the same phenomenon in ancient India of a culture living intensely from within in a profound differentiation from all surrounding cultures, its vitality rendered possible by an even greater richness of internal interchange and variation. Chinese civilisation offers a third instance. But at no time did Indian culture exclude altogether external influences; on the contrary a very great power of selective assimilation, subordination and transformation of external elements was a characteristic of its processes; it protected itself from any considerable or overwhelming invasion,
but laid hands on and included whatever struck or impressed it and in the act of inclusion subjected it to a characteristic change which harmonised the new element with the spirit of its own culture. But nowadays any such strong separative aloofness as distinguished the ancient civilisations, is no longer possible; the races of mankind have come too close to each other, are being thrown together in a certain unavoidable life unity. We are confronted with the more difficult problem of living in the full stress of this greater interaction and imposing on its impacts the law of our being.

Any attempt to remain exactly what we were before the European invasion or to ignore in future the claims of a modern environment and necessity is foredoomed to an obvious failure. However much we may deplore some of the characteristics of that intervening period in which we were dominated by the Western standpoint or move away from the standpoint back to our own characteristic way of seeing existence, we cannot get rid of a certain element of inevitable change it has produced upon us, any more than a man can go back in life to what he was some years ago and recover entire and unaffected a past mentality. Time and its influences have not only passed over him, but carried him forward in their stream. We cannot go backward to a past form of our being, but we can go forward to a large repossess of ourselves in which we shall make a better, more living, more real, more self-possessed use of the intervening experience. We can still think in the essential sense of the great spirit and ideals of our past, but the form of our thinking, our speaking, our development of them has changed by the very fact of new thought and experience; we see them not only in the old, but in new lights, we support them by the added strength of new view-points, even the old words we use acquire for us a modified, more extended and richer significance. Again, we cannot be "ourselves alone" in any narrow formal sense, because
we must necessarily take account of the modern world around us and get full knowledge of it, otherwise we cannot live. But all such taking account of things, all added knowledge modifies our subjective being. My mind, with all that depends on it, is modified by what it observes and works upon, modified when it takes in from it fresh materials of thought, modified when it is wakened by its stimulus to new activities, modified even when it denies and rejects; for even an old thought or truth which I affirm against an opposing idea, becomes a new thought to me in the effort of affirmation and rejection, clothes itself with new aspects and issues. My life is modified in the same way by the life influences it has to encounter and confront. Finally, we cannot avoid dealing with the great governing ideas and problems of the modern world. The modern world is still mainly European, a world dominated by the European mind and western civilisation. We claim to set right this undue preponderance, to reassert the Asiatic and, for ourselves, the Indian mind and to preserve and develop the great values of Asiatic and of Indian civilisation. But the Asiatic or the Indian mind can only assert itself successfully by meeting these problems and by giving them a solution which will justify its own ideals and spirit.

The principle I have affirmed results both from the necessity of our nature and the necessity of things, of life,—fidelity to our own spirit, nature, ideals, the creation of our own characteristic forms in the new age and the new environment, but also a strong and masterful dealing with external influences which need not be and in the nature of the situation cannot be a total rejection; therefore there must be an element of successful assimilation. There remains the very difficult question of the application of the principle,—the degree, the way, the guiding perceptions. To think that out we must look at each province of culture and, keeping always firm hold on a
perception of what the Indian spirit is and the Indian ideal is, see how they can work upon the present situation and possibilities in each of these provinces and lead to a new victorious creation. In such thinking it will not do to be too dogmatic. Each capable Indian mind must think it out or, better, work it out in its own light and power,—as the Bengal artists are working it out in their own sphere,—and contribute some illumination or effectuation. The spirit of the Indian renascence will take care of the rest, that power of the universal Time-Spirit which has begun to move in our midst for the creation of a new and greater India.
Rebirth, Evolution, Heredity

Two truths, discoveries with an enormous periphery of luminous result and of a considerable essential magnitude, evolution and heredity, figure to-day in the front of thought, and I suppose we have to take them as a well-established unquenchable light upon our being, lamps of a constant lustre, though not yet very perfectly trimmed, final so far as anything is final in man's constantly changing cinematographic process of the development of intellectual knowledge. They may be said to make up almost the whole fundamental idea of life in the way of seeing peculiar to a mind dominated, fashioned, pressed into its powerful moulds by the exact, curious, multifariously searching, yet in the end singularly limited observation and singularly narrow reason of our modern science. Science is in her own way a great seer and magician; she has both the microscopic and the macroscopic, the closely gazing and the telescopic view, a dissolving power of searching analytic resolution, a creative power of revealing synthetic effectuation. She has hunted to their lair many of the intermediate secret processes of the great creatrix, and even she has been able, by the inventive faculty given to us, to go and do one better. Man, this midget in infinity, locomotive yet nailed to the contiguity of a petty crust of soil by the force of gravitation, has certainly scored by
her a goodly number of points against the mother of the universe. But all this has been done in some perfection only in the limits of her lowest obtrusive physical field.

Face to face with psychic and spiritual secretcies, as in the open elementary world even of mind, Science has still the uninformed gaze and the groping hands of the infant. In that sphere she, so precise, illuminative, compelling in the physical, sees only the big blazing buzzing confusion which James tells us, with a possibly inaccurate vividness of alliterative phrase, is the newborn baby's view of the sensible world into which he has dropped down the mysterious stairs of birth. Science, faced with what are still to her the wonderful random accords and unexplained miracles of consciousness, protects herself from the errors of the imagination,—but stumbling incidentally by that very fact into plenty of the errors of an inadequate induction,—behind an opaque shield of cautious scepticism. She clings with the grasping firmness of the half-drowned to planks of security she thinks she has got in a few well-tested correspondences,—so-styled, though the word as used explains nothing,—between mental action and its accompaniment of suggestive or instrumental physical functionings. She is determined, if she can, to explain every supraphysical phenomenon by some physical fact; physical process of mind must not exist except as result or rendering of physiological process of body. This set resolution, apparently rational and cautious of ascertainable and firmly tangible truth, but really heroic in its paradoxical temerity, shuts up her chance of rapid discovery, for the present at least, in a fairly narrow circle. It taints too her extensions of physical truth into the psychical field with a pursuing sense of inadequacy. And this inadequacy in extended application is very evident in her theories of heredity and evolution when she forces them beyond their safe ground of physical truth and labours to illumine by them the subtle, complex, elusive
phenomena of our psychical being.

There are still, I dare say, persons here and there who cherish a secret or an open unfaith in the theory of a physical evolution, and believe that it will one day pass into the limbo of dead generalisations like the Ptolemaic theory in astronomy or like the theory of humours in medicine; but this is a rare and excessive scepticism. Yet it may not be without use or aptitude for our purpose to note that contrary to current popular notions the scientific account of this generalisation, like that of a good number of others, is not yet conclusively proved, even though now taken for granted. But still there is on the whole a mass of facts and indications in its favour so considerable as to look overwhelming, so that we cannot resist the conclusion that in this way or some such way the whole thing came about and we find it difficult to conceive any more convincing explanation of the indubitable ascending and branching scale of genus and species which meets even our casual scrutiny of living existence. One thing at least seems now intellectually certain, we can no longer believe that these suns and systems were hurled full-shaped and eternally arranged into boundless space and all these numberless species of being planted on earth ready-made and nicely tailored in seven days or any number of days in a sudden outburst of caprice or dionysiac excitement or crowded activity of mechanical conception by the fiat of a timeless Creator. The successive development which was summarily proposed by the ancient Hindu thinkers, the lower forms of being first, man afterwards as the crown of the Spirit's development of life on earth, has been confirmed by the patient and detailed scrutiny of physical science,—an aeonic development, though the farther Hindu conception of a constant repetition of the principle in cycles is necessarily incapable of physical evidence.

One thing more seems now equally certain that not
only the seed of all life was one,—again the great intuition of the Upanishads foreruns the conclusions of the physical enquiry, one seed which the universal self-existence by process of force has disposed in many ways, *ekam viṣjam bahunāḥ cakti-yogat,*—but even the principle of development is one and the structural ground-plan too as it develops step by step, in spite of all departures to this side or that in the workings of the creative Force or the creative Idea. Nature seems to start with an extraordinary poverty of original broad variative conceptions and to proceed to an extraordinary richness of her minuter consequential variations, which amounts to a forging of constant subtle differentiations of species and in the individual a startling insistence on result of uniqueness. It almost looks as if in the process of her physical harmonies there was meant to be some formal effect or symbolic reproduction of the truth that all things are originally one being, but a one who insists on his own infinite diversity, and even a suggestion that there is in this eternal unity an eternal pluralism, the Infinite Being self-repeated in an infinite multiplicity of beings each unique and yet each the One. To a mind on the look-out for the metaphysical suggestions we can draw from the apparent facts of being, that might not seem altogether an imagination.

In any case we have this now patent order in the profuse complexities of the natural harmony of living things,—one plasmic seed, one developing ground-plan, an opulent number of varieties whose logical process would be by an ascending order which passes up through fine but still very distinct gradations from the crude to the complex, from the less organised to the more organised, from the inferior to the superior type. The first question that should strike the mind at once, when this tree of life has been seen, is whether this logical order was indeed the actual order in the history of the universe, and then, a second, naturally arising from that problem, whether, if so, each new form developed by variation from its natural predecessor or came in by some unknown process, a fresh, independent and in a way sudden creation. In the first case, we have the scientific order of physical evolution,—in the other one knows not well what, perhaps an unseen Demiurge who developed the whole thing in the earlier
period of the earth evolution and has now wholly or almost entirely stopped the business so that we have no new physical development of that kind, but only, it may be, an evolution of capacity in types already created. Science stands out for a quite natural and mechanical, a quite unbroken physical evolution with many divergent lines indeed of developing variation, but in the line no gap or interstice. It is true that there are not one but a host of missing links, which even the richest remains of the past cannot fill in, and we are not in a position to deny with an absolute dogmatism the possibility of an advance per saltum, by a rapid overleaping, perhaps even by a crowded psychical or bio-psychic preparation whose results sprang out in the appearance of a new type with a certain gulf between itself and the preceding forms of life. With regard to man especially there is still an enormous uncertainty as to how he, so like yet so different from the other sons of Nature, came into existence. Still the gaps can be explained away, there is a great mass of telling facts in favour of the less physically anarchic view, and it seems to have on its side the right of greatest probability in a material universe where the most perfectly physical principle of proceeding would seem to be the just basic law.

But even if we admit the most scrupulous and rigorous continuity of successive determination, the question arises whether the process of evolution has been indeed so exclusively physical and biological as at first sight it looks. If it is, we must admit not only a rigorous principle of class heredity, but a law of hereditary progressive variation and a purely physical cause of all mental and spiritual phenomena. Heredity by itself means simply the constant transmission of physical form and biological characteristics from a previous life to its posterity. There is very evidently such a general force of hereditary transmission within the genus or species itself, as the tree so the seed, as the seed so the tree, so that a lion generates a lion and not a cat or a rhinoceros, a man a human being and not an ourangoutang,—though one reads now of a curious and startling speculation, turning the old theory topsy-turvy, that certain ape kinds may be, not ancestors, but degenerate descendants of man! But farther, if a physical evolution is the whole fact, there must be a capacity
for the hereditary transmission of variations by which new species are or have been created,—not merely in the process of a mixture or crossing, but by an internal development which is stored up and handed down in the seed. That too may very well be admitted, even though its real process and rationale are not yet understood, since the transmission of family and individual characteristics is a well observed phenomenon. But then the things transmitted are not only physical and biological, but psychic or at least bio-psychic characters, repetitions of customary nervous experience and mental tendency, powers. We have to suppose that the physical seed transmits these things. We are called upon to admit that the human seed for instance, which does not contain a developed human consciousness, yet carries with it the powers of such a consciousness so that they reproduce themselves automatically in the thinking and organised mentality of the offspring. This is an inexplicable paradox unless we suppose either that there is something more behind, a psychical power behind the veil of material process, or else that mind is only a process of life and life only a process of matter. Therefore finally we have to suppose the physical theory capable of explaining by purely material causes and a material constitution the mystery of the emergence of life in matter and the equal mystery of the emergence of mind in life. It is here that difficulties begin to crowd in which convict it, so far at least, of a hopeless inadequacy, and the nature of that inadequacy, its crux, its stumbling-point leave room for just that something behind, something psychical, a hidden soul process and for a more complex and less materialistic account of the truth of evolution.

The materialistic assumption—it is no more than a hypothetical assumption, for it has never been proved—is that development of non-living matter results under certain unknown conditions in a phenomenon of unconscious life which is in its real nature only an action and reaction of material energy, and the development of that again under certain unknown conditions in a phenomenon of conscious mind which is again in its real nature only an action and reaction of material energy. The thing is not proved, but that, it is argued, does not matter; it only
means that we do not yet know enough; but one day we shall know,—the necessary physiological reaction called by us an intuition or train of reasoning crowned by discovery having, I suppose, taken place in a properly constituted nervous body and the more richly convoluted brain of a Galileo of biology,—and then this great and simple truth will be proved, like many other things once scoffed at by the shallow common sense of humanity. But the difficulty is that it seems incapable of proof. Even with regard to life, which is by a great deal the lesser difficulty, the discovery of certain chemical or other physical and mechanical conditions under which life can be stimulated to appear, will prove no more than that these are the favourable or necessary conditions for the manifestation of life in body,—such conditions there must be in the nature of things,—but not that life is not another new and higher power of the force of universal being. The connection of life responses with physical conditions and stimuli proves very clearly that life and matter are connected and that, as indeed they must do to coexist, the two kinds of energy act on each other,—a very ancient knowledge; but it does not get rid of the fact that the physical response is accompanied by an element which seems to be of the nature of a nervous excitement and an incipient or suppressed consciousness and is not the same thing as the companion physical reaction.

When we come to mind, we see—how could it be otherwise in an embodied mind?—a response, interaction, connection, a correspondence if you will; but no amount of correspondence can show how a physical response can be converted into or amount to or by itself constitute in result a conscious operation, a perception, emotion, thought-concept, or prove that love is a chemical product or that Plato's theory of ideas or Homer's Iliad or the cosmic consciousness of the Yogan was only a combination of physiological reactions or a complex of the changes of grey brain matter or a flaming marvel of electrical discharges. It is not only that common sense and imagination boggle at these theories,—that objection may be disregarded,—not only that perception, reason and intuition have to be thrust aside in favour of a forced and too extended inference, but that there is a gulf of difference here.
between the thing to be explained and the thing by which it is sought to explain it which cannot be filled up, however much we may admit nervous connections and psychophysical bridges. And if the physical scientist points to a number of indicative facts and hopes one day to triumph over these formidable difficulties, there is growing up on the other side an incipient mass of psychical phenomena which are likely to drown his theory in fathomless waters. The insuperability of these always evident objections is beginning to be more widely recognised, but since the past still holds considerable sway, it is necessary to insist on them so that we may have the clear right to go on to more liberal hypotheses which do not try prematurely to reduce to a mechanical simplicity the problem of our being.

One of these is the ancient view that not only incidence of body and life on mind and soul, but incidence of mind and soul on body and life have to be considered. Here too there is the evolutionary idea, but physical and life evolution, even the growth of mind, are held to be only incidental to a soul evolution of which Time is the course and the earth among many other worlds the theatre. In the old Indian version of this theory evolution, heredity and rebirth are three companion processes of the universal unfolding, evolution the processional aim, rebirth the main method, heredity one of the physical conditions. That is a theory which provides at least the framework for a harmonious explanation of all the complex elements of the problem. The scientific idea starts from physical being and makes the psychical a result and circumstance of body; this other evolutionary idea starts from soul and sees in the physical being an instrumentation for the awakening to itself of a spirit absorbed in the universe of Matter.
The Future Poetry

THE POETS OF THE DAWN

The superiority of the English poets who lead the way into the modern age is that sudden almost unaccountable spiritual impulse, insistent but vague in some, strong but limited in one or two, splendid and supreme in its rare moments of vision and clarity, which breaks out from their normal poetic mentality and strives constantly to lift their thought and imagination to its own heights, a spirit or Daemon who does not seem to trouble at all with his voice or his oestrus the contemporary poets of continental Europe. But they have no clearly seen or no firmly based constant idea of the greater work which this spirit demands from them; they get at its best only in an inspiration over which they have not artistic control, and they have only an occasional or uncertain glimpse of its self motives. Thus they give to it often a form of speech and movement which is borrowed from their intellect, normal temperament or culture rather than wells up as the native voice and rhythm of the spirit within, and they fall away easily to a lower kind of work. They have a greater thing to reveal than the Elizabethan poets, but they do not express it with that constant fullness of native utterance or that more perfect correspondence between substance and form which is the greatness of Shakespeare and Spenser.

This failure to grasp the conditions of a perfect intuitive and spiritual poetry has not yet been noted, because the attempt itself has not been understood by the critical mind of the nineteenth century. That mind was heavily intellectualised, sometimes lucid, reasonable and acute, sometimes cloudily or fierily romantic, sometimes scientific, minutely delving, analytic, psychological, but in none of these moods and from none of these outlooks capable of understanding the tones of this light which for a moment flushed the dawning skies of its own age or tracing it to the deep and luminous fountains from which it welled. Taine's grotesquely misproportioned appreciation in which
Byron figures as the colossus and Titan of the age while the greater and more significant work of Wordsworth and Shelley is dismissed as an ineffective attempt to poetise a Germanic transcendentalism, Carlyle's ill-tempered and dyspeptic depreciation of Keats, Arnold's inability to see in Shelley anything but an unsubstantially beautiful poet of cloud and dawn and sunset, a born musician who had made a mistake in taking hold of the word as his instrument, are extreme, but still characteristic misunderstandings. In our own day we see the singers who lead the van of the future entering with a nearer intimacy into the domains of which these earlier poets only just crossed the threshold, but the right art and technique of this poetry have been rather found by the intuitive sense of their creators than yet intellectually understood so as to disengage their form from the obstruction of old-world ideas and standards of appreciation.

Each essential motive of poetry must find its own characteristic speech, its own law of rhythms,—even though metrically the mould may appear to be the same,—its own structure and development in the lyric, dramatic, narrative and, if that can still be used, the epic form and medium. The objective poetry of external life, the vital poetry of the life-spirit, the poetry of the intellect or the inspired reason, each has its own spirit and, since the form and word are the measure, rhythm, body of the spirit, must each develop its own body. There may be a hundred variations within the type which spring from national difference, the past of the civilisation, the cultural atmosphere, the individual idiosyncracy, but some fundamental likeness of spirit will emerge. Elizabethan poetry was the work of the life-spirit in a new, raw and vigorous people not yet tamed by a restraining and formative culture, a people with the crude tendencies of the occidental mind rioting almost in the exuberance of a state of nature. The poetry of the classical Sanskrit writers was the work of Asiatic minds, scholars, court-poets in an age of immense intellectual development and an excessive almost over-cultivated refinement, but still that too was a poetry of the life-spirit. In spite of a broad gulf of difference we yet find an extraordinary basic kinship between these two very widely separated great ages of poetry, though there was
never any possibility of contact between that earlier oriental and this later occidental work,—the dramas of Kali
dasa and some of the dramatic romances of Shakespeare, plays like the Sanskrit Seal of Rakshasa and Toy-Cart and
Elizabethan historic and melodramatic pieces, the poetry of the Cloud-Messenger and erotic Elizabethan poetry, the
romantically vivid and descriptive narrative method of Spenser’s Faerie Queene and the more intellectually ro-
mantic vividness and descriptive elaborateness of the Line
of Raghu and the Birth of the War-God. This kinship arises
from the likeness of essential motive and psychological
basic type and emerges and asserts itself in spite of the
enormous cultural division. A poetry of spiritual vision
and the sense of things behind life and above the intellect
must similarly develop from its essence a characteristic
voice, cry, mould of speech, natural way of development,
habits of structure.

The great poets of this earlier endeavour had all to
deal with the same central problem of creation and were
embarrassed by the same difficulty of a time which was
not ready for work of this kind, not prepared for it by any
past development, not fitted for it by anything in the com-
mon atmosphere of the age. They breathed the rarity of
heights lifted far beyond the level of the contemporary
surrounding temperament, intellect and life. But each be-
sides had an immense development of that force of sepa-
rate personality which is in art at least the characteristic
of our later humanity. Each followed his own way, was
very little influenced by the others, was impelled by a
quite distinct spiritual idea, worked it out in a quite indi-

gual method and, when he fell away from it or short of
it, failed in his own way and by shortcomings peculiar to
his own nature. There is nothing of that common aim
and manner which brings into one category the Eliza-
bethan dramatists or the contemporaries of Pope and
Dryden. We have to cast an eye upon them successively
at their separate work and see how far they carried their
achievement and where they stopped short or else deviated
from the path indicated by their own highest genius.
A PHILOSOPHICAL REVIEW

15th April 1919

CONTENTS

ESSAYS ON THE GITA .................. Aurobindo Ghose
The Theory of the Vibhuti

THE SYNTHESIS OF YOGA ............... A. G
Ch. LIII. The Instruments of the Spirit

THE ETERNAL WISDOM ................. Paul Richard
The Healing

A RATIONALISTIC CRITIC ON INDIAN CULTURE (3)

THE FUTURE POETRY
The Poets of the Dawn (2)

REBIRTH AND SOUL EVOLUTION
शास्त्र

A PHILOSOPHICAL
DESCRIPTIO

महर्षि विद्याधर

स्मार्तिकी

संक्षिप्ता
Essays on the Gita

THE THEORY OF THE VIBHUTI

The importance of this chapter of the Gita is very much greater than appears at first view or to an eye of prepossession which looks only for the creed of the last transcendence and the turning away of the human soul from the world to the absolute Godhead. The message of the Gita is the gospel of the Divinity in man who by force of an increasing union unfolds himself out of the veil of the lower Nature to the human soul, reveals his cosmic being, reveals his absolute transcendencies, reveals too himself in man and in all beings. The outcome for us of this union, this divine Yoga, man growing towards the Godhead, the Godhead manifest in and to the human being, is a liberation from limited ego and an elevation to the higher nature of a divine humanity. For dwelling in this greater spiritual nature and not in the mortal weft of the tangled complexity of the three gunas, man, one with God by knowledge, love and will and the giving up of his whole being into the Godhead, is able indeed to rise to the absolute Transcendence, but also to act upon the world, no longer in ignorance, but in the right relation of the individual to the Supreme, in the truth of the Spirit, fulfilled in immortality, for God in the world and no longer for
the ego. To call Arjuna to this action, to make him aware of the being and power that he is and of the Being and Power whose will acts through him, is the purpose of the embodied Divinity. To this end the divine Krishna is his charioteer; to this end there came upon him that great discouragement and dissatisfaction with the lesser human motives of his work; to substitute for them the greater spiritual motive this revelation is given to him in the supreme moment of the work to which he has been appointed. The vision of the World-Purusha and the divine command to action is the culminating point to which he was being led. That is now imminent; but without the knowledge now given to him through the Vibhuti-Yoga it would not bring with it its full meaning.

The mystery of the world-existence is in part revealed by the Gita,—for who shall exhaust all its infinite depths or what creed or philosophy say that it has enlightened in a narrow space or shut up in a brief system all the significance of the cosmic miracle?—but so far as is essential for the Gita’s purpose, it is revealed. We have the way of the origination of the world from God, the immanence of the Divine in it and its immanence in the Divine, the essential unity of all existence, the relation of the human soul obscured in Nature with the Godhead, its awakening to self-knowledge, its birth into a greater consciousness, its ascension into spiritual being. But when this new self-vision and consciousness have been acquired in place of the original ignorance, what will be the liberated being’s view of the world around him, his attitude towards the cosmic manifestation of which he has now the central secret? He will have first the knowledge of the unity of existence and the regarding eye of that knowledge. He will see all around him as being of the one divine Being; henceforward that vision will be the starting-point of all the inward and outward operations of his consciousness; it will be the fundamental seeing, the
spiritual basis of all his actions. He will see all things and beings living, moving, acting in the one divine Existence. But he will also see that one as the Inhabitant in all, their Self, the essential existence within them without whose secret presence in their conscious being they could not at all live, move or act, without whose will, power, sanction or sufferance not one of their movements at any moment would be in the least degree possible. Themselves too, their soul, mind, life, physical mould, he will see only as a result of the power of being of this one Existence, a becoming of this one universal Being. Their consciousness he will see to be derived entirely from its consciousness, their power and will to be drawn from and dependent on its power and will, their partial phenomenon of nature to be a resultant from its greater divine Nature, whether in the immediate actuality of things it strikes the mind as a manifestation or a disguise, a figure or a disfigurement of the Divinity. No untoward or bewildering appearance of things will in any smallest degree diminish or conflict with the completeness of this vision. It is the essential foundation of the greater consciousness into which he has arisen, the indispensable light, the one perfect way of seeing.

But the world is only a partial manifestation of the absolute Godhead, it is not itself that Divinity. The absolute Godhead is infinitely greater than any natural manifestation; by his very infinity, his absolute freedom of being he exists beyond all possibility of integral formulation in any scheme of worlds or extension of cosmic being, however wide, complex, endlessly varied the world may seem,—nāsti anto vistarasya me,—however to our finite view infinite. Beyond cosmos the eye of the liberated spirit will see the absolute Godhead. Cosmos he will see as a figure of the absolute Divinity, a constant term in the absolute existence. Every relative and finite he will see as a figure of the divine Absolute and Infinite, and
both beyond all finites and through each finite he will arrive at that alone, see always that beyond each finite phenomenon and natural being and relative action, happening or quality and find in the Divinity its spiritual significance.

These things, will not be to him intellectual concepts or this seeing simply a way of thinking; for if his knowledge is conceptual only, it becomes a philosophic and intellectual, not a real spiritual knowing and seeing, not a spiritual state of consciousness. This spiritual seeing is not ideative only, but as real, vivid, near, constant, effective, intimate as to the mind its sensuous seeing and feeling of images, objects and persons. It is only the physical mind that thinks of God and spirit as an abstract conception which it cannot visualise or represent to itself except by words and names and symbolic images and fictions. Spirit sees spirit, the divinised consciousness sees God, as directly and more directly, as intimately and more intimately than bodily consciousness sees matter. It sees, feels, thinks, senses the Divine; for to the spiritual consciousness all manifest existence appears as a world of spirit and not a world of matter, not a world of life, not a world even of mind; these other things are to its view only God-thought, God-force, God-form. That is what the Gita means by living in Vasudeva, mayi vartate. The spiritual consciousness is aware of the absolute Godhead, with that knowledge of identity which is so much more tremendously real than mental perception of the thinkable or sensuous experience of the sensible,—the Absolute behind all world-existence and originating it. Of the immutable self of this Godhead pervading and supporting the world's mutations with his unchanging eternity, this consciousness is aware, again by identity, by the oneness of this spirit with its own timeless unchanging immortal self. It is aware of the divine Person who knows himself in all these things and persons, becomes all things in his
consciounce and shapes their thoughts and forms and governs their actions by his immanent will. It is conscious of God absolute, God as self, God as spirit, soul and nature,—this too by a knowledge of identity, but of identity in variation, admitting of relations, admitting of greater and lesser degrees of the action of the one power of being. For Nature is God’s power of various self-becoming, átma-vibhûti.

But the spiritual consciousness of world-existence will not see nature in the world as the normal mind of man sees it in the ignorance or only as it is in the effects of the ignorance. All that is in this Nature of the ignorance imperfect, or painful, perverse and repellant, does not exist as an absolute opposite of the nature of the Godhead, but goes back to something behind it, to a saving power of spirit in which it finds its own true being and redemption. There is an original and originating divine Nature, in which the divine power of being enjoys its own absolute quality; it is the highest, which is also the perfect, energy of all the energies we see in the universe. That is what presents itself to us as the ideal nature of the Godhead, a nature of absolute knowledge, absolute power and will, absolute love and delight, and all the infinite variations of its quality and energy, ananta guna, aganana shakti, are there various self-formulations of this absolute wisdom, will, power, delight, love, a many-sided unity. Each energy, each quality is in the ideal divine nature pure, perfect, self-possessed, harmonious in its action; nothing there strives for its own separate limited self-fulfilment, but all act in an inexpressible unity. There all dharmas, all laws of being—dharma, law of being, is only characteristic action of divine energy and quality, guna-karma,—are one dharma; one divine Power of being, * working with an infinite freedom and bound to no single law nor limited

* Tapas, chit-shakti.
by any system, rejoices in its own play of infinity.

But in the universe in which we live, there is a principle of selection and differentiation. There we see each energy, each quality which comes out for expression labouring as if for its own hand, trying to get as much self-expression as it can in whatever way it can, and accommodating somehow that effort with the concomitant or rival effort of other energies and qualities for their separate self-expression. The Spirit, the Divine dwells in this struggling world-nature and imposes on it a harmony by the inalienable law of the inner secret oneness on which the action of all these powers is based; but it is a relative harmony which seems to result from an original division, to emerge from and subsist by the shock of divisions, and not from an original oneness. Or at least the oneness seems to be suppressed and latent, not to find itself; in fact it does not find itself, till the individual being in this world-nature discovers in himself the higher divine nature from which this is a derivation. Nevertheless, the qualities and energies at work in the world, operating variously in man, animal, plant, inanimate thing, are, whatever forms they may take, always divine qualities and energies. All energies and qualities are powers of the Godhead. They come from the divine Nature, work for their self-expression in the lower nature, increase their power of self-expression under its hampering conditions, and as they reach their heights of self-power, come near to the visible expression of the Divinity,—for since each energy is being and power of the Godhead, the expansion and self-expression of energy is the expansion and expression of the Godhead,—and directs itself upward to its own absolute in the supreme ideal, divine Nature. One might even say that at a certain point of intensity each force in us, force of knowledge, force of will, force of love, force of delight can result in an explosion which breaks the shell of the lower nature and liberates the energy from its separative action
into union with the infinite nature of the divine Being, through an absolute seeing of knowledge, an absolute love and delight, an absolute concentration of will of being. But the percussion comes by the touch of the Divine on our nature which directs the energy away from its normal limited separative action and objects towards the universal and transcendent, the infinite and absolute Godhead. This truth of the divine Power of being is the foundation of the theory of the Vibhuti.

The infinite divine Nature is present everywhere supporting the lower nature, \textit{parā prakritir me yayā dhārayate jagat}, but holds itself back, hidden in the secret heart of each natural existence, \textit{sarvabhūtānām hriddeçe}, until the veil of Yogamaya is rent by the light of knowledge. The spiritual being of man, the Jiva, possesses the divine Nature; he is the manifestation of God in this nature, \textit{parā prakritir jīva-bhūtā}, and he has in him all the divine energies and qualities, the force, the power of being of the Godhead. But in this world-nature in which we live, the Jiva follows the principle of selection and finite determination, and whatever nexus of energy and quality or spiritual principle of being he brings with him or brings forward as the seed of his self-expression, is his swabhava, his law of self-becoming, and determines his swadharma, his law of action. But if that were all, there would be no perplexity or difficulty. But also this lower energy of nature is a nature of ignorance, of egoism, of the three gunas. Because it is a nature of egoism, the Jiva conceives of himself as the separative ego: he works out his self-expression egoistically as a separative will of being in conflict with as well as in association with the same will of being in others; he attempts to possess the world by strife and not by unity and harmony. Because it is a nature of ignorance, a blind seeing and imperfect or partial self-expression, he does not know himself, does not know his law of being, but follows it instinctively under the com-
pulsion of Nature, with a struggle and inner conflict and very large possibility of deviation. Because it is a nature of the three gunas, this confused and striving self-expression takes various forms of incapacity, perversion or partial self-finding. Dominated by the guna of tamas, the mode of darkness and inertia, the power of being works in a weak confusion, a prevailing incapacity, an unaspiring subjection to the blind mechanism of the nature of the Ignorance. Dominated by guna of rajas, the mode of action, desire and possession, there is a struggle, an effort, a growth of power and capacity, but it is stumbling, painful, vehement, misled by wrong notions, methods, ideals, impelled to a misuse, corruption, perversion of right notions, methods or ideals and prone, especially, to a great exaggeration of the ego. Dominated by guna of sattwa, the mode of light and poise and peace, there is a more harmonious action, a right dealing with the nature, but still within the limits of the individual knowledge and capacity and not able to exceed the better forms of the lower will and knowledge. To go beyond the ignorance, the ego and the gunas is the way of divine perfection. By that transcendence the Jiva finds the divine nature and the divine self-being.

The liberated eye of knowledge in the spiritual consciousness does not in its outlook on the world see this struggling lower Nature alone. If we perceive only this apparent fact of our being and others' being, we are looking with the eye of the ignorance and cannot know God equally in all, in the sattwic, the rajasic, the tamasic being, in God and Titan, in saint and sinner, in the wise man and the ignorant, in the great and the little, man, animal, plant, inanimate existence. The liberated vision sees three things at once as the whole truth of the natural being. First and foremost it sees the divine Nature in all, secret, present, waiting for evolution; it sees it as the real power in all things which gives the value to all the
apparent action of quality and nature, and reads the significance of these latter phenomena not in their own language of ego and ignorance, but in the light of the divine Nature. Therefore it sees the differences of the apparent action in Deva and Rakshasa, man and beast and bird and reptile, good and wicked, ignorant and learned, but as action of divine quality and energy under these conditions, under these masks; it is not deluded by the mask, but sees behind every mask the Godhead. It observes the perversion or the imperfection, but it sees the truth of being behind, sees it even in the perversion and imperfection self-blinded, struggling to find itself, groping by various form of self-expression and experience towards complete self-knowledge, towards its own infinite and absolute. Therefore the liberated eye does not lay undue stress on the perversion and imperfection, but is able to see all with a complete love and charity in the heart, a complete understanding in the intelligence, a complete equality in the spirit. Finally, it sees the upward urge of the powers of being towards Godhead; it respects, welcomes, encourages all high manifestations of energy and quality, the flaming tongues of the Divinity, the mounting greatness of being uplifted from the levels of the lower nature towards heights of luminous wisdom and knowledge, mighty power, strength, capacity, courage, heroism, benignant sweetness and ardour and grandeur of love and self-giving, preeminent virtue, noble action, captivating beauty and harmony, fine and godlike creation. The eye of the spirit sees and marks out the rising godhead of man in the great Vibhuti.

This is a recognition of the Godhead as Power, but power in its widest sense, power not only of might, but of knowledge, will, love, work, purity, sweetness beauty. The Divine is being, consciousness, delight, and in the world all throws itself out and finds itself by energy of being, energy of consciousness, energy of delight; this is
a world of the works of the divine Energy. That energy shapes itself here in different kinds of being, each of which has its own characteristic powers of energy. Each power is the Divine himself in that form, in the hind, in the Titan as in the God, in the inconscient sun that flames through ether as in man who thinks upon earth. The deformation given by the gunas is the minor, not really the major aspect; the essential thing is the divine power that is finding self-expression. It is the Godhead who manifests himself in the great thinker, the hero, the leader of men, the great teacher, sage, prophet, religious founder, saint, lover of man, the great poet, the great artist, the great scientist, the ascetic self-tamer, the tamer of things and events and forces. The work itself, the great poem, the perfect form of beauty, the great love, the noble act, the divine achievement is a movement of godhead; it is the Divine in manifestation.

This is a truth which all ancient cultures recognised and respected, but one side of the modern mind has singular repugnances to the idea, sees in it a worship of mere strength and power, an ignorant or self-degrading hero-worship or a doctrine of the Asuric superman. Certainly, there is an ignorant way of taking this truth, as there is an ignorant way of taking all truths; but it has its proper place, its indispensable function in the divine economy of Nature. The Gita puts it in that right place and perspective. It must be based on the recognition of the divine self in all men and all beings; it must be consistent with an equal heart to the great and the small, the eminent and the obscure manifestation; God must be seen and loved in the ignorant, the humble, the weak, the vile, the outcast. In the Vibhuti himself it is not, except as a symbol, the outward individual that is to be thus recognised and set high, but the one Godhead who displays himself in the power. But this does not abrogate the fact that there is an ascending scale in manifestation and that Na-
ture mounts upward in her degrees of self-expression to the visible expression of the Godhead. Each great being, each great achievement is a sign of her power of self-exceeding and a promise of the final, the supreme exceeding. Man himself is a superior degree of natural manifestation to the beast and reptile, though in both there is the one equal Brahman. But man has not reached his own highest heights of self-exceeding, and meanwhile every sign of a greater power of being in him must be recognised as a promise to him and an indication. Respect for the divinity in man, in all men, is not diminished, but heightened and given a richer significance by lifting our eyes to the trail of the great Pioneers who lead or point him by whatever step of attainment towards supermanhood.

Arjuna himself is a Vibhuti; he is a man high in the spiritual evolution, a figure marked out in the crowd of his contemporaries, a chosen instrument of the divine Narayana, the Godhead in humanity. In one place the Teacher speaking as the supreme and equal Self of all declares that there is none dear to him, none hated, but in others he says that Arjuna is dear to him and his bhakta and therefore guided and safe in his hands, chosen for the vision and the knowledge. There is only an apparent inconsistency. The Power as the self of the cosmos is equal to all, therefore to each being he gives according to the workings of his nature; but there is also a personal relation of the Purushottama to the human being in which he is especially near to the man who has come near to him. All these heroes and men of might who have joined in battle on the plain of Kurukshetra, are vessels of the divine Will and through each he works according to his nature, but behind the veil of his ego. Arjuna has reached that point when the veil can be rent and the embodied Godhead can reveal his being and his workings to his Vibhuti. It is even essential that there should be the revelation. He is the instrument of a great work, a work
terrible in appearance but necessary for a great step in the march of the race, a decisive movement in its struggle towards the kingdom of the Right and the Truth, dharma rājya. The history of the cycles of man is a progress towards the unveiling of the Godhead in the soul and life of humanity; each great event and stage of it is a divine manifestation. Arjuna, the chief instrument of the divine will, the great protagonist, must become the divine man, capable of doing the work consciously as the action of the Divine; so it is to receive its spiritual import and significance. He is called to self-knowledge; he must see God as the Master of the universe and the origin of the world's beings and happenings, all as the Divine's self-expression in Nature, God in all, God in himself as man and as Vibhuti, God in the lownesses of being and on its heights, God on the summit, man too on the heights as the Vibhuti, but rising to the summit in the supreme liberation and union. Time in its creation and destruction must be seen by him as the figure of the Godhead in its steps,—accomplishing the cycles of the world on whose spires of movement the divine spirit in the human being rises, doing God's work in the world as his Vibhuti, to the supreme transcendences. This knowledge has been given; the Time figure of the Godhead is now to be revealed and from the million months of that figure will issue the command for the divine action to the liberated Vibhuti.
The Synthesis of Yoga

THE YOGA OF SELF-PERFECTION

CHAPTER LII

THE INSTRUMENTS OF THE SPIRIT

If there is to be an active perfection of our being, the first necessity is a purification of the working of the instruments which it now uses for a music of discords. The being itself, the spirit, the divine Reality in man stands in no need of purification; it is for ever pure, not affected by the faults of its instrumentation or the stumblings of mind and heart and body in their work, as the sun, says the Upanishad, is not touched or stained by the faults of the eye of vision. Mind, heart, the soul of vital desire, the life in the body are the seats of impurity; it is they that must be set right if the working of the spirit is to be a perfect working and not marked by its present greater or less concession to the devious pleasure of the lower nature. What is ordinarily called purity of the being, is either a negative whiteness, a freedom from sin gained by a constant inhibition of whatever action, feeling, idea or will we think to be wrong, or else, the highest negative or passive purity, the entire God-content, inaction, the complete stilling of the vibrant mind and the soul of desire, which in quietistic disciplines leads to a supreme peace; for then
the spirit appears in all the eternal purity of its immaculate essence. That gained, there would be nothing farther to be enjoyed or done. But here we have the more difficult problem of a total, unabated, even an increased and more powerful action founded on perfect bliss of the being, the purity of the soul's instrumental as well as the spirit's essential nature. Mind, heart, life, body are to do the works of the Divine, all the works which they do now and yet more, but to do them divinely, as now they do not do them. This is the first appearance of the problem before him on which the seeker of perfection has to lay hold, that it is not a negative, prohibitory, passive or quiescent, but a positive, affirmative, active purity which is his object. A divine quietism discovers the immaculate eternity of the Spirit, a divine kinetism adds to it the right pure undeviating action of the soul, mind and body.

Moreover, it is a total purification of all the complex instrumentality in all the parts of each instrument that is demanded of us by the integral perfection. It is not, ultimately, the narrower moral purification of the ethical nature. Ethics deals only with the desire-soul and the active outward dynamical part of our being; its field is confined to character and action. It prohibits and inhibits certain actions, certain desires, impulses, propensities,—it inculcates certain qualities in the act, such as truthfulness, love, charity, compassion, chastity. When it has got this done and assured a base of virtue, the possession of a purified will and blameless habit of action, its work is finished. But the Siddha of the integral perfection has to dwell in a larger plane of the Spirit's eternal purity beyond good and evil. By this phrase it is not meant, as the rash hastily concluding intellect would be prone to imagine, that he will do good and evil indifferently and declare that to the spirit there is no difference between them, which would be in the plane of individual action an obvious untruth and might serve to cover a reckless self-indulgence
of the imperfect human nature. Neither is it meant that since good and evil are in this world inextricably entangled together, like pain and pleasure,—a proposition which, however true at the moment and plausible as a generalisation, need not be true of the human being's greater spiritual evolution,—the liberated man will live in the spirit and stand back from the mechanical continued workings of a necessarily imperfect nature. This, however possible as a stage towards a final cessation of all activity, is evidently not a counsel of active perfection. But it is meant that the Siddha of the active integral perfection will live dynamically in the working of the transcendent power of the divine Spirit as a universal will through the supermind individualised in him for action. His works will therefore be the works of an eternal Knowledge, an eternal Truth, an eternal Might, an eternal Love, an eternal Ananda; but the truth, knowledge, force, love, delight will be the whole essential spirit of whatever work he will do and will not depend on its form; they will determine his action from the spirit within and the action will not determine the spirit or subject it to a fixed standard or rigid mould of working. He will have no dominant mere habit of character, but only a spiritual being and will with at the most a free and flexible temperamental mould for the action. His life will be a direct stream from the eternal fountains, not a form cut to some temporary human pattern. His perfection will not be a sattvic purity, but a thing uplifted beyond the gunas of Nature, a perfection of spiritual knowledge, spiritual power, spiritual delight, unity and harmony of unity; the outward perfection of his works will be freely shaped as the self-expression of this inner spiritual transcendence and universality. For this change he must make conscient in him that power of spirit and supermind which is now superconscient to our mentality. But that cannot work in him so long as his present mental, vital, physical being is not liberated from its actual
inferior working. This purification is the first necessity.

In other words, purification must not be understood in any limited sense of a selection of certain outward kinetic movements, their regulation, the inhibition of other action or a liberation of certain forms of character or particular mental and moral capacities. These things are secondary signs of our derivative being, not essential powers and first forces. We have to take a wider psychological view of the primary forces of our nature. We have to distinguish the formed parts of our being, find out their basic defect of impurity or wrong action and correct that, sure that the rest will then come right naturally. We have not to doctor symptoms of impurity, or that only secondarily, as a minor help,—but to strike at its roots after a deeper diagnosis. We then find that there are two forms of impurity which are at the root of the whole confusion. One is a defect born of the nature of our past evolution, which has been a nature of separative ignorance; this defect is a radically wrong and ignorant form given to the proper action of each part of our instrumental being. The other impurity is born of the successive process of an evolution, where life emerges in and depends on body, mind emerges in and depends on life in the body, supermind emerges in and lends itself to instead of governing mind, soul itself is apparent only as a circumstance of the bodily life of the mental being and veils up the spirit in the lower imperfections. This second defect of our nature is caused by this dependence of the higher on the lower parts; it is an immixture of functions by which the impure working of the lower instrument gets into the characteristic action of the higher function and gives to it an added imperfection of embarrassment, wrong direction and confusion.

Thus the proper function of the life, the vital force, is enjoyment and possession, both of them perfectly legitimate, because the Spirit created the world for Ananda,
enjoyment and possession of the many by the One, of the One by the many and of the many too by the many; but—this is an instance of the first kind of defect,—the separative ignorance gives to it the wrong form of desire and craving which vitiates the whole enjoyment and possession and imposes on it its opposites, want and suffering. Again, because mind is entangled in life from which it evolves, this desire and craving get into the action of the mental will and knowledge; that makes the will a will of craving, a force of desire instead of a rational will and a discerning force of intelligent effectuation, and it distorts the judgment and reason so that we judge and reason according to our desires and prepossessions and not with the disinterested impartiality of a pure judgment and the rectitude of a reason which seeks only to distinguish truth and understand rightly the objects of its workings. That is an example of immixture. These two kinds of defect, wrong form of action and illegitimate mixture of action, are not limited to these signal instances, but belong to each instrument and to each combination of their functionings. They pervade the whole economy of our nature. They are fundamental defects of our lower instrumental nature, and if we can set them right, we shall get our instrumental being into a state of purity, enjoy the clarity of a pure will, a pure heart of emotion, a pure enjoyment of our vitality, a pure body. That will be a preliminary, a human perfection, but it can be made the basis and open out in its effort of self-attainment into the greater, the divine perfection.

Mind, life and body are the three powers of our lower nature. But they cannot be taken quite separately because the life acts as a link and gives its character to body and to a great extent to our mentality. Our body is a living body; the life-force mingles in and determines all its functionings. Our mind too is largely a mind of life, a mind of physical sensation; only in its higher functions
is it normally capable of something more than the workings of a physical mentality subjected to life. We may put it in this ascending order. We have first a body supported by the physical life-force, the physical prana which courses through the whole nervous system and gives its stamp to our corporeal action, so that all is of the character of the action of a living and not an inert mechanical body. Prana and physicality together make the gross body, sthulāçarīra. This is only the outer instrument, the nervous force of life acting in the form of body with its gross physical organs. Then there is the inner instrument, anatalkarana, the conscious mentality. This inner instrument is divided by the old system into four powers; chitta or basic mental consciousness; manas, the sense mind; buddhi, the intelligence; ahankara, the ego-idea. The classification may serve as a starting-point, though for a greater practicality we have to make certain farther distinctions. This mentality is pervaded by the life-force, which becomes here an instrument for psychic consciousness of life and psychic action on life. Every fibre of the sense mind and basic consciousness is shot through with the action of this psychic prana, it is a nervous or vital and physical mentality. Even the buddhi and ego are overpowered by it, although they have the capacity of raising the mind beyond subjection to this vital, nervous and physical psychology. This combination creates in us the sensational desire-soul which is the chief obstacle to a higher human as well as to the still greater divine perfection. Finally, above our present conscious mentality is a secret supermind which is the proper means and native seat of that perfection.

Chitta, the basic consciousness, is largely subconscious; it has, open and hidden, two kinds of action, one passive or receptive, the other active or reactive and formative. As a passive power it receives all impacts, even those of which the mind is unaware or to which it is inattentive, and it
stores them in an immense reserve of passive subconscient memory on which the mind as an active memory can draw. But ordinarily the mind draws only what it had observed and understood at the time,—more easily what it had observed well and understood carefully, less easily what it had observed carelessly or ill understood; at the same time there is a power in consciousness to send up to the active mind for use what that mind had not at all observed or attended to or even consciously experienced. This power only acts observably in abnormal conditions, when some part of the subconscient chitta comes as it were to the surface or when the subliminal being in us appears on the threshold and for a time plays some part in the outer chamber of mentality where the direct intercourse and commerce with the external world takes place and our inner dealings with ourselves develop on the surface. This action of memory is so fundamental to the entire mental action that it is sometimes said, memory is the man. Even in the submental action of the body and life, which is full of this subconscient chitta, though not under the control of the conscious mind, there is a vital and physical memory. The vital and physical habits are largely formed by this submental memory. For this reason they can be changed to an indefinite extent by a more powerful action of conscious mind and will, when that can be developed and can find means to communicate to the subconscient chitta the will of the spirit for a new law of vital and physical action. Even, the whole constitution of our life and body may be described as a bundle of habits formed by the past evolution in Nature and held together by the persistent memory of this secret consciousness. For chitta, the primary stuff of consciousness, is like prana and body universal in Nature, but is subconscient and mechanical in nature of Matter.

But in fact all action of the mind or inner instrument arises out of this chitta or basic consciousness, partly
conscient, partly subconscious or subliminal to our active mentality. When it is struck by the world’s impacts from outside or urged by the reflective powers of the subjective inner being, it throws up certain habitual activities, the mould of which has been determined by our evolution. One of these forms of activity is the emotional mind,—the heart, as we may call it for the sake of a convenient brevity. Our emotions are the waves of reaction and response which rise up from the basic consciousness, chitta-vritti. Their action too is largely regulated by habit and an emotive memory. They are not imperative, not laws of Necessity; there is no really binding law of our emotional being to which we must submit without remedy; we are not obliged to give responses of grief to certain impacts upon the mind, responses of anger to others, to yet others responses of hatred or dislike, to others responses of liking or love. All these things are only habits of our affective mentality; they can be changed by the conscious will of the spirit; they can be inhibited; we may even rise entirely above all subjection to grief, anger, hatred, the duality of liking and disliking. We are subject to these things only so long as we persist in subjection to the mechanical action of the chitta in the emotive mentality, a thing difficult to get rid of because of the power of past habit and especially the importunate insistence of the vital part of mentality, the nervous life-mind or psychic prana. This nature of the emotive mind as a reaction of chitta with a certain close dependence upon the nervous life sensations and the responses of the psychic prana is so characteristic that in some languages it is called chitta and prana, the heart, the life soul; it is indeed the most directly agitating and powerfully insistent action of the desire-soul which the immixture of vital desire and responsive consciousness has created in us. And yet the true emotive soul, the real psyche in us, is not a desire-soul, but a soul of pure love and delight; but that, like the rest of our true being, can only emerge when the deformation created by
the life of desire is removed from the surface and is no longer the characteristic action of our being. To get that done is a necessary part of our purification, liberation, perfection.

The nervous action of the psychic prana is most obvious in our purely sensational mentality. This nervous mentality pursues indeed all the action of the inner instrument and seems often to form the greater part of things other than sensation. The emotions are especially assailed and have the pranic stamp; fear is more even of a nervous sensation than an emotion, anger is largely or often a sensational response translated into terms of emotion. Other feelings are more of the heart, more inward, but they ally themselves to the nervous and physical longings or outward-going impulses of the psychic prana. Love is an emotion of the heart and may be a pure feeling,—all mentality, since we are embodied minds, must produce, even thought produces, some kind of life effect and some response in the stuff of body, but they need not for that reason be of a physical nature,—but the heart's love allies itself readily with a vital desire in the body. This physical element may be purified of that subjection to physical desire which is called lust, it may become love using the body for a physical as well as a mental and spiritual nearness; but love may, too, separate itself from all, even the most innocent physical element, or from all but a shadow of it, and be a pure movement to union of soul with soul, psyche with psyche. Still the proper action of the sensational mind is not emotion, but conscious nervous response and nervous feeling and affection, impulse of the use of physical sense and body for some action, conscious vital craving and desire. There is a side of receptive response, a side of dynamic reaction. These things get their proper normal use when the higher mind is not mechanically subject to them, but controls and regulates their action. But a still higher state is when they undergo a certain transformation by the conscious will of the spirit which gives
its right and no longer its wrong or desire form of characteristic action to the psychic prana.

Manas, the sense mind, depends in our ordinary consciousness on the physical organs of receptive sense for knowledge and on the organs of the body for action directed towards the objects of sense. The superficial and outward action of the senses is physical and nervous in its character, and they may easily be thought to be merely results of nerve-action; they are sometimes called in the old books prānas, nervous or life activities. But still the essential thing in them is not the nervous excitation, but the consciousness, the action of the chitta, which makes use of the organ and of the nervous impact of which it is the channel. Manas, sense-mind, is the activity, emerging from the basic consciousness, which makes up the whole essentiality of what we call sense. Sight, hearing, taste, smell, touch are really properties of the mind, not of the body; but the physical mind which we ordinarily use, limits itself to a translation into sense of so much of the outer impacts as it receives through the nervous system and the physical organs. But the inner Manas has also a subtle sight, hearing, power of contact of its own which is not dependent on the physical organs. And it has, moreover, a power not only of direct communication of mind with object—leading even at a high pitch of action to a sense of the contents of an object within or beyond the physical range,—but direct communication also of mind with mind. Mind is able too to alter, modify, inhibit the incidence, values, intensities of sense impacts. These powers of the mind we do not ordinarily use or develop; they remain subliminal and emerge sometimes in an irregular and fitful action, more readily in some minds than in others, or come to the surface in abnormal states of the being. They are the basis of clairvoyance, clair-audience, transference of thought and impulse, telepathy, most of the more ordinary kinds of occult
powers,—so called, though these are better described less mystically as powers of the now subliminal action of the Manas. The phenomena of hypnotism and many others depend upon the action of this subliminal sense-mind; not that it alone constitutes all the elements of the phenomena, but it is the first supporting means of intercourse, communication and response, though much of the actual operation belongs to an inner Buddhi. Mind physical, mind supraphysical,—we have and can use this double sense mentality.

Buddhi is a construction of conscious being which quite exceeds its beginnings in the basic chitta; it is the intelligence with its power of knowledge and will. Buddhi takes up and deals with all the rest of the action of the mind and life and body. It is in its nature thought-power and will-power of the Spirit turned into the lower form of a mental activity. We may distinguish three successive gradations of the action of this intelligence. There is first an inferior perceptive understanding which simply takes up, records, understands and responds to the communications of the sense-mind, memory, heart and sensational mentality. It creates by their means an elementary thinking mind which does not go beyond their data, but subjects itself to their mould and rings out their repetitions, runs round and round in the habitual circle of thought and will suggested by them or follows, with an obedient subservience of the reason to the suggestions of life, any fresh determinations which may be offered to its perception and conception. Beyond this elementary understanding, which we all use to an enormous extent, there is a power of arranging or selecting reason and will-force of the intelligence which has for its action and aim an attempt to arrive at a plausible, sufficient, settled ordering of knowledge and will for the use of an intellectual conception of life.

In spite of its more purely intellectual character this
secondary or intermediate reason is really pragmatic in its intention. It creates a certain kind of intellectual structure, frame, rule into which it tries to cast the inner and outer life so as to use it with a certain mastery and government for the purposes of some kind of rational will. It is this reason which gives to our normal intellectual being our set aesthetic and ethical standards, our structures of opinion and our established norms of idea and purpose. It is highly developed and takes the primacy in all men of an at all developed understanding. But beyond it there is a reason, a highest action of the buddhi which concerns itself disinterestedly with a pursuit of pure truth and right knowledge; it seeks to discover the real Truth behind life and things and our apparent selves and to subject its will to the law of Truth. Few, if any of us, can use this highest reason with any purity, but the attempt to do it is the topmost capacity of the inner instrument, the antahkarana.

Buddhi is really an intermediary between a much higher Truth-mind not now in our active possession, which is the direct instrument of Spirit, and the physical life of the human mind evolved in body. Its powers of intelligence and will are drawn from this greater direct Truth-mind or supermind. Buddhi centres its mental action round the ego-idea, the idea that I am this mind, life and body or am a mental being determined by their action. It serves this ego-idea whether limited by what we call egoism or extended by sympathy with the life around us. An ego sense is created which reposes on the separative action of the body, of the individualised life, of the mind-responses, and the ego-idea in the buddhi centralises the whole action of this ego’s thought, character, personality. The lower understanding and the intermediary reason are instruments of its desire of experience and self-enlargement. But when the highest reason and will develop, we can turn towards that which these outward things mean to the higher spiritual consciousness. The “I” can then be seen as a ment-
al reflection of the Self, the Spirit, the Divine, the one existence transcendent, universal, individual in its multiplicity; the consciousness in which these things meet, become aspects of one being and assume their right relations, can then be unveiled out of all these physical and mental coverings. When the transition to supermind takes place, the powers of the Buddhi do not perish, but have all to be converted to their supramental values. But the consideration of the supermind and the conversion of the buddhi belongs to the question of the higher siddhi or divine perfection. At present we have to consider the purification of the normal being of man, preparatory to any such conversion, which leads to the liberation from the bonds of our lower nature.
The Eternal Wisdom

BOOK II

IV

THE VICTORY OF THE DIVINE

THE HEALING

1 It is thus that for a very long time you have undergone suffering, affliction and distress and have augmented the harvests of death, long enough in very truth to have recognised suffering, long enough to have turned away from suffering, long enough to have enfranchised yourselves from suffering.

2 Return ye now every one from his evil way and make your ways and your doings good.—Turn ye from your evil ways.

3 Follow not a law of perdition, shut not yourselves up in negligence, follow not a law of falsehood; do nothing for the sake of the world.—But now put off all these things.—A man shall shake off every tie; for when he has no more attachment for form and name, when he is utterly without possessions, sorrow does not run after him.

7 I know not anything, O my brothers, which so much gives birth to good, leads to the supreme happiness and destroys evil as vigilance, energy, moderation, contentment, wise reflection, a clear conscience, the friendship of the just, seeking after good and aversion from evil.
8 Be ye holy in all manner of conduct.
9 Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow.
10 Thou knowest, O my son, the way of regeneration.
11 If thou art weary of suffering and affliction, do no longer any transgression, neither openly nor in secret.
12 —Thou shalt heal thy soul and deliver it from all its pain and travelling.
13 Do no evil and evil shall not come upon thee; be far from the unjust and sin shall be far from thee.
14 My son, give me thy heart and let thine eyes observe my ways.—Leave hereafter iniquity and accomplish righteousness.
15 Once thou hadst passions and namedst them evils. But now thou hast only virtues; they were born from thy passions. Thou broughtest into thy passions thy highest aim; then they became thy virtues and thy joys.
16 Let all men accomplish only the works of righteousness, and they shall build for themselves a place of safety where they can store their treasures.
17 Let a man make haste towards good, let him turn away his thought from evil.—The wise man sits not inert; he is ever walking incessantly forward towards a greater light.

7) Anguttara Nikaya.—8) I Peter I. 15.—9) Isaiah I. 18.—
The good acts we do today, our own progress will show to us tomorrow as an evil, because we shall have acquired a greater light.

The night is far spent, the day is at hand; let us therefore cast off the works of darkness and let us put on the armour of light.—Let us strive to destroy in ourselves all that is of the animal, that the humanity in us may be manifest.—Our creation, our perfection are our own work.

To refrain from all evil, to speak always the truth, to abstain from all theft, to be pure and control the senses, that in sum constitutes the duty which the Manu has prescribed for the four classes.—In every way evil company should be abandoned, because it gives occasion to passion, wrath, folly, dissipation, loss of decision, loss of energy. These propensities are at first a bubbling froth, but they become as if oceans.

A man’s spiritual gain depends on his ideas and sentiments; it is the product of his heart and not of his works.—For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts.—One should, one can ameliorate one’s life, not by external changes, but by a transformation of one’s self in the soul. That one can do always and everywhere.—Infected by the vices, the soul is swollen with poisons and can only be cured by knowledge and intelligence.—For there is nothing so powerful to purify as knowledge.

The intelligence uncovers its light to the souls it governs and battles against their tendencies, even as a good physician uses fire and steel to combat the maladies of the body and recall it to health.—When a man is delivered from all the dispositions of his heart

which turn towards evil and not towards good and which can be extinguished, let him uproot them like the stock of a palm-tree, so that they shall be destroyed and have no power to sprout again. That I call a true repentance.

33 The saintly disciple who applies himself in silence to right meditation, has surmounted covetousness, negligence, wrath, the inquietude of speculation and doubt; he contemplates and enlightens all beings friendly or hostile, with a limitless compassion, a limitless sympathy, a limitless serenity. He recognises that all internal phenomena are impermanent, subjected to sorrow and without substantial reality, and turning from these things he concentrates his mind on the permanent.—He should sanctify his soul, for it is there that there sits the eternal Beloved; he should deliver his mind from all that is the water and mire of things without reality, vain shadows, so as to keep in himself no trace of love or hatred; for love may lead into the evil way and hatred prevents us from following the good path.

34 Whosoever is truly enlightened, cannot fail to arrive at perfection.—As the darkness of centuries is scattered when the light is brought into a chamber, so the accumulated faults of numberless births vanish before a single shaft of the light of the Almighty.

35 If iron is once changed to gold by the touch of the philosopher’s stone, it may be kept in the earth or thrown into a mass of ordure, but always it will be gold and can never go back to its first condition. So is it with him whose heart has touched, were it but a single time, the feet of the Almighty; let him dwell amidst the tumult of the world or in the solitude of the forest, by nothing can he again be polluted.

33) Buddhist Texts.—34) Baba-ullah.—35) Confucius.—36) Ramakrishna.—37) id.
A Rationalistic Critic on Indian Culture

This criticism is not so far very formidable; its edge, if it has any apart from the edge of trenchant misrepresentation, turns against the assailant. To have put a high value on philosophy, to have sought by it the highest secrets of our being, to have turned an effective philosophic thought on life and called in the thinkers, the men of profoundest spiritual experience, highest ideas, largest available knowledge, to govern and shape society, to have subjected creed and dogma to the test of the philosophic mind and founded religious belief upon spiritual intuition, philosophical thought and psychological experience, are not signs of barbarism or of a mean and ignorant culture; they are marks of the highest possible type of civilisation. And there is nothing here that would warrant us in abasing ourselves before the idols of the positivist reason and putting the spirit and aim of Indian culture at all lower than the spirit and aim of western civilisation whether in its brief highest ancient period of rational enlightenment and the speculative philosophic idea or in its broadest, most active period of modern scientific thought and knowledge. Different it is, inferior it is not, but has rather a distinct element of superiority.
It is useful to lay stress on this greatness of the spirit and aim, not only because it is of immense importance and is the first test of the value of a culture, but because the assailants take advantage of two extraneous circumstances to create a prejudice and confuse the real issues. They have the immense advantage of attacking India when she is prostrate and in the dust and, materially, Indian civilisation seems to have ended in a great defeat and downfall; they can afford to show a superb and generous courage in kicking the surrounding dust and mire with their hooves upon the sick and wounded lioness caught in the nets of the hunters and try to persuade the world that she had never any strength and virtue in her,—an easy task in this age of the noble culture of Reason and Mammon and Science doing the works of Moloch, when the brazen idol of the great goddess Success is worshipped as she was never before worshipped by cultured human beings. But they have the greater advantage of representing her to the world in a period of the eclipse of her civilisation when after at least two thousand years of the most brilliant and many-sided cultural activity she had lost everything except the memory of her past and her long depressed and obscured but always living and now strongly reviving religious spirit.

I have touched before on the significance of this failure and this temporary eclipse. I shall touch on it again at closer quarters, since it has been raised as an objection to the value of Indian culture and Indian spirituality. At present it will be enough to say that culture cannot be judged by material success; still less can spirituality: philosophic, aesthetic, poetic, intellectual Greece failed and fell while drilled and militarist Rome triumphed and conquered, but no one dreams of crediting for that reason the victorious imperial nation with the higher culture, the greater civilisation: the religious culture of Judaea is not disproved or lessened by the destruction
of the Jewish State or proved and given greater value by the commercial capacity shown by the Jewish race in their dispersion. But I admit, as ancient Indian thought admitted, that material and economical capacity and prosperity are a part, though not the highest or most essential part, of the total effort of human civilisation. In that respect India throughout her long period of cultural activity can claim equality with any ancient or mediaeval country. No people before modern times reached a higher splendour of wealth, commercial prosperity, material appointment, social organisation. That is the record of history, of ancient documents, of contemporary witnesses; to deny it is to give evidence of a singular prepossession and obfuscation of the view, an imaginative, or is it unimaginative, misreading of present into past actuality. The splendour of Asiatic and not least of Indian prosperity, the wealth of Ormuz and of Ind, the "barbaric doors rough with gold," barbaricae postes squalentes auro, was once stigmatised by the less opulent West as a sign of barbarism. Circumstances have been strangely reversed; the barbaric and much less artistic ostentation of wealth is now to be found in London, New York and Paris, and it is the nakedness of India and the squalor of her poverty which are flung in her face as evidence of barbarism.

India's political, administrative and military as well as her economic organisation was no mean achievement; there too the records stand and can be left to contradict the ignorance of the uninstructed and the rhetoric of the journalistic critic or the interested politician. There was an element of failure and defect, almost unavoidable in the totality of a problem on so large a scale and in the then conditions, but to exaggerate that into a count against her civilisation would be a singular severity of criticism which few civilisations watched to their end could survive. Failure in the end, yes, because of the decline of
her culture, not as a result of its most valuable elements. As to the later eclipse of the more essential elements of her civilisation, it is enough at present to say that a culture must be judged, first by its essential spirit, then by its better accomplishment, lastly by its power of final survival, renovation, adaptation to new phases of the permanent needs of humanity, not by the poverty, confusion or disorganisation of a period of temporary decline, in which the hostile critic refuses or has not the eye to recognise the saving soul of good which still keeps alive and promises a return to the greatness of a permanent and always needed ideal. Indian civilisation must be judged mainly by the culture and greatness of its millenniums, not by the ignorance and weakness of a few centuries.

But our critic denies not only the greatness of spirit of Indian civilisation, which stands too high to be vulnerable to an assault of this ignorant and prejudiced character, but its leading ideas, its practical life-value, its fruits, its character and efficacy. We must consider here too, whether this disparagement has a critical value or is only a temperament expression of the misunderstanding natural to a widely different view of life and estimate of its highest significances and realities. If we notice the character of the attack and its terms, we shall find that it amounts only to a condemnation passed by the positivist mind attached to the normal values of life upon the quite different standards of a culture which looks beyond the ordinary life of man to something greater behind it and makes it a passage to something eternal, permanent and infinite. We are told that India has no spirituality,—a portentous discovery; on the contrary she has succeeded, it would seem, in killing the germs of all sane and virile spirituality. Mr. Archer evidently puts his own sense, a novel and interesting sense, on the word. One had thought that spirituality meant a recognition of something greater than
mind and life, something pure, great, divine beyond the normal mental and vital nature of mankind, not physical mind and life, but spirit, and the rising of the soul in man towards this greater thing secret within him. That is the idea which is the soul of Indian thinking. But the rationalist does not believe in the spirit in this sense; life, human will-force and reason are his highest godheads. Spirituality then,—it would have been simpler and more logical to reject the word when the thing on which it rests is denied,—has to be given another sense, some high passion and effort of the emotions, will and reason, directed towards the finite, not towards the infinite, towards the temporal not towards the eternal, towards life, not towards any greater reality which is behind the superficial phenomena of life. The thought and suffering which seam and furrow the ideal head of Homer, there, we are told, is the sane and virile spirituality. The calm and compassion of Buddha victorious over suffering, the meditation of the thinker tranced in communion with the Eternal, passed above the seekings of thought into identity with the supreme light of the Spirit, the rapture of the saint made one by love in the pure heart with the transcendent and universal Love, the will of the Karmayogin raised above egoistic desire and passion into the impersonality of the divine and universal will, these things on which India has set the highest value and which have been the supreme endeavour of her greatest spirits, are not sane, not virile. This, one may be allowed to say, is a very occidental and up to date idea of spirituality. Homer, Shakespeare, Raphael, Spinoza, Kant, Charlemagne, Abraham Lincoln, shall we suggest, are to figure henceforth not only as great poets and artists, heroes of thought and action, but as our typical heroes and exemplars of spirituality; not Buddha, not Christ, Chaitanya, St. Francis, Ramakrishna; for these are either semi-barbaric orientals or touched by the feminine insanity of an oriental religion. Whether Mr. Archer's epithets and
his charge against Indian spirituality stand in the comparison, let the judicious determine. But meanwhile we see the opposition of the standpoints.

This forms the gravamen of his charge against the effective value of Indian philosophy, that it turns away from life, nature, vital will, the effort of man upon earth. It denies all value to life; it leads not towards the study of nature, but away from it; it expels all volitional individuality; it preaches the unreality of the world, detachment from terrestrial interests, the unimportance of the life of the moment compared with the endless chain of past and future existences; it is an enervating metaphysic tangled up with false notions of pessimism, asceticism, karma and reincarnation:—all of them ideas which are fatal to that supreme spiritual thing, volitional individuality. We may mark to begin with, that this is a grotesquely exaggerated and false notion of Indian culture and philosophy; it is got up by presenting one side only of the Indian mind in colours of a sombre emphasis, after a manner which I suppose Mr. Archer has learned from the modern masters of realism. But in substance and spirit it is a fairly correct statement of the notions which the European mind has induced itself to form about the character of Indian thought and culture, sometimes in ignorance, sometimes in defiance of the evidence; not only so, but it has somehow managed to impress some strong shadow of it on the mind of educated India. We will first set right the tones of the picture and we can then better judge the opposition of mentality which is at the bottom of the criticism.

To say that Indian philosophy has led away from the study of nature, is to state an unfact and to ignore the history of Indian civilisation. If by nature is meant physical Nature, the plain truth is that no nation before the modern epoch carried scientific research so far and with such success as India of ancient times. That is a truth which lies on the face of history for all to read; it has
been brought forward with great force and much wealth of detail by Indian scholars and scientists of high eminence, but it was known already to European savants who had taken the trouble to make a comparative study. Not only was India in the first rank in mathematics, astronomy, chemistry, medicine, surgery, all the branches of physical knowledge which were practised in ancient times, but she was, along with the Greeks, the teacher of the Arabs from whom Europe recovered the lost habit of scientific enquiry and got the basis from which modern science started. In many directions India had the priority of discovery, to take only two examples, the decimal notation in mathematics, the perception that the earth is a moving body in astronomy,—chālā prithvī sthirā bhāti, the earth moves and only appears to be still, said the Indian astronomer many centuries before Galileo. This great development would hardly have been possible in a nation whose thinkers and men of learning were led by its metaphysical tendencies to turn away from the study of nature. Moreover, a remarkable feature of the Indian mind was a great attention to the things of life, a disposition to observe minutely its salient facts, to systematise and so found in each department of it a science, scheme and rule. That is at least a good beginning of the scientific tendency and not the sign of a culture capable only of unsubstantial metaphysics.

It is perfectly true that Indian science came abruptly to a halt somewhere about the thirteenth century and a period of darkness and inactivity set in, which prevented it from proceeding to or sharing in the greater development of modern science. But this was not due to any increase or intolerance of the metaphysical tendency calling the national mind away from physical nature: it was part of a general cessation of new intellectual activity, for philosophy too ceased to develop almost at the same time; the last great original attempts at spiritual philosophy are
dated only a century later than the names of the last
great original scientists. It is true also that Indian meta-
physics did not, as modern philosophy has attempted,
read the truth of being principally by the light of the
truths of physical Nature; it founded itself rather upon
psychology and psychic science, India's special strength,
—but study of mind too is surely study of nature,—in
which her success was greater than in physical knowledge.
This she could not but do, since it was the spiritual truth
of being for which she was seeking; nor is any really
great and enduring philosophy possible except on this
basis. It is true also that the harmony she established in
her culture between philosophical truth and truth of psy-
chology and religion was not extended in the same degree
to the truth of physical being; physical Science had not
then arrived at the great universal generalisations which
would have made and are now making that synthesis
possible. Nevertheless it is to be noted that from the
beginning, from as early as the thought of the Vedas, the
Indian mind had recognized that the same general laws
and powers hold in spiritual, psychical and physical
being; it discovered the omnipresence of life, affirmed
the evolution of the soul in Nature from the vegetable and
the animal to the human form, stated on the basis of
philosophic intuition and spiritual and psychological
experience many of the truths which modern knowledge
is reaffirming from the other side as it passes from the
study of physical nature to the study of life and mind.
These things too were certainly not the results of a bar-
ren and empty metaphysics.

Equally is it a misrepresentation to say that Indian
culture denies all value to life, detaches from terrestrial
interests and insists on the unimportance of the life of
the moment. To read these European comments one
would imagine that all Indian thought was nothing but
nihilistic Buddhism and the monistic illusionism of
Shankara and all Indian art and literature and social thinking nothing but its statement! It does not follow that because these things are what the average European has heard about India or the European scholar is most interested in and struck by in her thought, therefore they are, however great may have been their influence, the whole of Indian thinking. The ancient civilisation of India founded itself very expressly upon four interests of the human being, desire and enjoyment, material, economical and other aims of the mind and body, ethical conduct and right law of the individual and social life, and finally spiritual liberation, kāma, artha, dharma, moksha, and it held that the business of culture and social organisation was to lead, satisfy and support him in some harmony of these aims. Moreover, it insisted that except in very rare cases the full satisfaction of the first three of these objects must precede the last, fullness of human experience and action prepare for the spiritual liberation; the debt to the family, the community and the gods could not be scamped. There was no preaching then of a general rush to the cave and the hermitage.

The whole character of ancient Indian life and literature is inconsistent with the idea of an exclusive other-worldly bent. The great mass of Sanskrit literature is a literature of human life, only certain philosophic and religious writings are devoted to the withdrawal from it, nor are these by any means as a rule contemptuous of its value. If the Indian mind gave the highest importance to spiritual liberation,—and whatever the positivist mood may say, spiritual liberation of some kind, whatever the exact turn we may give to it, surely is the highest possibility of the human spirit,—it was not interested in that alone, but equally in ethics, law, politics, society, the sciences, arts and crafts, everything that appertains to human life. It thought on these things deeply and scrutinisingly, it wrote on them with power and knowledge. What a monument
of political and administrative genius is the Çukra-Nīti, to take one example only, and what a mirror of the practical organisation of a great civilised people! Indian art was not always solely or principally hieratic,—it seems so only because it is in the temples and cave cathedrals that it has survived,—but devoted, as the old literature testifies, as much to the court and the city as to the temple and monastery. Indian education, of women as well as of men, was more rich and comprehensive and many-sided than any system of education has been before modern times. The documents which prove these things are now available to any one who cares to study, and it is time that this parrot talk about the unpractically metaphysical, quietlyistically anti-vital character of Indian civilisation should cease and give place to a true and understanding estimate.

But it is perfectly true that Indian culture has always set the highest value on that in man which rises beyond the ordinary terrestrial preoccupation; it has held up the ideal of a supreme and arduous self-exceeding. The spiritual life has been to its view a nobler thing than the life of external power and enjoyment, the thinker greater than the man of action, the spiritual man greater than the thinker, the soul that lives in God more perfect than the soul that lives in matter and outward mind. It is undoubtedly here that the difference comes in between the typical western and the typical Indian mentality. The former acquired rather than possessed by nature the religious mind and has always worn its acquisition loosely; but India has constantly believed in worlds behind of which the material world is only the antechamber, in a self greater than the ego or the mental and vital self, in a near and present Eternal in which the temporal being exists and to which in man it increasingly turns. The sentiment of the Bengali poet, singer and devotee of the Divine Mother,—

How rich an estate man lies fallow here!
If this were tilled, a golden crop could spring,—expresses the real Indian feeling about human life; but it is the greater spiritual possibilities man alone of terrestrial beings possesses by which it is chiefly attracted. The ancient Aryan culture recognised all human possibilities, but it put this highest and so graded life in its system of the four classes and the four orders. Buddhism first, giving an enormous extension to the ascetic ideal and the monastic impulse, upset this balance and practically left only two orders, the householder and the ascetic, the monk and the layman, an effect which still subsists to the present day. It is this upsetting of the Dharma for which we find it fiercely attacked in the Vishnu Purana under the veil of an apologue, for its effect in weakening the life of society. But Buddhism too had its other side, its side turned towards action, by which it gave a new meaning and a new moral and ideal power to life. Subsequently came the lofty illusionism of Shankara at the close of the two greatest known millenniums of Indian culture, which did certainly depreciate life as an unreality, a relative phenomenon, and in the end not worth living. It exaggerated still farther the ascetic emphasis of Buddhism. But mark that it was not universally accepted, nor admitted without a struggle and that Shankara was denounced by his adversaries as a masked Buddhist. The later Indian mind has been powerfully impressed by his idea of Maya; but popular thought and sentiment was never wholly shaped by it, it leaned quite as much or more to the religions of devotion which see in life a play or Lila of God and not a half sombre, half glaring illusion defacing the white silence of eternity. It is only recently that educated India accepting the ideas of English and German scholars imagined for a time Shankara’s Mayavada to be the one high thing in, if not the whole of our philosophy and gave it an excessive prominence. But against that tendency too there is now a powerful reaction. Still it is true that the ascetic ideal which
in the ancient vigour of our culture was the fine spire of life mounting into the eternal existence, became latterly its top-heavy dome and tended to crush the rest of the edifice under the weight of its bare and imposing sublimity.

But here also we should get the right view, away from all exaggerations. Mr. Archer drags in Karma and Reincarnation into his list of false anti-vital Indian notions. But it is preposterous to speak of reincarnation as a doctrine which preaches the unimportance of the life of the moment compared with the endless chain of past and future existences. The doctrine of reincarnation and Karma is simply this that the soul has a past which shaped its present birth and existence and a future which our present action is shaping, that this past and future take, partially, the form of recurring terrestrial births and that Karma, our own action, is the great power which by its continuity and development as a subjective and objective force determines the whole nature and eventuality of our repeated existences. There is nothing here to depreciate the importance of the present life; rather the doctrine gives to it immense vistas and enormously enhances the value of effort and ethical action: the nature of the present act is of immense importance to the Indian mind precisely because it determines not only our immediate but our subsequent future; there will be found too pervading literature the idea of present action and energy, tapasya, as an all-powerful force for the acquisition whether of the spiritual or the material desires of the human will.

No doubt, the present life loses the exclusive importance which we give to it when we regard it only as an ephemeral moment in Time never to be repeated, our one sole opportunity, without any after existence beyond it; but that is a narrow exaggerated insistence on the present which shuts up the human soul in the prison of the moment: it may give a feverish intensity to action, but it is inimical to calm and joy and greatness of the spirit. No
doubt, too, the idea that our present sufferings are the results of our own past action, gives a calm, a resignation, an acquiescence to the Indian mind which the western intelligence finds it difficult to understand, and this may degenerate, especially in a time of great national weakness, depression and misfortune, into a quietistic fatalism. But that is not its inevitable turn, nor is it the turn given to it in the records of the more vigorous past of our culture. But there is another turn given which increases with time, and that is the Buddhistic idea of the succession of rebirths as a chain of Karma from which the soul must escape finally to the calm of eternity. This notion has strongly affected Hinduism. But whatever is depressing in it, belongs not properly to the doctrine of rebirth itself, but to those other elements which are stigmatised as an ascetic pessimism.

But pessimism is not peculiar to the Indian mind: it has been an element in the thought of all developed civilisations. It is the sign of a culture already old, a fruit of the mind which has experienced much, sounded life and found it full of suffering, sounded joy and achievement and found that all is vanity and vexation of spirit and that there is nothing new under the sun or, if there is, its novelty is but of a day. Pessimism has been as rampant in Europe as in India and it is certainly a singular thing to find the materialist of all people bringing against Indian spirituality this accusation. For what can be more depressing than the materialistic view of the quite physical and ephemeral nature of human life? There is nothing in the most ascetic notes of the Indian mind like the black gloom of certain kinds of European pessimism, a city of dreadful night without joy here or hope beyond, nothing like the sad and shrinking attitude before death and the dissolution of the body which pervades western literature. The note of ascetic pessimism often found in Christianity itself, —a distinctly western note, for it is absent in Christ's tea-
chings,—with its devil-ridden and flesh-ridden world and the flames of eternal hell waiting man beyond, has a character of sorrow and terror alien to the Indian mind, to which indeed religious terror is a stranger, while the sorrow of the world fades into a certain bliss beyond. Buddha's teaching lays heavy stress on the sorrow and impermanence of things, but the Buddhist Nirvana won by the heroic spirit of moral self-conquest and calm wisdom is a state of ineffable calm and joy, very different from the blank cessation which is the mechanical end of our pain and struggle, the sorry Nirvana of the western pessimist. Illusionism preached, not a gospel of sorrow, but the final unreality of joy and grief and the whole world-existence,—not an entire unreality, for it admits its practical validity and allows the values of life to those who dwell in the Ignorance. But like all Indian asceticism this too places before the human soul the possibility of a great effort and concentration of knowledge and will by which it can rise to an absolute being or an absolute bliss. Pessimism with regard to man's normal life, a profound sense of its imperfection, but an unconquerable optimism of his spiritual possibility which, if it does not believe in the ideal of an immense material progress of the race or a perfection of the normal man with earth as its field, does believe in a spiritual progress for every individual and a perfection lifted above subjection to the shocks of life. Nor is pessimism with regard to life the sole note of Indian religious mentality; its most popular forms accept life as a game of God and see beyond our present conditions the eternal nearness to the Divine for every human being or a luminous growing into godhead. That can hardly be called a pessimistic theory of existence.

Asceticism too,—there can be no great and complete culture without some element of it; for it means the self-denial and self-conquest by which man represses his lower impulses and rises to greater heights of his being. Indian
asceticism is not a gospel of sorrow or a mere painful mortification of the flesh, but a great effort towards a higher joy, towards the complete possession of spiritual being; it has in it a joy of self-conquest, a joy of inner peace, a joy of a supreme self-exceeding. It is only a mind besotted with the flesh or too enamoured of life and its restless effort and inconstant satisfactions which can deny the nobility of the ascetic endeavour or the loftiness of its idealism. But there are exaggerations and deflections, such as all ideals undergo, and those not the least which are the most difficult to humanity; asceticism may become a fanatic self-torture, a crude repression of the nature, a mere fleeing from existence or an indolent shunning of the trouble of life and the effort demanded from our manhood. Practised not by the comparatively few who are called to it, but preached in its extreme form to all and adopted by myriads who are unfit, its values may be debased, counterparts abound, the vital force of the community lose its spring and elasticity. It would be idle to pretend that such defects and untoward results have been absent in India. Nor would I accept the ascetic ideal by itself as the sole and the full final solution of the problem of human existence. But even its exaggerations have at least a nobler spirit behind them than the vitalistic exaggerations which are the opposite defect of western culture. And the point to be pressed is that Indian asceticism, in its greatest eras or in its real representatives, has not been a tired quietism or a conventional monasticism, but a high effort of the human spirit to rise beyond the life of desire and vital satisfaction and arrive at an acme of spiritual calm, greatness, bliss, illumination, divine realisation. The question between the religio-philosophical culture of India and the vehement secular activism of the modern mind is whether such an endeavour is or is not essential to the highest perfection of the human being and therefore to the fullness of a great and complete human civilisation.
The Future Poetry

THE POETS OF THE DAWN

(2)

A poetry whose task is to render truth of the Spirit by passing behind the appearances of the sense and the intellect to their spiritual reality, is in fact attempting a work for which no characteristic power of language has been discovered,—except the symbolic, but the old once established symbols will no longer entirely serve, and the method itself is not now sufficient for the need,—no traditional form of presentation native to the substance, no recognised method of treatment or approach, or none at once sufficiently wide and subtle, personal and universal for the modern mind. In the past indeed there have been hieratic and religious ways of approaching the truths of spirit which have produced some remarkable forms in art and literature. Sufi poetry, Vaishnava poetry are of this order, in more ancient times the symbolic and mystic way of the Vedic singers, while the unique revelatory utterance of the Upanishads stands by itself as a form of inspired thought which penetrates either direct or through strong unveiling images to the highest truths of self and soul and the largest seeing of the Eternal. One or two modern poets have attempted to use in a new way the almost unworked wealth of poetical suggestion in Catholic
Christianity. But the drift of the modern mind in this direction is too large in its aim and varied in its approach to be satisfied by any definite or any fixed symbolic or hieratic method, it cannot rest within the special experience and figures of a given religion. There has been too universal a departure from all specialised forms and too general a breaking down of the old cut channels; in place of their intensive narrowness we have a straining through all that has been experienced by an age of wide intellectual curiosity to the ultimate sense of that experience. The truth behind man and Nature and things, behind intellectual and emotional and vital perception is sought to be seized by a pressure upon these things themselves, and the highly intellectualised language and way of seeing developed by this age is either used as it is with more meaning or strained or moulded anew or given some turn or transformation which will bring in the intensity of the deeper truth and vision. An intellectualism which takes this turn can choose one of three methods. It may prolong the language and forms it already possesses and trust to the weight of the thing it has to say and the power of its vision to inform this vehicle with another spirit. It may strain, heighten, transfigure the language and forms into a more intensive force of image, mould and expression. Or it may strive for some new and direct tone, some sheer cry of intuitive speech and sound born from the spirit itself and coming near to its native harmonies. The moulds too may either be the established moulds turned or modified to a greater and subtler use or else strange unprecedented frames, magical products of a spiritual inspiration. On any of these lines the poetry of the future may arrive at its objective and cross the borders of a greater kingdom of experience and expression.

But these earlier poets came in an age of imperfect, unenriched and uncompleted intellectuality. The language which they inherited was admirable for clear and balanced
prose speech, but in poetry had been used only for adequate or vigorous statement, rhetorical reasoning, superficial sentimentalising or ornate thought, narrative, description in the manner of a concentrated, elevated and eloquent prose. The forms and rhythmical movements were unsuitable for any imaginative, flexible or subtly feeling poetry. Their dealing with these forms was clear and decisive; they were thrown aside and new forms were sought for or old ones taken from the earlier masters or from song and ballad moulds and modified or developed to serve a more fluid and intellectualised mind and imagination. But the language was a more difficult problem and could not be entirely solved by such short cuts as Wordsworth’s recipe of a resort to the straightforward force of the simplest speech dependent on the weight of the substance and thought for its one sufficient source of power. We find the tongue of this period floating between various possibilities, on its lower levels it is weighted down by some remnant of the character of the eighteenth century and proceeds by a stream of eloquence, no longer artificial, but facile, fluid, helped by a greater force of thought and imagination. This turn sometimes rises to a higher level of inspired and imaginative poetic eloquence. But beyond this pitch we have a fuller and richer style packed with thought and imaginative substance, the substitute of this new intellectualised poetic mind for the more spontaneous Elizabethan richness and curiosity; but imaginative thought is the secret of its power, no longer the exuberance of the life-soul in its vision. On the other side we have a quite different note, a sheer poetical directness, which sometimes sinks below itself to poverty and insufficiency or at least to thinness, as in much of the work of Wordsworth and Byron, but, when better supported and rhythmmed, rises to quite new authenticities of great or perfect utterance, and out of this there comes in some absolute moments a native voice of the spirit, in Wordsworth’s revelations of the
spiritual presence in Nature and its scenes and peoples, in Byron’s rare forceful sincerities, in the luminous simplicities of Blake, in the faery melodies of Coleridge, most of all perhaps in the lyrical cry and ethereal light of Shelley. But these are comparatively rare moments, the mass of their work is less certain and unequal in expression and significance. Finally we get in Keats a turning away to a rich, artistic and sensuous poetical speech which prepares us for the lower fullnesses of the intellectual and aesthetic epoch that had to intervene. The greatest intuitive and revealing poetry has yet to come.

Byron and Wordsworth are the two poets who are the most hampered by this difficulty of finding and keeping to the native speech of their greater self, most often depressed in their elevation, because they are both drawn by a strong side of their nature, the one to a forceful, the other to a weighty intellectualised expression; neither of them are born singers or artists of word and sound, neither of them poets in the whole grain of their mind and temperament, not, that is to say, always dominated by the aesthetic, imaginative or inspired strain in their being, but doubled here by a man of action and passion, there by a moralist and preacher, in each too a would-be “critic of life,” who gets into the way of the poet and makes upon him illegitimate demands; therefore they are readily prone to fall away to what is, however interesting it may otherwise be, a lower, a not genuinely poetic range of substance and speech. But both in the deepest centre or on the highest peak of their inspiration are moved by powers for which their heavily or forcibly intellectualised language of poetry was no adequate means. It is only when they escape from it that they do their rare highest work. Byron, no artist, intellectually shallow and hurried, a poet by compulsion of personality rather than in the native colour of his mind, inferior in all these respects to the finer strain of his great contemporaries, but in compen-
sation a more powerful elemental force than any of them and more in touch with all that had begun to stir in the mind of the times,—always an advantage, if he knows how to make use of it, for a poet's largeness and ease of execution, succeeds more amply on the inferior levels of his genius, but fails in giving any adequate voice to his highest possibility. Wordsworth, meditative, inward, concentrated in his thought, is more often able by force of brooding to bring out that voice of his greater self, but flags constantly, brings in a heavier music surrounding his few great clear tones, drowns his genius at last in a desolate sea of platitude. Neither arrives at that amplitude of achievement which might have been theirs in a more fortunate time, if ready forms had been given to them, or if they had lived in the stimulating atmosphere of a contemporary culture harmonious with their personality.

Byron's prodigious reputation, greater and more prolonged on the continent than in his own country, led perhaps to too severely critical an undervaluing when his defects became nakedly patent in the tending away of the helpful glamour of contemporary sympathies. That is the penalty of an exaggerated fame lifted too high on the wings or the winds of the moment. But his fame was no accident or caprice of fortune; it was his due from the Time-Spirit. His hasty vehement personality caught up and crowded into its work in a strong though intellectually crude expression an extraordinary number of the powers and motives of the modern age. The passion for liberty found in him its voice of Tyrrhenian bronze. The revolt and self-assertion of the individual against the falsities and stifling conventions of society, denial, unbelief, the scorn of the sceptic for established things, the romance of the past, the restlessness of the present, the groping towards the future, the sensuous, glittering, artificial romance of the pseudo-East, the romance of the solitary, the rebel, the individual exaggerated to himself by loneliness, the immoral or amor-
al superman, all that flawed romanticism, passionate sentimentality, insatiable satiety of sensualism, cynicism, realism which are the chaotic fermentation of an old world dying and a new world in process of becoming,—a century and a half's still unfinished process,—caught hold of his mood and unrolled itself before the dazzled, astonished and delighted eyes of his contemporaries in the rapid succession of forcibly ill-hewn works impatiently cut out or fiercely molten from his single personality in a few crowded years from its first rhetorical and struggling outburst in Childe Harold to the accomplished ease of its finale in Don Juan. Less than this apparent plenitude would have been enough to create the rumour that rose around the outbreak of this singular and rapid energy. No doubt, his intellectual understanding of these things was thin and poverty-stricken in the extreme, his poetic vision of the powers that moved him had plenty of force, but wanted depth and form and greatness. But he brought to his work what no other poet could give and what the mentality of the time, moved itself by things which it had not sufficient intellectual preparation to grasp, was fitted to appreciate, the native elemental force, the personality, the strength of nervous and vital feeling of them which they just then needed and which took the place of understanding and vision. To this pervading power, to this lava flood of passion and personality, were added certain preeminent gifts, a language at first of considerable rhetorical weight and drive, afterwards of great nervous strength, directness, precision, force of movement, a power of narrative and of vivid presentation, and always, whatever else might lack, an unfailing energy. It was enough for the immediate thing he had to do, though not at all enough for the highest assured immortality.

These things which Byron more or less adequately expressed, were the ferment of the mind of humanity in its first crude attempt to shake off the conventions of
the past and struggle towards a direct feeling of itself and its surrounding world in their immediate reality. But behind it there is something else which seems sometimes about to emerge vaguely, an element which may be called spiritual, a feeling of the greatness of man the individual spirit commensurate with Nature and his world, man in communion with the greatness of Nature, man able to stand in the world in his own strength and puissance, man affirming his liberty, the claim to freedom of a force as great within as the forces which surround and seem to overwhelm him. It is a Titanism, the spirit in man seen through the soul of desire, in revolt, not in self-possession, man the fallen archangel, not man returning to godhead: but it reposes on, it is the obscure side of a spiritual reality. He could not break through the obstructions of his lower personality and express this thing that he felt in its native tones of largeness and power. If he could have done so, his work would have been of a lasting greatness. But he never found the right form, never achieved the liberation into right thought and speech of the Daemon within him. The language and movement he started from were an intellectual and sentimental rhetoric, the speech of the eighteenth century broken down, melted and beaten into new shape for stronger uses; he went on to a more chastened and rapid style of great force, but void of delicacy, subtlety and variety; he ended in a flexible and easy tongue which gave power to even the most cynical trivialities and could rise to heights of poetry and passion: but none of these things, however adapted to his other gifts, was the style wanted for this greater utterance. Art, structure, accomplished mould were needs of which he had no idea; neither the weight of a deep and considered, nor the sureness of an inspired interpretation were at his command. But sometimes language and movement rise suddenly into a bare and powerful sincerity which, if he could have maintained
it, would have given him the needed instrument: but the patience and artistic conscientiousness or the feeling for poetic truth which could alone have done this, were far from him. Considerable work of a secondary kind he did, but he had something greater to say which he never said, but only gave rare hints of it and an obscured sense of the presence of its meaning.

Wordsworth, with a much higher poetic mind than Byron's, did not so entirely miss his greatest way, though he wandered much in adjacent paths and finally lost himself in the dry desert sands of the uninspired intellectual mentality. At the beginning he struck in the midst of some alloy full into his purest vein of gold. His earliest vision of his task was the right vision, and whatever may be the general truth of his philosophy of childhood in the great Ode, it seems to have been true of him. For as intellectuality grew on him, the vision failed; the first clear intimations dimmed and finally passed leaving behind an unillumined waste of mere thought and moralising. But always, even from the beginning, it got into the way of his inspiration. Yet Wordsworth was not a wide thinker, though he could bring a considerable weight of thought to the aid of the two or three great things he felt and saw lucidly and deeply, and he was unfitted to be a critic of life of which he could only see one side with power and originality,—for the rest he belongs to his age rather than to the future and is limited in his view of religion, of society, of man by many walls of convention. But what the poet sees and feels, not what he opines, is the real substance of his poetry. Wordsworth saw Nature and he saw man near to Nature, and when he speaks of these things, he finds either his noblest or his purest and most penetrating tones. His view of them is native to his temperament and personality and at the opposite pole to Byron's. Not that which is wild, dynamic or tumultuously great in Nature, but her calm, her serenity, the soul
of peace, the tranquil Infinite, the still, near, intimate voice that speaks from flower and bird, sky and star, mountain and stream, this he knew, felt and lived in as no poet before or after him has done, with a spiritual closeness and identity which is of the nature of a revelation, the first spiritual revelation of this high near kind to which English poetry had given voice. Some soul of man, too, he sees, not in revolt,—he has written unforgettable lines about liberty, but a calm and ordered liberty,—in harmony with this tranquil soul in Nature, finding in it some original simplicity and purity of his being and founding on it a life in tune with the order of an eternal law. On this perception the moralist in Wordsworth founds a rule of simple faith, truth, piety, self-control, affection, grave gladness in which the sentimental naturalism of the eighteenth century disappears into an ethical naturalism, a very different idealisation of humanity in the simplicity of its direct contact with Nature unspoiled by the artifice and corruption of a too developed society. All that Wordsworth has to say worth saying is confined to these motives and from them he draws his whole genuine thought inspiration.

But it is in the Nature strain of which he is the discoverer that he is unique, for it is then that the seer in him either speaks the revelatory thought of his spirit or gives us strains greater than thought’s, the imperishable substance of spiritual consciousness finding itself in sight and speech. At other times, especially when he fuses this Nature-strain with his thought and ethical motive, he writes sometimes poetry of the very greatest; at others again it is of a varying worth and merit; but too often also he passes out from his uninspired intelligence work with no stamp of endurance, much less of the true immortality. In the end the poet in him died while the man and the writer lived on; the moralist and concentrated thinker had killed the singer, the intellect had walled up the issues of the imagination and spiritual vision.
But even from the beginning there is an inequality and uncertainty which betray an incomplete fusion of the sides of his personality, and the heavy weight of intellectuality shadows over and threatens the spiritual light which it eventually extinguished. Except in a small number of pieces which rank among the greatest things in poetry, he can never long keep to the pure high poetic expression. He intellectualises his poetic statement overmuch and in fact states too much and sings too little, has a dangerous turn for a too obvious sermonising, pushes too far his reliance on the worth of his substance and is not jealously careful to give it a form of beauty. In his works of long breath there are terrible stretches of flattest prose in verse with lines of power, sometimes of fathomless depth like that wonderful

Voyaging in strange seas of thought alone, interspersed or occurring like a lonely and splendid accident, *rari nantes in gurgite vasto.* * It has been said with justice that he talks too much in verse and sings too little; there is a deficient sense of the more subtle spirit of rhythm, a deficiency which he overcomes when moved or lifted up, but which at other times, hampers greatly his effectiveness. His theory of poetic diction, though it has a certain truth in it, was, as he practised it, narrow and turned to unsoundness; it betrayed him into the power of the prosaic and intellectual element in his mind. These defects grew on him as the reflective moralist and monk and the conventional citizen,—there was always in him this curious amalgam,—prevailed over the seer and poet.

But still one of the seer-poets he is, a seer of the calm spirit in Nature, the poet of man’s large identity with her and serene liberating communion: it is on this side that he is admirable and unique. He has other strains too of

* "Rare swimming in the vast gurge."
great power. His chosen form of diction, often too bare and trivial in the beginning, too heavy afterwards, helps him at his best to a language and movement of unsurpassed poetic weight and gravity charged with imaginative insight, in which his thought and his ethical sense and spiritual sight meet in a fine harmony, as in his one great Ode, in some of his sonnets, in *Ruth*, even in *Laodamia*, in lines and passages which uplift and redeem much of his less satisfying work, while when the inner light shines wholly out, it admits him to the secret of the very self-revealing voice of Nature herself speaking through the human personality in some closest intimacy with her or else uttering the greatness of an impersonal sight and truth. He has transparencies in which the spirit gets free of the life-wave, the intelligence, the coloured veils of the imagination, and poetic speech and rhythm become hints of the eternal movements and the eternal stabilities, voices of the depths, rare moments of speech direct from our hidden immortality.
Rebirth and Soul Evolution

The ideas that men currently form about life and things are for the most part pragmatic constructions. They are forms of a reason which is concerned with giving only such a serviceable account to itself of its surroundings as shall make a sufficient clue to our immediate business of the growth, action, satisfaction of the personality, something feasible, livable, effective for our journeying in Time, something viable, to use the expressive French word. Whether it corresponds to or is directly in touch with any real reality of things seems to be very much a matter of accident. It seems to be sufficient if we can persuade our facile and complaisant reason of its truth and find it serviceable and fruitful in consequences for thought, action and life-experience. It is true that there is another unpragmatic reason in us which labours to get rid of this demand of the intellectual and vital personality; it wants to look at the real truth of things without veils and without any object, to mirror the very image of Truth in the still waters of a dispassionate, clear and pure mentality. But the workings of this calmer greater reason are hampered by two tremendous difficulties. First, it seems next to impossible to disengage it entirely from the rest of ourselves, from the normal intellectuality, from the will to believe, from that instinct of the intelligence which helps the survival, by a sort of subtle principle of preference and selection, of the way of thinking that suits the personal bent or accomplished
frame of our nature. And again, what is the Truth that our reason mirrors? It is after all some indirect image of Truth, not her very self and body seen face to face; it is an image moulded from such data, symbol, process of Reality,—if any real Reality there is,—as we can gather from the very limited experience of self and existing things open to human mind. So that unless there be some means by which knowledge can burst through all veils to the experience of the very Reality itself, or unless there be some universal Logos, divine Mind or Supermind, which knows itself and all things and our consciousness can reflect or get into touch with that, a pursuing insufficiency and uncertainty must always keep its baffling grasp upon even the highest power and largest walk of our reason and beset all the labour of human knowledge.

Nowhere are these disabilities more embarrassing than in those fundamental questions of the nature of the world and of our own existence which yet most passionately interest thinking humanity because this is in the end the thing of utmost importance to us, since everything else, except some rough immediate practicality of the moment, depends on its solution. And even that, until this great question is settled, is only a stumbling forward upon a journey of which we know not the goal or the purpose, the meaning or the necessity. The religions profess to solve these grand problems with an inspired or revealed certainty; but the enormity of their differences shows that in them too there is a selection of ideas, separate aspects of the Truth,—the sceptic would say, shows of imagination and falsehood,—and a construction from a limited spiritual experience. In them too there is an element of chosen and willed believing and some high pragmatic aim and utility, whether that be the soul's escape from the sorrow or unreality of existence or celestial bliss or a religio-ethical sanction and guidance. The philosophical systems are very obviously only feasible selective constructions of great reflective ideas. More often these are possibilities of the reason much rather than assured certainties or, if founded on spiritual experience, they are still selective constructions, a sort of great architectural approach to some gate into unknowable Divine or ineffable Infinite. The modern scientific mind professed to rid us
of all mere intellectual constructions and put us face to face with truth and with assured truth only; it claimed the right to rid man of the fantastic encumbrance of religion and the nebulous futilities of metaphysical philosophy. But religion and philosophy have now turned upon science and convicted her on her own statement of facts of an equal liability to the two universal difficulties of human reason. The system of science seems to be itself only another feasible and fruitful construction of the reason giving a serviceable account to itself of the physical world and our relations to it and it seems to be nothing more. And its knowledge is fatally bound by the limitation of its data and its outlook. Science too creates only a partial image of Truth stamped with a character of much uncertainty and still more clearly imprinted with the perverse hallmark of insufficiency.

We have to recognise that human reason, moving as it does from a starting-point of ignorance and in a great environing circle of ignorance, must proceed by hypothesis, assumption and theory subject to verification of some kind convincing to our reason and experience. But there is this difference that the religious mind accepts the theory or assumption,—to which it does not at all give these names, for they are to it things felt,—with faith, with a will of belief, with an emotional certainty, and seeks its verification by an increasing spiritual intuition and experience. The philosophic mind accepts it calmly and discerningly for its coherent agreement with the facts and necessities of being; it verifies by a pervading and unfailing harmony with all the demands of reason and intellectualised intuition. But the sceptical mind—not the mind of mere doubt which usually arrogates that name, but the open and balanced mind of careful, impartial and reserved inquiry,—gives a certain provisional character to its hypotheses, and it verifies by the justification of whatever order or category of ascertainable facts it takes for its standard of proof and invests with a character of decisive authority or reality. There is room enough for all three methods and there is no reason why our complex modern mind should not proceed simultaneously by all of them at once. For if the sceptical or provisional attitude makes us more ready to modify our
image of Truth in the light of new material of thought and knowledge, the religious mind also, provided it keeps a certain firm and profound openness to new spiritual experience, can proceed faster to a larger and larger light, and meanwhile we can walk by it with an assured step and go securely about our principal business of the growth and perfection of our being. The philosophical mind has the use of giving a needed largeness and openness to our mentality,—if it too does not narrow itself by a closed circle of metaphysical dogma,—and supports besides the harmony of our other action by the orderly assent of the higher reason.

In this matter of the soul and rebirth the initial hypothesis now lies quite open to us; the barrier has fallen. For if there is one thing now certain it is that physical science may give clues of process, but cannot lay hold on the reality of things. That means that the physical is not the whole secret of world and existence, and that in ourselves too the body is not the whole of our being. It is then through something supraphysical in Nature and ourselves which we may call the soul, whatever the exact substance of soul may be, that we are likely to get that greater truth and experience which will enlarge the narrow circle traced by physical science and bring us nearer to the Reality. There is nothing now to bar the most rational mind,—for true rationalism, real free thought need no longer be identified, as it was for some time too hastily and intolerantly, with a denial of the soul and a scouting of the truths of spiritual philosophy and religion,—there is nothing to prevent us from proceeding firmly upon whatever certitudes of spiritual experience have become to us the soil of our inner growth or the pillars on our road to self-knowledge. These are soul realities. But the exact frame we shall give to that knowledge, will best be built by farther spiritual experience aided by new enlarged intuitions, confirmed in the suggestions of the philosophic reason and fruitfully using whatever helpful facts we may get from the physical and the psychic sciences. These are truths of soul process; their full light must come by experimental knowledge and observation of the world without us and the world within.

The admission of the soul’s existence does not of it-
self lead, by its own necessity, by any indispensable next step, to the acceptance of rebirth. It will only bring in this indispensable consequence if there is such a thing as a soul evolution which enforces itself always and is a constant part of the order of existence and the law of the time process. Moreover the admission of an individual soul is a first condition of the truth of rebirth. For there is a plausible theory of existence which admits an All-Soul, a universal being and becoming of which the material world is some sensible result, but does not admit any at all abiding truth of our spiritual individuality. The All-Soul may continually develop, may slowly yet urgently evolve its becoming; but each individual man or apparent individual being is to this way of thinking only a moment of the All-Soul and its evolution; out of that it rises by the formation which we call birth and it sinks back into it by the dissolution which we call death. But this solution can only stand if we credit a creative biological evolution and its instrumentation of physical heredity with the whole causation of all our mental and spiritual being; in that case there is no real soul or spirit, soul personality or spiritual becoming is simply a result of life and body. Now the question of rebirth turns almost entirely upon the fundamental question of the past of the individual being and its future. If the creation of the whole nature is to be credited to the physical birth, then the body, life and soul of the individual are only a continuation of the body, life and soul of his ancestry, and there is no room anywhere for soul rebirth. The individual man has no past being independent of them and can have no independent future; he can prolong himself in his progeny,—the child may be his second or continued self, as the Upanishad puts it,—but there is no other rebirth for him. No continued stream of individuality presided over by any mental or spiritual person victoriously survives the dissolution of the body. On the other hand, if there is any element in us, still more the most important of all, which cannot be so accounted for, but presupposes a past or admits a future evolution other than that of the race mind and the physical ancestry, then some kind of soul birth becomes a logical necessity.

Now it is just here that the claims of physical and vital evolution and heredity seem to fail,—as a cause of
our whole mental and spiritual being. Certainly it has been shown that our body and the most physical part of our life action are very largely the results of heredity, but not in such a way as to exclude an assisting and perhaps really predominant psychical cause other than the ancestral contribution. It has been shown if you will that our conscious vitality and those parts of mind which depend upon it, temperament, character, certain impulses and pre-dispositions, are to a great extent shaped—or is it only influenced?—by evolutionary heredity, but not that they are entirely due to this force, not that there is no soul, no spiritual entity which accepts and makes use of this instrumentation, but is not its created result or helplessly subject to it in its becoming. Still more are the higher parts of our mind marked with a certain stamp of spiritual independence. They are not altogether helpless formations of evolutionary heredity. But still all these things are evidently very much under the influence of environment and its pressures and opportunities. And we may draw from that, if we choose, a limiting conclusion; we may say that they are a phase of the universal soul, a part of the process of its evolution by selection; the race, not the individual, is the continuous factor and all our individual effort and acquisition, only in appearance, not really independent, ceases with death, except so much of our gain as is chosen to be carried on in the race by the universal being or becoming.

But when we come to our highest spiritual elements, we find that here we do arrive at a very clear and sovereign independence. We can carry on far beyond any determination by environment or the pressure of the race-soul our own soul evolution by the governing force of our spiritual nature. Quite apart from any evidence of an after life on other planes or any memory of past births, this is sufficient warrant for a refusal to accept the theory of the ephemeral being of the individual and the sole truth of the evolutionary Universal. Certainly, the individual being is not thereby shown to be independent of the All-Soul; it may be nothing but a form of it in time. But it is sufficient for our purpose that it is a persistent soul form, not determined by the life of the body and ceasing with its dissolution, but persisting independently beyond. For if
it is thus independent of the physical race continuity in
the future, if it is capable of determining its own future
soul evolution in time, it must have had such an indepen-
dent existence all through, it must have determined in
reality as well its past soul evolution in time. Possibly it
may exist in the All-soul only during the universal con-
tinuity, may have arisen from it in that, may pass into it
eventually. Or possibly it may exist in it prior to, or it is
better to say, independent of the universal continuity,—
there may be some kind of eternal individual. But it is
sufficient for the theory of rebirth that a soul continuity
of the individual exists and not alone a succession of
bodies informed by the All-Soul with a quite ephemeral
illusion of mental or spiritual individuality.

There are theories of existence which accept the in-
dividual soul, but not soul evolution. There is, for in-
stance, that singular dogma of a soul without a past but with
a future, created by the birth of the body but indestructi-
ble by the death of the body. But this is a violent and irra-
tional assumption, an imagination unverified and without
verisimilitude. It involves the difficulty of a creature be-
ingin in time but enduring through all eternity, an im-
mortal being dependent for its existence on an act of physical
generation, itself always and entirely unphysical and inde-
pendent of the body which results from the generation.
These are objections insuperable to the reason. But there
is too the difficulty that this soul inherits a past for which
it is in no way responsible, or is burdened with mastering
propensities imposed on it not by its own act, and is yet
responsible for its future which is treated as if it were in
no way determined by that often deplorable inheritance,
damnosa hereditas, or that unfair creation, and were entire-
ly of its own making. We are made helplessly what we are
and are yet responsible for what we are,—or at least for
what we shall be hereafter, which is inevitably determined
to a large extent by what we are originally. And we have
only this one chance. Plato and the Hottentot, the fortunate
child of saints or Rishis and the born and trained criminal
plunged from beginning to end in the lowest fetid corrup-
tion of a great modern city have equally to create by the
action or belief of this one unequal life all their eternal
future. This is a paradox which offends both the soul and
the reason, the ethical sense and the spiritual intuition.

There is too the kindred idea, behind which a truth obscurely glimmers, that the soul of man is something high, pure and great which has fallen into the material existence and by its use of its nature and its acts in the body must redeem itself and return to its own celestial nature. But it is evident that this one earthly life is not sufficient for all to effect that difficult return, but rather most may and do miss it entirely, and we have then either to suppose that an immortal soul can perish or be doomed to eternal perdition or else that it has more existences than this poor precarious one apparently given to it, lives or states of being which intervene between its fall and the final working out of a sure redemption. But the first supposition is subject to all the difficulties of that other paradox. Apart from the problem of the reason of the fall, it is difficult to see how straight from celestial being these different souls should have lapsed immediately to such immense differences of gradation in their fall and in such way that each is responsible for the unequal conditions under which he has to determine so summarily his eternal future. Each must surely have had a past which made him responsible for his present conditions, if he is to be held thus strictly to account for all their results and the use he makes of his often too scanty, grudging and sometimes quite hopeless opportunity. The very nature of our humanity supposes a varying constituent past for the soul as well as a resultant future.

More reasonable therefore is a recent theory which suggests that a spirit or mental being has descended from another and greater plane and taken up the material existence when the physical or the animal evolution had proceeded far enough for a human embodiment upon earth to be possible. He looks back to a long series of human lives, beginning from that point, which has brought each of us to his present condition, and forward to a still continuing series which will carry all by their own degrees and in their own time to whatever completion or return is intended for the self-embodying human soul in its terrestrial evolution. But here again, what is it that brings about this connection of a spiritual being and higher mental nature and a physical being and lower animal nature? what
necessitates this taking up of the lower life by the spirit which here becomes man? It would seem that there must have been some previous connection and the possessing mental spiritual being must all the time have been preparing this lower life it occupies for a human manifestation. The whole evolution would then be an ordered continuity from the beginning and the intervention of mind and spirit would be no sudden and inexplicable miracle, but a coming forward of that which was always there behind, a taking up of manifested life by that which was always presiding over the life evolution.

What this theory of rebirth supposes is an evolution of being in the material world from matter to embodied mind, a universal spirit ensouling this evolution, individual spirits existing in the universal and following their upward course to whatever purposed consummation or liberation or both may beckon to us at its end. Much more than this it may mean, but this at least; a soul evolution the real fact, an assumption of higher and higher forms the first appearance. We might indeed admit a past and future for the human soul, but place them below and above this terrestrial plane and admit only one casual or purposeful existence upon earth. But this would mean two orders of progressive existence unconnected and yet meeting for a brief moment. There would be an errant individual human soul intervening in the ordered terrestrial evolution and immediately passing out without any connecting cause or necessity. But especially it leaves insufficiently explained the phenomenon of the largely terrestrial animal being and nature of this spiritual and supra-terrestrial entity, this soul, its struggle for liberation, and the infinitely varying degrees in which in different bodies it has succeeded in dominating the lower nature. A past terrestrial soul evolution which accounts for these variations and degrees of our mixed being and a future soul evolution by which we can progressively liberate the godhead of the spirit, seem the only just and reasonable explanation of these facts of a matter-shackled soul assuming a variable degree of humanity amidst a progressive appearance of life, mind, spirit in a material universe. Rebirth is the only possible machinery for such a soul evolution.
A PHILOSOPHICAL REVIEW

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CONTENTS

ESSAYS ON THE GITA.................. Aurobindo Ghose
The Vision of God the World-Spirit

THE SYNTHESIS OF YOGA.............. A. G.
Chapter LIV. Purification : the
Lower Mentality

THE ETERNAL WISDOM.............. Paul Richard
The Victory of the Divine Purification

A RATIONALISTIC CRITIC ON INDIAN CULTURE (4)

THE FUTURE POETRY
The Poets of the Dawn

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF REBIRTH
THE VISION OF GOD THE WORLD-SPIRIT.

The vision of the universal Purusha is one of the best known and most powerfully poetic passages in the Gita, but its place in the thought is not altogether on the surface. It is evidently intended for a poetic and revelatory symbol, and we have to see how it is brought in and what is the importance of its aspects in order to seize its meaning. It is invited by Arjuna himself, who desires to see the living image of the greatness of the divine Soul which governs the universe. He has heard the highest spiritual secret of existence, that all is from God and all is the Divine and in all things God dwells and is concealed and can be revealed in every finite appearance. The illusion which so persistently holds man's sense and mind, the idea that things at all exist in themselves or for themselves apart from God or that anything subject to Nature can be self-moving and self-guided, has passed from him,—that was the cause of his doubt, bewilderment and refusal of action. Now he knows what is the sense of the birth and passing away of existences; he knows that the imperishable greatness of the divine conscious Soul is the secret of all these appearances. All is a Yoga of this great eternal Spirit in things and all happenings are the result and expression of that Yoga; it is all Nature full of the secret Godhead and labouring to reveal him in her, But
he would see too the very form and body of this Godhead, if that be possible. He has heard of his attributes and understood the steps and ways of his self-revelation; but now he asks of this Master of the Yoga to reveal his very imperishable Self to the eye of Yoga. Not, evidently, the formless silence of his actionless immutability, but the Supreme from whom is all energy and action, of whom forms are the masks, who reveals his force in the Vibhuti,—the Master of works, the Master of knowledge and adoration, the Lord of Nature and all beings. For this greatest all-comprehending vision he is made to ask, because it is so, from the Spirit revealed in the universe, that he must receive the command to his part in the world-action.

What thou hast to see, replies the Avatar, the human eye cannot grasp,—for the human eye can see only the outward appearances of things or make out of them separate symbol forms of which each gives a few aspects of the Divinity. But there is a divine eye by which the Divine in his Yoga can be beheld and that eye I now give. Thou shalt see, he says, my hundreds and thousands of divine forms, various in kind, various in shape and hue; thou shalt see the Adityas and the Rudras and the Maruts and the Aswins; thou shalt see many wonders that none has beheld; thou shalt see today the whole world related and unified in my body and whatever else thou willest to behold. This then is the keynote, the central significance. It is the vision of the One in the many, the Many in the One,—and all are the One. It is this vision that to the eye of the divine Yoga liberates, justifies, explains all that is and was and shall be. Once seen and held, it lays the shining axe of God at the root of all doubts and perplexities, denials and oppositions. It is the vision that reconciles and unifies. If the soul can arrive at unity with the Godhead in this vision,—Arjuna has not yet done that, therefore we find that he has fear when he sees,—all even that is terri-
ble in the world loses its terror. We see that it too is an aspect of the Godhead and once we have found its divine meaning, not seeing it by itself alone, we can accept the whole of existence with an all-embracing joy and a mighty courage, go forward with sure steps to the work appointed and see beyond it the supreme consummation. The soul admitted to the divine knowledge, which beholds all things in one view, not with a divided, partial and therefore bewildering seeing, can make a new discovery of the world and all else that it wills to see, yach cha\textit{\textit{n}}yad drashtum ichchasi; it can move on the basis of this all-relating and all-unifying vision from revelation to completing revelation.

The supreme divine Form is then made visible. It is that of the infinite Godhead whose faces are everywhere and in whom are all the wonders of existence, who multiplies unendingly all the many marvellous revelations of his being, a world-wide Divinity seeing with innumerable eyes, speaking from innumerable mouths, armed for battle with numberless divine uplifted weapons, glorious with divine ornaments of beauty, robed in heavenly raiment of deity, lovely with garlands of divine flowers, fragrant with divine perfumes. Such is the light of this body of God as if a thousand suns had risen at once in heaven. The whole world multitudinously divided and yet unified is visible in the body of the God of Gods. Arjuna sees him, God magnificent and beautiful and terrible, the Lord of souls who has manifested in the glory and greatness of his spirit this wild and monstrous and orderly and wonderful and sweet and terrible world, and overcome with marvel and joy and fear he bows down and adores with words of awe and with clasped hands the tremendous vision. "I see" he cries "all the gods in thy body, O God, and the various companies of beings, Brahma the creating lord seated in the Lotus, and the Rishis and the race of the divine Serpents. I see numberless arms and bellies and eyes and
faces, I see thy infinite forms on every side, but I see not thy end nor thy middle nor thy beginning, O Lord of the universe, O Form universal. I see thee crowned and with thy mace and thy discus, hard to discern because thou art a luminous mass of energy on all sides of me, an encompassing blaze, a sun-bright fire-bright Immeasurable. Thou art the supreme immutable whom we have to know, thou art the high foundation and abode of the universe, thou art the imperishable guardian of the eternal laws of being, thou art the sempiternal soul of existence."

But in the greatness of this vision there is too the terrific image of the Destroyer. This Being without end or middle or beginning is he in whom all things begin and exist and end. This Godhead who embraces the worlds with his numberless arms and destroys with his million hands, whose eyes are suns and moons, has a face of blazing fire and is ever burning up the whole universe with the flame of his energy. The form of him is fierce and marvellous and alone it fills all the regions and occupies the whole space between earth and heaven. The companies of the gods enter it, afraid, adoring; the Rishis and the Siddhas crying "May there be peace and weal" praise it with many praises, the eyes of Gods and Titans and Giants are fixed on it in amazement. It has enormous burning eyes; it has mouths that gape to devour terrible with many tusks of destruction; it has faces like the fires of Death and Time. The kings and the captains and the heroes on both sides of the world-battle are hastening into its tusked and terrible jaws and some are seen with crushed and bleeding heads caught between its teeth of power; the nations are rushing to destruction with helpless speed into its mouths of flame like many rivers hurrying in their course towards the ocean or like moths that cast themselves on a kindled fire. With those burning mouths the Form of Dread is licking all the regions around; the whole world is full of his burning energies and baked
in the fierceness of his lustres. The world and its nations are shaken and in anguish with the terror of destruction and Arjuna shares in the trouble and panic around him; troubled and in pain is the soul within him and he finds no peace or gladness. He cries to the dreadful Godhead, "Declare to me who thou art that wearest this form of fierceness. Salutation to thee, O thou great Godhead, turn thy heart to grace. I would know who thou art who wast from the beginning, for I know not the will of thy workings."

This last cry of Arjuna indicates the double intention in the vision. This is the figure of the supreme and universal Being, the Ancient of Days who is for ever, sanâtanam purusham purânam, who for ever creates,—Brahma the Creator is one of the Godheads seen in his body, —who keeps the world always in existence,—he is the guardian of the eternal laws of being, but who is always too destroying in order that he may new-create, who is Time, who is Death, who is Rudra the Dancer of the calm and awful dance, who is Kali with her garland of skulls trampling naked in battle and flecked with the blood of the slaughtered Titans, who is the cyclone and the fire and the earthquake and pain and famine and revolution and ruin and the swallowing ocean. And it is this last aspect of him which he puts forward at the moment. It is an aspect from which the mind in men willingly turns away and ostrich-like hides its head so that perchance, not seeing it, it may not be seen by it. The weakness of the human heart wants only fair and comforting truth or in its absence pleasant fables; it will not have the truth in its entirety because there is much that is not clear and pleasant and comfortable, but hard to understand and harder to bear. The raw religionist, the superficial optimistic thinker, the man at the mercy of his sensations and emotions agree in twisting away from the sterner conclusions of the aspects of universal
existence. Indian religion has been ignorantly reproached for not sharing in this general game of hiding, because on the contrary it has built and placed before it the terrible as well as the sweet and beautiful symbols of the Godhead. But it is the depth and largeness of its long thought and spiritual experience which prevent it from feeling or from giving countenance to these feeble shrinkings.

Indian spirituality knows that God is Love and Peace and Eternity,—the Gita which presents us with these terrible images, speaks of the Godhead who embodies himself in them as the lover and friend of all creatures. But there is too the aspect of his divine government of the world which meets us from the beginning, the aspect of destruction, and to ignore it is to miss the full reality of the divine Love and Peace and Eternity and even to throw on it an aspect of partiality and illusion, because the comforting exclusive form in which it is put is not borne out by the nature of the world we live in. This world of our battle and labour is a fierce dangerous destructive devouring world in which life exists precariously and the soul and body of man move among enormous perils, a world in which by every step forward, whether we will it or no, something is crushed and broken, in which every breath of life is a breath too of death. To put away the responsibility for all that seems to us evil or terrible on the shoulders of a semi-omnipotent Devil, or to put it aside as part of Nature, making an opposition between world-nature and God-Nature, as if Nature were independent of God, or to throw the responsibility on man and his sins, as if he had a preponderant voice in the making of this world or could create anything against the will of God, are clumsily comfortable devices in which the religious thought of India has never taken refuge. We have to look courageously in the face of the reality and see that it is God and none else who has made this world in his being and that so he has made it. We have
to see that Nature devouring her children, Time eating up the lives of creatures, Death universal and ineluctable and the violence of the Rudra forces in man and Nature are also the supreme Godhead in one of his cosmic figures. We have to see that God the bountiful and prodigal creator, God the helpful, strong and benignant preserver is also God the devourer and destroyer. The torment of the couch of pain and evil on which we are racked is his touch as much as happiness and sweetness and pleasure. It is only when we see with the eye of the complete union and feel this truth in the depths of our being that we can entirely find behind that mask too the calm and beautiful face of the all-blissful Godhead and in this touch that tests our imperfection the touch of the friend and builder of the spirit in man. The discords of the worlds are God's discords and it is only by accepting and proceeding through them that we can arrive at the greater concords of his supreme harmony.

The problem raised by the Gita and the solution it gives demand this character of the vision of the world-spirit. It is the problem of a great struggle, ruin and massacre which has been brought about by the all-guiding Will and in which the eternal Avatar himself has descended as the charioteer of the protagonist in the battle. The seer of the vision is himself the protagonist, the representative of the battling soul of man who has to strike down tyrant and oppressive powers that stand in the path of his evolution and to establish and enjoy the kingdom of a higher right and nobler law of being. Perplexed by the terrible aspect of the catastrophe in which kindred smite at kindred, whole nations are to perish and society itself seems doomed to sink down in a pit of confusion and anarchy, he has shrunk back, refused the task of destiny and demanded of his divine Friend and Guide why he is appointed to so dreadful a work, kim karmani ghore man nityojayasi. He has been shown then how individually to
rise above the apparent nature of whatever work he may do, to see that Nature the executive force is the doer of the work, his natural being the instrument, God the master of Nature and of works to whom he must offer them without desire or egoistic choice as a sacrifice; he has been shown too that the Divine who is above all these things and untouched by them, yet manifests himself in man and Nature and their action and that all is a movement in the cycles of this divine manifestation. But now when he is put face to face with the embodiment of this truth, he sees in it magnified by the image of the divine greatness this aspect of terror and destruction and is appalled and can hardly bear it. For why should it be thus that the All-spirit manifests himself in Nature? what is the meaning of this creating and devouring flame that is mortal existence, this world-wide struggle, these constant disastrous revolutions, this labour and anguish and travail and perishing of creatures? He puts the ancient question and breathes the eternal prayer, "Declare to me who art thou that comest to us in this form of fierceness. I would know who art thou who wast from the beginning, for I know not the will of thy workings. Turn thy heart to grace."

Destruction, replies the Godhead, is the will of my workings with which I stand here on this field of Kurukshetra, the field of the working out of the Dharma, the field of human action,—as we might symbolically translate the descriptive phrase, dharmakshetra kurukshetra,—a world-wide destruction which has come in the process of the Time-Spirit. I have a foreseeing purpose which fulfils itself infallibly and no participation or abstention of any human being can prevent, alter or modify it; all is done by me already in my foreseeing will before it can at all be done by man upon earth. I as Time have to destroy the old structures and to build up a new, mighty and splendid kingdom. Thou as the human instrument of a
divine Will, hast in this struggle which thou canst not prevent, to battle for the right and slay and conquer its opponents; thou too as the human soul in Nature hast to enjoy in Nature the fruit given by me, the empire of right and justice. Let this be sufficient for thee to be one with God in thy soul, to receive his command, to do his will in Nature, to see the divine purpose fulfilled in the world. "I am Time the waster of the peoples arisen and increased whose will in my workings is here to destroy the nations. Even without thee all these warriors shall be not, who are ranked in the opposing armies. Therefore arise, get thee glory, conquer the enemy and enjoy an opulent kingdom. By me and none other already even are they slain, do thou become the occasion only, O Savyasachin. Slay, by me who are slain, Drona, Bhishma, Jayadratha, Karna and other heroic fighters; be not pained and troubled. Fight, thou shalt conquer the adversary in the battle." The fruit of the great and terrible work is promised and prophesied, not as a fruit hungered for by the individual,—for to that there is to be no attachment,—but as the result of the divine will, the glory and success of the thing to be done accomplished, the glory given by the Divine to himself in his Vibhuti. So the final and compelling command to action is given.

It is the Timeless who manifests himself as Time and as world-spirit from whom the command to action proceeds; for certainly the Godhead when he says, "I am Time the Destroyer of beings," does not mean either that he is the Time-Spirit alone or that the whole essence of the Time-Spirit is destruction. But it is this which is the present will of his workings, pravritti. Destruction is always a simultaneous or alternate element which keeps pace with creation and it is by destroying and renewing that the Master of Life does his long work of preservation. More, destruction is the first condition of progress. Inwardly, the man who does not destroy his lower self-formations,
cannot rise to a greater being; outwardly, the nation or community which shrinks too long from destroying and replacing its past forms of life, is itself destroyed, rots and perishes and out of its debris other nations and communities are formed. By destruction of the old giant occupants man made himself a place upon earth. By destruction of the Titans the gods maintain the continuity of the divine Law in the cosmos. Whoever prematurely attempts to get rid of this law of battle and destruction, strives vainly against the greater will of the World-Spirit. Whoever turns from it in the weakness of his lower members, as did Arjuna in the beginning,—therefore was his shrinking condemned as a weak and false pity, an inglorious, an unAryan and unhallowen feebleness of heart and impotence of spirit, klayiyam, kshudram hridaya-daurbalyam,—is showing not true virtue, but a want of spiritual courage to face the sterner truths of being and of action. Man can only exceed the law of battle by discovering the greater law of his immortality. There are those who seek this where it always exists and must primarily be found, in the higher reaches of the pure spirit, and to find it turn away from a world governed by the law of Death. That is an individual solution which makes no difference to mankind and the world, or rather makes only this difference that they are deprived of so much spiritual power which might have helped them forward in the painful march of their evolution.

What then is the master man, the divine worker, the opened channel of the universal Will to do when he finds the World-Spirit turned towards some immense catastrophe, figured before his eyes as Time the destroyer arisen and increased for the destruction of the nations, and himself put there in the forefront whether as a fighter with physical weapons or a leader and guide or an inspirer of men, as he cannot fail to be by the very force of his nature and the power within him, svabhavajena swena karmanā? To
abstain, to sit silent, to protest by non-intervention? But
abstention will not help, will not prevent the fulfilment
of the destroying Will, but rather by the lacuna it creates
increase confusion. Even without thee, cries the Godhead,
my will of destruction would still be accomplished, rite’pi
twâm. If Arjuna were to abstain or even if the battle of
Kurukshetra were not to be fought, that evasion would only
prolong and make worse the inevitable confusion, disorder,
ruin that are coming; for these things are no accident,
but an inevitable seed that has been sown and a harvest
that must be reaped. They who have sown the wind,
must reap the whirlwind. Nor indeed will his own nature
allow him any real abstention, prakritis twâm niyokshyati,
This is what the Teacher tells Arjuna at the close, “That
which in thy egoism thou dreamest, saying, I will not
fight, vain is this thy resolve, Nature shall yoke thee to
thy work; bound by thy own action which is born of
the law of thy being, what from delusion thou desirest
not to do, that thou shalt do even perforce.” Then to give
another turn, to use some kind of soul force, spiritual me-
thon and power, not physical weapons? But that is only an-
other form of the same action; the destruction will still take
place, and the turn given too will be not what the indi-
vidual ego, but what the World-Spirit wills. Even, the
force of destruction may feed on this new power, may get a
more formidable impetus and Kali arise filling the world
with a more terrible sound of her laughers. No real peace
can be till the heart of man deserves peace; the law of
Vishnu cannot prevail till the debt to Rudra is paid.
To turn aside then and preach to a still unevolved man-
kind the law of love and oneness? Teachers of the law of
love and oneness there must be, for by that way must come
the ultimate salvation. But not till the Time-Spirit in man
is ready, can the inner and ultimate prevail over the outer
and immediate reality. Christ and Buddha have come and
gone, but it is Rudra who still holds the world in the
hollow of his hand. And meanwhile the fierce forward labour of mankind tormented and oppressed by the Powers that are profiteers of egoistic force and their servants cries for the sword of the Hero of the struggle and the word of its prophet.

The highest way appointed for him is to carry out the will of God without egoism, as the human occasion and instrument of that which he sees to be decreed, with the constant supporting memory of the Godhead in himself and man, mām anusmaran, and in whatever ways are appointed for him by the Lord of his Nature, Nimittamātram bhava savyasāchin. He will not cherish personal enmity, anger, hatred, egoistic desire and passion, will not hasten towards strife or lust after violence and destruction like the fierce Asura, but he will do his work, lokasangrahāya. Beyond the action he will look towards that to which it leads, that for which he is warring. For God the Time-Spirit does not destroy for the sake of destruction, but to make the ways clear in the cyclic process for a greater rule and a progressing manifestation, rājyam samriddham. He will accept in its deeper sense, which the superficial mind does not see, the greatness of the struggle, the glory of the victory,—if need be, the glory of the victory which comes masked as defeat,—and lead man too in the enjoyment of his opulent kingdom. Not appalled by the face of the Destroyer, he will see within it the eternal Spirit imperishable in all these perishing bodies and behind it the face of the Charioteer, the Leader of man, the Friend of all creatures, suhridam sarvabhūtānām. This formidable World-Form once seen and acknowledged, it is to that reassuring truth that the rest of the chapter turns.
The Synthesis of Yoga

THE YOGA OF SELF-PERFECTION

CHAPTER LIV

PURIFICATION—THE LOWER MENTALITY

We have to deal with the complex action of all these instruments and set about their purification. And the simplest way will be to fasten on the two kinds of radical defect in each, distinguish clearly in what they consist and set them right. But there is also the question where we are to begin. For the entanglement is great, the complete purification of one instrument depends on the complete purification too of all the others, and that is a great source of difficulty, disappointment and perplexity,—as when we think we have got the intelligence purified, only to find that it is still subject to attack and overclouding because the emotions of the heart and the will and sensational mind are still affected by the many impurities of the lower nature and they get back into the enlightened buddhi and prevent it from reflecting the pure truth for which we are seeking. But we have on the other hand this advantage that one important instrument sufficiently purified can be used as a means for the purification of the others, one step firmly taken makes easier all the others and gets rid of a host of difficulties. Which instrument then by its purification and perfection will bring about most easily and effectively or can aid with a most powerful rapidity the perfection of the rest?
Since we are the spirit enveloped in mind, a soul evolved here as a mental being in a living physical body, it must naturally be in the mind, the antahkarana, that we must look for this desideratum. And in the mind it is evidently by the buddhi, the intelligence and the will of the intelligence that the human being is intended to do whatever work is not done for him by the physical or nervous nature as in the plant and the animal. Pending the evolution of any higher supramental power the intelligent will must be our main force for effectuation and to purify it becomes a very primary necessity. Once our intelligence and will are well purified of all that limits them and gives them a wrong action or wrong direction, they can easily be perfected, can be made to respond to the suggestions of Truth, understand themselves and the rest of the being, see clearly and with a fine and scrupulous accuracy what they are doing and follow out the right way to do it without any hesitating or eager error or stumbling deviation. Eventually their response can be opened up to the perfect discernings, intuitions, inspirations, revelations of the supermind and proceed by a more and more luminous and even infallible action. But this purification cannot be effected without a preliminary clearing of its natural obstacles in the other lower parts of the antahkarana, and the chief natural obstacle running through the whole action of the antahkarana, through the sense, the mental sensation, emotion, dynamic impulse, intelligence, will, is the intermiscence and the compelling claim of the psychic prana. This then must be dealt with, its dominating intermiscence ruled out, its claim denied, itself quieted and prepared for purification.

Each instrument has, it has been said, a proper and legitimate action and also a deformation or wrong principle of its proper action. The proper action of the psychic prana is pure possession and enjoyment, bhoga. To enjoy thought, will, action, dynamic impulse, result of action,
emotion, sense, sensation, to enjoy too by their means objects, persons, life, the world, is the activity for which this prana gives us a psycho-physical basis. A really perfect enjoyment of existence can only come when what we enjoy is not the world in itself or for itself, but God in the world, when it is not things, but the Ananda of the spirit in things that forms the real, essential object of our enjoying and things only as form and symbol of the spirit, waves of the ocean of Ananda. But this Ananda can only come at all when we can get at and reflect in our members the hidden spiritual being, and its fullness can only be had when we climb to the supramental ranges. Meanwhile there is a just and permissible, a quite legitimate human enjoyment of these things, which is, to speak in the language of Indian psychology, predominantly sattvic in its nature. It is an enlightened enjoyment principally by the perceptive, aesthetic and emotive mind, secondarily only by the sensational, nervous and physical being, but all subject to the clear government of the buddhi, to a right reason, a right will, a right reception of the life impacts, a right order, a right feeling of the truth, law, ideal sense, beauty, use of things. The mind gets the pure taste of enjoyment of them, rasa, and rejects whatever is perturbed, troubled and perverse. Into this acceptance of the clear and limpid rasa, the psychic prana has to bring in the full sense of life and the occupying enjoyment by the whole being, bhoga, without which the acceptance and possession by the mind, rasa-grahaṇa, would not be concrete enough would be too tenuous to satisfy altogether the embodied soul. This contribution is its proper function.

The deformation which enters in and prevents the purity, is a form of vital craving; the grand deformation which the psychic prana contributes to our being, is desire. The root of desire is the vital craving to seize upon that which we feel we have not, it is the limited life's instinct for possession and satisfaction. It creates the sense
of want,—first the simpler vital craving of hunger, thirst, lust, then these psychical hungers, thirsts, lusts of the mind which are a much greater and more instant and pervading affliction of our being, the hunger which is infinite because it is the hunger of an infinite being, the thirst which is only temporarily lulled by satisfaction, but is in its nature insatiable. The psychic prana invades the sensational mind and brings into it the unquiet thirst of sensations, invades the dynamic mind with the lust of control, having, domination, success, fulfilment of every impulse, fills the emotional mind with the desire for the satisfaction of liking and disliking, for the wreaking of love and hate, brings the shrinkings and panics of fear and the strainings and disappointments of hope, imposes the tortures of grief and the brief fevers and excitement of joy, makes the intelligence and intelligent will the accomplices of all these things and turns them in their own kind into deformed and lame instruments, the will into a will of craving and the intelligence into a partial, a stumbling and an eager pursuer of limited, impatient, militant prejudgment and opinion. Desire is the root of all sorrow, disappointment, affliction, for though it has a feverish joy of pursuit and satisfaction, yet because it is always a straining of the being, it carries into its pursuit and its getting a labour, hunger, struggle, a rapid subjection to fatigue, a sense of limitation, dissatisfaction and early disappointment with all its gains, a ceaseless morbid stimulation, trouble, disquiet, açauti. To get rid of desire is the one firm indispensable purification of the psychical prana,—for so we can replace the soul of desire with its pervading immiscence in all our instruments by a mental soul of calm delight and its clear and limpid possession of ourselves and world and Nature which is the crystal basis of the mental life and its perfection.

The psychical prana interferes in all the higher operations to deform them, but its defect is itself due to its being interfered with and deformed by the nature of
the physical workings in the body which Life has evolved in its emergence from matter. It is that which has created the separation of the individual life in the body from the life of the universe and stamped on it the character of want, limitation, hunger, thirst, craving for what it has not, a long groping after enjoyment and a hampered and baffled need of possession. Easily regulated and limited in the purely physical order of things, it extends itself in the psychical prana immensely and becomes, as the mind grows, a thing with difficulty limited, insatiable, irregular, a busy creator of disorder and disease. Moreover, the psychical prana leans on the physical life, limits itself by the nervous force of the physical being, limits thereby the operations of the mind and becomes the link of its dependence on the body and its subjection to fatigue, incapacity, disease, disorder, insanity, the pettiness, the precariousness and even the possible dissolution of the workings of the physical mentality. Our mind instead of being a thing powerful in its own strength, a clear instrument of conscious spirit, free and able to control, use and perfect the life and body, appears in the result a mixed construction; it is a predominantly physical mentality limited by its physical organs and subject to the demands and to the obstructions of the life in the body. This can only be got rid of by a sort of practical, inward psychological operation of analysis by which we become aware of the mentality as a separate power, isolate it for a free working, distinguish too the psychical and the physical prana and make them no longer a link for dependence, but a transmitting channel for the Idea and Will in the buddhi, obedient to its suggestions and commands; the prana then becomes a passive means of effectuation for the mind's direct control of the physical life. This control, however abnormal to our habitual poise of action, is not only possible,—it appears to some extent in the phenomena of hypnosis, though these are unhealthily abnormal, because
there it is a foreign will which suggests and commands,—but must become the normal action when the higher Self within takes up the direct command of the whole being. This control can be exercised perfectly, however, only from the supramental level, for it is there that the true effective Idea and Will reside and the mental thought-mind, even spiritualised, is only a limited, though it may be made a very powerful deputy.

Desire, it is thought, is the real motive power of human living and to cast it out would be to stop the springs of life; satisfaction of desire is man’s only enjoyment and to eliminate it would be to extinguish the impulse of life by a quietistic asceticism. But the real motive power of the life of the soul is Will; desire is only a deformation of will in the dominant bodily life and physical mind. The essential turn of the soul to possession and enjoyment of the world consists in a will to delight, and the enjoyment of the satisfaction of craving is only a vital and physical degradation of the will to delight. It is essential that we should distinguish between pure will and desire, between the inner will to delight and the outer lust and craving of the mind and body. If we are unable to make this distinction practically in the experience of our being, we can only make a choice between a life-killing ascetism and the gross will to live or else try to effect an awkward, uncertain and precarious compromise between them. This is in fact what the mass of men do; a small minority trample down the life instinct and strain after an ascetic perfection; most obey the gross will to live with such modifications and restraints as society imposes or the normal social man has been trained to impose on his own mind and actions; others set up a balance between ethical austerity and temperate indulgence of the desiring mental and vital self and see in this balance the golden mean of a sane mind and healthy human living. But none of these ways gives the perfection which we are seeking, the divine government
of the will in life. To tread down altogether the prana, the vital being, is to kill the force of life by which the large action of the embodied soul in the human being must be supported; to indulge the gross will to live is to remain satisfied with imperfection; to compromise between them is to stop half way and possess neither earth nor heaven. But if we can get at the pure will undeformed by desire,—which we shall find to be a much more free, tranquil, steady and effective force than the leaping smoke-stifled, soon fatigued and baffled flame of desire,—and at the calm inner will of delight not afflicted or limited by any trouble of craving, we can then transform the prana from a tyrant, enemy, assailant of the mind into an obedient instrument. We may call these greater things, too, by the name of desire, if we choose, but then we must suppose that there is a divine desire other than the vital craving, a God-desire of which this other and lower phenomenon is an obscure shadow and into which it has to be transfigured. It is better to keep distinct names for things which are entirely different in their character and inner action.

To rid the prana of desire and incidentally to reverse the ordinary poise of our nature and turn the vital being from a troublesomely dominant power into the obedient instrument of a free and unattached mind, is then the first step in purification. As this deformation of the psychical prana is corrected, the purification of the rest of the intermediary parts of the antahkarana is facilitated, and when that correction is completed, their purification too can be easily made absolute. These intermediary parts are the emotional mind, the receptive sensational mind and the active sensational mind or mind of dynamic impulse. They all hang together in a strongly knotted interaction. The deformation of the emotional mind hinges upon the duality of liking and disliking, råga-dvesha, emotional attraction and repulsion. All the complexity of our emotions and their tyranny over the soul arise
from the habitual responses of the soul of desire in the
emotions and sensations to these attractions and repul-
sions. Love and hatred, hope and fear, grief and joy all
have their founts in this one source. We like, love, wel-
come, hope for, joy in whatever our nature, the first habit
of our being, or else a formed (often perverse) habit, the
second nature of our being, presents to the mind as plea-
sant, *priyam*; we hate, dislike, fear, have repulsion from or
grief of whatever it presents to us as unpleasant, *apriyam*.
This habit of the emotional nature gets into the way of the
intelligent will and makes it often a helpless slave of the
emotional being or at least prevents it from exercising a
free judgment and government of the nature. This defo-
rmation has to be corrected. By getting rid of desire in the
psychic prana and its intermiscence in the emotional mind,
we facilitate the correction. For then attachment which
is the strong bond of the heart, falls away from the heart-
strings; the involuntary habit of *raga-dwesha* remains, but,
not being made obstinate by attachment, it can be dealt
with more easily by the will and the intelligence. The rest-
less heart can be conquered and get rid of the habit of at-
traction and repulsion.

But then if this is done, it may be thought, as with
regard to desire, that this will be the death of the emo-
tional being. It will certainly be so, if the deformation is
eliminated but not replaced by the right action of the
emotional mind; the mind will then pass into a neutral
condition of *blank indifference* or into a luminous state of
peaceful impartiality with no stir or wave of emotion. The
former state is in no way desirable; the latter may be
the perfection of a quietistic discipline, but in the inte-
gral perfection which does not *reject* love or shun various
movement of delight, it can be no more than a stage
which has to be overpassed, a preliminary passivity ad-
mited as a first basis for a right activity. Attraction and
repulsion, liking and disliking are a necessary mechanism
for the normal man, they form a first principle of natural instinctive selection among the thousand flattering and formidable, helpful and dangerous impacts of the world around him. The buddhi starts with this material to work on and tries to correct the natural and instinctive by a wiser reasoned and willed selection; for obviously the pleasant is not always the right thing, the object to be preferred and selected, nor the unpleasant the wrong thing, the object to be shunned and rejected; the pleasant and the good, preyas and creyas, have to be distinguished, and right reason has to choose and not the caprice of emotion. But this it can do much better when the emotional suggestion is withdrawn and the heart rests in a luminous passivity. Then too the right activity of the heart can be brought to the surface; for we find then that behind this emotion-ridden soul of desire there was waiting all the while a soul of love and lucid joy and delight, a pure psyche, which was clouded over by the deformations of anger, fear, hatred, repulsion and could not embrace the world with an impartial love and joy. But the purified heart is rid of anger, rid of fear, rid of hatred, rid of every shrinking and repulsion: it has a universal love, it can receive with an untroubled sweetness and clarity the various delight which God gives it in the world. But it is not the lax slave of love and delight; it does not desire, does not attempt to impose itself as the master of the actions. The selective process necessary to action is left principally to the buddhi and, when the buddhi has been overpassed, to the spirit in the supramental will, knowledge and Ananda.

The receptive sensational mind is the nervous mental basis of the affections; it receives mentally the impacts of things and gives to them the responses of mental pleasure and pain which are the starting-point of the duality of emotional liking and disliking. All the heart's emotions have a corresponding nervous-mental accompaniment, and we often find that when the heart is freed of any will to
the dualities, there still survives a root of disturbance of nervous mind, or a memory in physical mind which falls more and more away to a quite physical character, the more it is repelled by the will in the buddhi. It becomes finally a mere suggestion from outside to which the nervous chords of the mind still occasionally respond until a complete purity liberates them into the same luminous universality of delight which the pure heart already possesses. The active dynamic mind of impulse is the lower organ or channel of responsive action; its deformation is a subjection to the suggestions of the impure emotional and sensational mentality and the desire of the prana, to impulses to action dictated by grief, fear, hatred, desire, lust, craving, and the rest of the unquiet brood. Its right form of action is a pure dynamic force of strength, courage, temperamental power, not acting for itself or in obedience to the lower members, but as an impartial channel for the dictates of the pure intelligence and will or the supramental Purusha. When we have got rid of these deformations and cleared the mentality for these truer forms of action, the lower mentality is purified and ready for perfection. But that perfection depends on the possession of a purified and enlightened buddhi; for the buddhi is the chief power in the mental being and the chief mental instrument of the Purusha.
The Eternal Wisdom

BOOK II

IV

THE VICTORY OF THE DIVINE
PURIFICATION.

1. Unto the pure all things are pure, but unto them that are defiled nothing is pure.

2-3. Blessed are the pure in heart.—Blessed is he who keepeth himself pure.—Happy is the man whose senses are purified and utterly under curb.—His purity has brought him many profitable things, and this in the first rank, to know his soul.—Purity is, next to birth, the greatest good that can be given to man.—Step by step, piece by piece, hour by hour, the wise man should purify his soul of all impurity as a silversmith purifies silver.

8. By the practice of benevolence, tenderness, good will and indifference to the objects of happiness and sorrow, virtue and vice the mind arrives at its purification.

9. Whosoever purifies his own nature by holy thoughts, good words and good actions, has the real purity. Right nature is the true purification. In this visible world the true purification is for each man the right nature of his own natural being. And this nature is right in him when he purifies himself by holy thoughts, good words and good actions.

Whosoever recognises at all times his faults of omission and cleanses himself by observing the ways of purity in each one of his actions, shall attain to perfection.

To discern the eternal Reality and to detach oneself from the world are the two means of purification of the human heart.—The mind is a clear and polished mirror and our continual duty is to keep it pure and never allow dust to gather upon its face.—When a mirror is covered with dust, it cannot reflect the image cast upon it, it can only do that when it is without spot. It is so with beings. If their minds are not clear of stain, the Absolute cannot reveal himself in them; but if they free themselves from pollution, then shall he reveal himself within their being.

The light of the sun is the same everywhere where it may fall, but it is the clear surfaces, water and mirror and polished metals, that can give its perfect reflection. Even such is the light of the Divine. It falls equally and impartially on every heart, but only the clean and pure heart can perfectly reflect it.—

The soiled mirror reflects never the sunbeams, and the unclean and impure heart which is subjected to Maya, can never perceive the glory of the Eternal. But the pure in heart sees the Eternal, even as the clear mirror reflects the sun.

A torrent of clarity streams from the mind which is purified in full of all its impurities.

By the purity of the thoughts, of the actions, of holy words one cometh to know Ahura-Mazda.

Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

Now we see through a glass darkly, but then face to face.—Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all pollution of the flesh and spirit.—Be ye clean, ye that bear the vessels of the Lord.—Cleanse your heads, ye sinners, and purify your hearts, ye double-minded.—Say in yourselves, “In the midst of this world of corruption, I would resemble the lotus which remains intangible by the mire in which it is born.”

Thus strive by the faith of love to burn the veils of the demoniac nature over the soul that thou mayst purify thy mind and make it ready to understand.—Let thy mind be pure like gold, firm like a rock, transparent as crystal.

Thou seest after Paradise and thou longest to arrive where thou shalt be free from all sorrow and disunion; appease thy heart and make it white and pure, then art thou even here in Paradise.—Knowest thou not that thou nurturkest in thyself a god? It is a god whom thou usest for thy strength, a god whom thou carriest with thee everywhere, and thou knowest it not at all, O unhappy man. And thinkest thou that I speak of a silver or golden idol outside thee? The god of whom I speak, thou carriest within thee and perceivest not that thou pollutest him by thy impure thoughts and infamous actions.

Purify thyself and thou shalt see God. Transform thy body into a temple, cast from thee evil thoughts and contemplate God with the eye of thy conscious soul.

Renovate thyself daily.

A Rationalistic Critic on Indian Culture

The right judgment of the life-value of Indian philosophy is intimately bound up with a right appreciation of the life-value of Indian religion; for in this culture religion and philosophy are too intimately one to be divided. Indian philosophy is the intellectual theory or intuitive perception of the thought and truth and heart of Indian religion; Indian religion is Indian spiritual philosophy put into experience and action. Whatever in the religious thought and practice of that vast, rich, thousand-sided, infinitely pliable, yet very firmly structured system we call Hinduism, does not in intention—practice too often forgets or falls below intention—come under this description, is either social framework or projection of ritual buttresses, or else it is some excrescence and growth of corruption, such as from time to time overtakes all religious bodies, degradations of its truth and meaning in the vulgar mind, or was contracted in periods of fossilisation, or is extraneous matter gathered in but not successfully assimilated. For the inner principle of Hinduism, the most tolerant and assimilative of systems, is not sharply exclusive like the religious spirit of Christianity or Islam, but, so far as that may be without loss to its own powerful idiosyncracy
and law of being, inclusive: it has continually taken in
from all sides and trusted to the power of assimilation of
its spiritual heart and the white heat of its flaming centre to
turn even the most unpromising material into forms for its
spirit. Before we turn to see what it really is that irritates
the hostile Western critic in Indian religious philosophy,
it is as well then to consider what he has to say about
other sides of this ancient, dateless, but still vigorously
living and growing Hinduism.

Well, he has a great deal to say, and though he does
not say it with the intemperate drunkenness of denuncia-
tion and vomit of false witness, hatred, uncharitableness
and of all things degrading and unspiritual and unclean
which are the mark of a certain type of "Christian litera-
ture" on the subject,—Sir John Woodroffe gives a superla-
tive example of this noxious compound from the pages of
another journalistic authority, Mr. Harold Begbie, "vir-
ile" perhaps if violence is virile, but certainly not sane,
—it is yet a mass of unsparing condemnation, exaggera-
ted where it has any foundation, serenely illogical in what
looks like deliberate misrepresentation. But still we must
try to disengage even from this crude tissue the salient and
typical antipathies that recommend it to the uncritical and
even to some critical minds which share them, for it is
these alone that it is useful to distinguish. And first, we
will note that Mr. Archer does casually admit a philoso-
phical, therefore, one might suppose, a rational element in
Indian religion, though he disparages and dismisses as false
and as positively harmful what he conceives to be the
governing ideas of this religious philosophy. But at the
same time he harps on the total irrationality of Hinduism.

He explains this pervading irrational character by the alle-
gation that the Indian people have always gravitated towards
the form rather than the substance, and towards the letter
rather than the spirit. That kind of gravitation, one would
imagine,—the "always" is, of course, the indispensable
exaggeration habitual to this journalistic type of writing, —is a fairly universal feature of the human mind, not only in religion, but in society, politics, literature, art, every human activity; a cult of the form, forgetfulness of the spirit, a turn towards convention and externalism has been the common drift of the human mind from China to Peru and it does not skip Europe on its way. Nor can Europe which has constantly fought, killed, burned, tortured, imprisoned, persecuted in every way imaginable by human stupidity and cruelty for the sake of dogmas, words, rites and forms of church government and made these things do duty for spirituality, be said to have a record which would entitle it to cast this reproach in the face of eastern religions. But, we are told, this gravitation more afflicts the Indian than any other religion: higher Hinduism can be scarcely said to exist except in certain small reforming sects; current Hinduism, the popular religion consists of the cult of a monstrous folk-lore oppressing and paralysing the imagination,—though here again one would think that if anything an excess rather than any paralysis of the creative religious imagination might be charged against the Indian mentality; animism and magic are its prevailing characteristics; the Indian people has displayed a genius for obfuscating reason and formalising, materialising, degrading religion; if India has possessed great thinkers, she has not extracted from their thoughts a rational and ennobling religion; the devotion of the Spanish or the Russian peasant is rational and enlightened by comparison. Irrationalism, anti-rationalism is the chief substance of all this laboured and overcharged accusation.

The phenomenon that has disgusted and astonished the mind of this critic, is the obstinate survival in India of the old religious spirit and antique religious types still unsubmerged by the flood of modernism. India, he tells us, still clings to what not only the western world, but
China and Japan have for ages outgrown; the religion is a superstition full of performances of piety repulsive to the free enlightened secular mind of the modern man, and its daily practices put it far outside the pale of civilisation,—if it had only confined its practice decorously to church attendance on Sunday, marriage and funeral services and grace before meat, it might have been admitted as human and tolerable! It is the great anachronism of the modern world; it has not been cleansed for thirty centuries; it is paganism, it is a wholly unfiltered paganism, and by its tendency towards pollution rather than purification the place marked out for it is incomparably the lowest in the scale of world religions. An ingenious remedy is proposed. Christianity destroyed Paganism in Europe; therefore, since any immediate or any very rapid triumph of sceptical free-thought would at first too happily abrupt a transition to be quite feasible, we are advised to take up for a time with Christianity, poor irrational thing that it is, dark and deformed though it looks in the ample light of the positivist reason, because Christianity, especially Protestant Christianity, will be at least a good preparatory step towards the noble freedoms of atheism and agnosticism. But if even this little cannot be hoped for, in spite of numerous famine conversions, at any rate Hinduism must somehow or other get itself filtered, and until that hygienic operation has been executed, India must be denied fellowship on equal terms with the civilised nations.

Incidentally, to support this charge of irrationalism and its companion charge of Paganism, we find a third and more damaging count brought against it, an alleged want of all moral worth and ethical substance. There is now an increasing perception, even in Europe, that reason is not the last word of human mind, not quite the one and only sovereign way to truth and certainly not the sole arbiter of religious and spiritual truth. The accusation of paganism too does not settle the question, since plenty of cultivated
minds are well able to see that there were things in the
cient religions lumped together under that inappropriate
ickname, which the world has not been a gainer by losing.
But whatever the actual practice of men,—and in this res-
pect the normal human being is a singular mixture of the
sincere but quite ineffective, the just respectable, would-be
ethical man and the self-deceiving or semi-hypocritical
Pharisee,—all religions raise high the flag of morality and,
whether religious or secular-minded, all but the antino-
mian profess to follow in their lives that standard. This
accusation is therefore about the most prejudicial charge
that can be brought against any religion. But the self-cons-
tituted prosecuting judge whose diatribe we are examining,
brings it without scruple and without measure. He pro-
nounces that Hinduism is not an ennobling or even a
morally helpful religion; if it has talked much of righte-
ousness, it has never claimed moral teaching as one of
its functions,—though a religion that can talk much of
righteousness without performing the function of moral
teaching, sounds rather like a square which can make no
claim to be a quadrilateral; and if the Hindu is com-
paratively free from the grosser Western vices,—as yet, until
he enters "the pale of civilisation,"—it is not because there
is any ethical strain in his character, but because these
vices do not come his way, his social system founded on
the barbarous idea of the Dharma, the ethical and social
law, having perhaps too stupidly neglected to provide him
with the opportunities so richly provided by western civi-
lisation. Yet the whole character of Hinduism, which is
the character of the people, indicates, we are calmly told, a
melancholy proclivity towards whatever is monstrous and
unwholesome! On that highest note of unmeasured den-
unciation we may leave Mr. Archer's dance of disparage-
ment and turn to disengage the temperamental sources of
his criticism.
Two things especially distinguish the normal Euro-
pean mind,—we must leave aside some great souls and some great thinkers or some moments or epochs of abnormal religiosity and look at the dominant strain,—and they are, always, the cult of the inquiring, defining, effective, practical reason and the cult of life. The great high tides of European civilisation, Greek culture, the Roman world before Constantine, the Renascence, the modern age with its two colossal idols, Industrialism and physical Science, have come to the West on the strong ascending urge of these two powers. When they have ebbed, the European mind has entered into much confusion. Christianity failed to spiritualise Europe deeply, whatever it may have done towards humanising it in certain ethical directions, because it ran counter to these two master instincts, denied the reason and put its anathema on the satisfied or strenuous fullness of life. But the great ages of Asia—in India the high Vedic beginning, the grand spiritual stir of the Upanishads, the flood of Buddhism, Vedanta, Sankhya, the Puranic and Tantric religions, the flowering of Vaishnavism and Shaivism in the southern kingdoms—have come in on a surge of spiritual light, a climbing of the religious or the religio-philosophic mind to its own heights, its noblest or its richest realities; it was then that intellect, thought, poetry, the arts, the material life flowered into splendour, while the ebbing of spirituality brought in on the contrary the weakness of these other powers, periods of fossilisation, tracts of decline, even beginnings of decay. This is a clue which we have to hold to, if we would understand the great lines of divergence between the East and the West. Towards the spirit if not to it man must rise or he misses his upward curve of strength; but there are different ways of approach. Europe must, it would seem, go through the life and the reason and find spiritual truth by their means as a crown and a revelation, she cannot at once take the kingdom of heaven by violence, as the saying of Christ
would have men do. The attempt confuses and obscures her reason, is combated by her life instincts and leads to revolt and negation. But Asia*, at any rate India lives naturally by a spiritual influx from above, which brings with it a spiritual evocation of the higher powers of mind and life. The two continents are two sides of the integral orb of humanity and each must move to whatever progress or culmination the spirit in humanity seeks, by the law of its being, its Dharma. A one-sided world would be the poorer for its uniformity. That is a truth which the violent Indian assailant of a materialistic Europe or the contemptuous enemy or cold disparager of Asiatic or Indian culture agree in ignoring. There can be here no real question of barbarism and civilisation,—all masses of men are barbarians labouring to civilise themselves,—but one of the differences necessary to the completeness of the growing orb of human culture.

Meanwhile the divergence gives rise to a constant opposition of outlooks in religion and in most other matters, which brings with it more or less of an incapacity for mutual understanding. The emphasis of the Western mind is on life, the outer life above all, the things that are grasped, visible, tangible, and on the inner life only as an intelligent reflection of the outer world, with the reason for a firm putter of things into shape, an intelligent critic, builder, refiner of the external materials offered by Nature; the present use of living, in this life and for this life, is its whole preoccupation, the present existence of the individual, the continuous physical existence and developing mind and knowledge of humanity. Even of religion the West is apt to demand that it shall subordinate itself to

* Modern Japan may be alleged as an instance to the contrary. Modern Japan has grown in political power and in industry; but what of her inner powers of mind? Are they not waiting for a spiritual renascence to repeat the glories of her great Shinto and Buddhist ages?
this utility. The Greek and the Roman looked on religious cult as a sanction for the life of the "polis" or a force for the just firmness and stability of the State. The Middle Ages when the Christian idea was at its height, were an interregnum, a period during which the Western mind was trying to assimilate in its emotion and intelligence an oriental ideal, though it never succeeded in firmly living it, just as for Asia the present moment is an interregnum dominated by an attempt to assimilate in its intellect and life in spite of a rebellious soul and temperament the western ideal and outlook; but even then the Christian idea marked in its purity by the emphasis of its introspective tendency and an uncompromising other-worldliness had to compromise with this demand of the occidental temperament and in doing that it lost its own real kingdom. And finally the genuine temperament of the West triumphed in an increasing rationalising and secularisation of religion. Religion became more and more a pale and ever thinning shadow pushed aside into a corner of the being and lucky if not entirely exiled, while outside the doors of the vanquished Church marched on their victorious way the triumphant secular pomp of the life and reason.

The tendency to secularism is a necessary consequence of the cult of life and reason. Ancient Europe did not separate religion and life, but that was because it had no need for the separation, since its religion, once it had got rid of the oriental element of the mysteries, was a secular institution which did not look beyond a certain supraphysical sanction and aid to the government of this life, and even then the final tendency was to philosophise and reason away the relics of the original religious spirit, exile such shadow as remained of the brooding wings of a suprarational mystery and get into the clear sunlight of the logical and practical reason. But modern Europe, the more effectually to shake off the obsession of the Chris-
tian idea, which like all oriental religious thought claims to make religion commensurate with life and to spiritualise, against whatever obstacles may be opposed to it by the unregenerate vital nature of the animal man, the whole being, separated religion from the life, from philosophy, art and science, from politics, from the greater part of the action of society; it secularised and rationalised too the ethical being so that it might stand in itself and have no need of any aid from any religious sanction. It left religion an impoverished system of belief and ceremony to which one might or might not subscribe with very little difference to the march of the human mind and life, for its penetrating and colouring power had been reduced to a faint minimum, a superficial pigmentation of dogma, sentiment and emotion.

Even the poor little corner that was left, intellectualism insisted on flooding as much as possible with the light of reason; it has been bent on reducing not only the infrarational but equally the suprarational refuges of the religious spirit. The old pagan polytheistic symbolism which had clothed the ancient idea of a divine presence and greater supraphysical life and being in all Nature and in every particle of life and matter and in all animal being and in all the mental action of man,—an idea which to the secularist reason is only an intellectualised animism,—had been swept aside. The Divinity had left the earth and lived far aloof and remote in other worlds, in a celestial heaven of saints and immortal spirits. But why any other worlds? We will admit, said the progressing intellect, only this material world to which our reason and senses bear witness and, for the rest, a vague idea of spiritual being without a habitation to satisfy the chilled remnants of the old spiritual sense or illusion,—Theism or else a rationalised Christianity. Or why that even? A Reason or Power, called God for want of a better name, represented by the moral and physical Law in the material universe is surely suffici-
ent for a rational mind; so we get to Deism. Or why then any God at all? The reason and the senses give no witness to God, can make of Him at most a plausible hypothesis; but there is no need of an unsubstantial hypothesis, Nature is enough and the sole thing of which we have knowledge. Thus by a quite inevitable process we have got to the atheistic or agnostic cult of secularism, and there reason and life may henceforward take their foundation and work well satisfied,—if only that inconvenient veiled ambiguous infinite Something behind will leave them alone for the future!

A temperament, an outlook of this kind must necessarily be impatient of any such thing as an earnest straining after the suprarational and the infinite, though it may tolerate some moderate play of these fine hallucinations as an innocent indulgence of the speculative mind or the artistic imagination. Asceticism, other-wordliness are abhorrent to its temperament and fatal to its outlook; life is a thing to be possessed and enjoyed rationally or forcefully,—this earthly life, the one thing we know and are concerned with; at most a moderate intellectual and ethical asceticism is permissible, the simple life, plain living and high thinking; but the ecstatic spiritual asceticism is an offence to the reason. Pessimism of the vitalistic kind may be allowed, for it admits that life though an evil has to be lived and does not cut at the roots of the rational outlook; but the obvious rational standpoint is to take life as it is and make the most of it, practically for the best ordering of its mixed good and evil, or ideally with some hope of a rational perfection. If spirituality is to have any meaning, then, it can only signify the aim at a lofty intelligence, will, beauty, good, morality in high labour to make the best of this life that is, but not vainly looking beyond to some unhuman, unattainable, infinite or absolute satisfaction. If religion is to survive, let its function be to serve this kind of spiritual aim,
to govern conduct, to give beauty and purity to our living, but let it keep within the bounds of the intelligence and the practical reason; let it minister to a sane and virile spirituality. This description,—it being understood that the main strands are isolated in it and departures ignored, although in all human nature there must be departures often of an extreme kind, since in each man there are the possibilities of all humanity,—would not, I think, be an unfair or exaggerated description of the persistent ground and characteristic turn of the western temperament and of its outlook as it stands self-fulfilled before it proceeds to that deflection or that self-exceeding to which man is inevitably moved when he reaches the acme of his normal nature. For he must either grow or stagnate and cease and disintegrate; for him until he has found all himself, there is no static abiding.

But when this western mind is confronted with the still surviving force of Indian religion, thought, culture, it finds that here all its standards are denied or exceeded, all that it has rejected is still held in honour. Here is a philosophy which founds itself on the immediate reality of the Infinite, on the pressing claim of the Absolute, not as a thing to speculate about, but as a real presence and a constant Power which demands the soul of man. Here is a mentality which sees God at the beginning, God in the middle, God at the end, God everywhere, God in Nature and man and animal and inanimate thing,—mere metaphysicised animism according to official reports, and we all know that official reports cannot err or lie,—and worst of all, all this not as a permissible poetical play of the imagination not to be taken too seriously by life, but as a thing to be lived, realised, put at the back even of outward action, with whole disciplines systematised for the purpose which men still practise and whole lives given up to this pursuit of the Infinite, the Absolute, the supreme Person, the universal Godhead. And to pursue
this immaterial aim men are still content to abandon
the outward life and society and all that has to a rational
mind a substantial and ascertainable value. Here is a
country which is still heavily coloured with the ochre tint
of the garb of the Sannyasin, where the Beyond is still
preached as a truth and men have a living belief in other
worlds and reincarnation and a whole army of antique
ideas whose truth is quite unverifiable by the instruments
of physical Science, and where the experiences of Yoga are
held to be as true or more true than the experiments of
the laboratory. A thinking of things evidently unthink-
able since the rational western mind has ceased to think
about them; an attempt to know things evidently un-
knowable since that mind has made no attempt to know
them! And there is the attempt even to make this thing
the highest flight of life itself, its very goal, and even a
governing force, a shaping power in art and culture and
conduct, in things which the rational mind tells us they
ought logically not to touch, since life and art and cul-
ture and conduct can only be founded on the intellectual
reason and the practical environment and the truths and
suggestions of physical Nature. There is thus a very ap-
parent gulf between the two mentalities which looks unbrid-
geable. Or rather, though the Indian mind can under-
stand well enough, even when it does not share, the
positivist type of occidental mentality, it is itself to the
latter a thing abnormal and unintelligible.

When we come to the effects of the Indian religio-
philosophical standpoint on life, the occidental critic finds
that as his reason is offended by this suprarational, to him
antirational, urge, so too all the strongest instincts of his
temperament are violently shocked by their own direct con-
trasts and opposites. Life, the thing on which he puts an
entire and unquestioning value, is here questioned, seems
to him to be belittled and discouraged, and to a certain
extent is so by the extremest consequences of the Indian
outlook or inlook. He finds asceticism rampant, at the head of things, casting its shade on the vital instincts and calling man to exceed the life of the body and even the life of the mental will and intelligence. He himself lays an enormous stress upon force of personality, the individual will, the apparent man; he finds here an opposing stress in a growth towards impersonality, the merging of the individual in the universal, a growing or breaking beyond the apparent man. The flowering of the mental and vital ego or at most its subservience to the larger ego of the community is his cultural ideal; here this ego is regarded as the chief obstacle to soul perfection and its place is proposed to be taken not by the concrete communal ego, but by something inward, abstract, transcendental, some supramental, supraphysical Reality. His own type is that of the rajasic, kinetic, pragmatic, active man, and thought for him turns always to action and has little value except for the sake of action or as a satisfaction of mental activity; here the type proposed for admiration is the self-possessing sattvic man for whom calm thought, knowledge and the inner life are the things of the greatest importance and action is chiefly of consequence for its effects on the growth of the inner being. And there is too, very prominent, the quietism which looks forward to the cessation or Nirvana of all thought and action in a perpetual peace. It is not surprising that he should look upon these contrasts with much dissatisfaction, repugnance, a recoil of antipathy.

But at any rate there are in these things something noble and lofty, however remote they may seem to his understanding. He can disparage them as false, antirational, depressing, but not denounce them as evil and ignoble, except by such misrepresentations as some of those we have noted in Mr. Archer’s more irresponsible structures. They may be signs of an antique or an antiquated, but are certainly not the fruits of a barbaric culture. But when he surveys the forms of the religion which they enligh-
ten and animate, it does look to him as if here there was a pure barbarism. For here is a confluence of everything of which he has so long been steadily emptying religion in his own culture and been well content to call that emptiness reformation. He sees a gigantic, to him a monstrous polytheism, a superabundance of what to his intelligence seems rank superstition. The Hindu is popularly credited with a belief in thirty crores and more of gods, as many inhabitants for all the many heavens as men for this single earthly peninsula India, and has no objection to adding, if need be, to this mighty multitude. Here are temples, images, a priesthood, a mass of unintelligible rites and ceremonies, the daily repetition of Sanskrit mantras and prayers, some of them of a prehistoric creation, a belief in all kinds of supraphysical beings and forces, saints, gurus, holy days, vows, offerings, sacrifice, a constant reference of life to powers and influences of which there can be no physical evidence instead of a rational scientific dependence on the material laws which alone govern the existence of mortal beings. It is to him an unintelligible chaos; it is animism; it is a monstrous folk-lore. The meaning which Indian thought puts upon these things, their spiritual sense, escapes him altogether or it leaves him incredulous or else strikes his mind as a subtly futile useless symbolism. And not only is the cult and belief of this antiquated and mediaeval kind, but it is not kept in its proper place. Instead of putting religion into an unobtrusive and ineffective corner, the Indian mind has the pretension, the preposterous pretension which rational man has outgrown, of filling the whole of life with the power of religion.

It is difficult to convince the too positive average European intelligence which has "outgrown" the religious mentality or is only struggling back towards it after a not yet liquidated bankruptcy of rationalistic materialism, to appreciate the meaning of these Indian religious
forms. They are, it has been well phrased, rhythms of its 
spirit, but one who misses the spirit, must necessarily miss 
too the connection of the spirit and the rhythm. The gods 
of this worship are, as every Indian knows, names, forms, 
personalities, aspects of the one Divinity; each Godhead 
is a form or derivation or dependent power of the supre-
me Trinity, each Goddess a form of the universal Shak-
tti. But to the logical European mind monotheism, poly-
theism, pantheism are irreconcilable warring dogmas; to 
believe in a one Divine Being superior to cosmos who is 
all cosmos and who lives in many forms of godhead, is 
to it a hotch-potch, mush, confusion of ideas; for synthesis 
is not the forte of this analytic and logical mind. The image 
to the Hindu is a physical symbol of the supraphysical 
and a basis for the meeting between the embodied mind 
and sense of man and the supraphysical power or being 
he worships; but the average European mind has small 
faith in disembodied entities and, if they exist, it would 
put them away into a category apart, a separate existence, 
another world; such a nexus between the physical and 
supraphysical is to its view a meaningless subtlety. The 
rites, ceremonies, system of cult and worship can only 
be understood if it is realised that Hinduism is in the 
first place a non-dogmatic inclusive religion,—it would 
have taken even Islam and Christianity into itself, if they 
had tolerated the process,—and, secondly, that religion, 
if it is to be a reality for the mass of men, must address 
itself to the whole of our being, and not only to the supra-
 rational and the rational parts, but to all the others, the 
imagination, the emotions, the aesthetic sense, even the 
very instincts of our half subconscious being. It must lead 
man to the suprarational, the spiritual truth, it must take 
the aid of the reason, but it cannot afford to neglect to 
call Godwards the rest of our complex mentality. And it 
must take each man where he stands, spiritualise him 
through what he can feel and not at once force on him
something which he cannot yet grasp as true and living. That is the sense and aim of all those parts of Hinduism which are specially stigmatised as irrational or antirational by the positivist reason. But this plain necessity the European mind has failed to understand. It insists on "purifying" religion—by the reason and not by the spirit, on reforming it—by the reason and not by the spirit. We know what were the results of this kind of purification and reformation in Europe; the infallible outcome of that doctoring has been first to impoverish and then slowly to kill religion.

The accusation of a want of ethical content, monstrous and false as it is, can also perhaps be explained by a characteristic misunderstanding. In fact, Hindu thought and literature in general might almost be accused of a tyrannously pervading ethical obsession. The idea of the Dharma is, next to the idea of the Infinite, its major chord. There is no ethical idea which it has not entertained, stressed, put in its most ideal and imperative form, enforced by teaching, injunction, parable, artistic creation, formative examples,—truth, honour, loyalty, fidelity, courage, chastity, love, long-suffering, harmlessness, forgiveness, compassion, benevolence, beneficence; these are its common themes, in its view the very stuff of a right human life, the essence of the dharma of man. Neither Buddhism, nor Jainism, nor Hinduism is at all inferior in ethical teaching and practice to any other religion or ethical system. For the practice of these virtues in older times there is abundant internal and foreign evidence; and a considerable stamp of them still remains in spite of much degeneracy even though some of those manlier virtues have been depressed which only flourish healthily on the soil of freedom. The legend to the contrary began, I think, in the minds of scholars with a Christian bias who were misled by the stress which Indian philosophy lays on knowledge rather than action as the means of salvation; they forgot or did
not see that ethical perfection is presupposed as the first step towards the divine knowledge which cannot come to the impure mind and that knowledge of the truth means for Indian thought a life according to the truth and does not consist in mere intellectual assent or recognition. But, besides, morality is for the western mind mostly a thing of outward conduct; for the Indian mind it is that, but only as a means and sign for a soul-state. It does not, except incidentally, string together a number of commandments for observance, a table of moral laws, but enjoins the ethical purity of the mind with action as its outward index. It says strongly enough, Thou shouldst not kill, but it insists more firmly on the injunction, “Thou shalt not hate, thou shalt not yield to anger, malice, or greed” which are the roots of killing. Hinduism besides admits relative standards. Non-injuring is the very highest, *ahinsā paramo dharman*, but it does not lay it as a physical rule on the warrior, but insistently demands from him mercy, chivalry, respect for the weak, the unarmed, the vanquished, the prisoner, the wounded, the fugitive, and so escapes the unpracticality of a too absolutist rule for all life. A misunderstanding of this inwardness and this wise relativity is perhaps responsible for much misrepresentation. The western ethicist likes to have a high standard as a counsel of perfection which is honoured too often more by the breach than by the observance; Indian ethics puts an equally high, often higher standard, but admits stages of progress and tries to moralise as much as possible those who are not yet capable of the highest ethical being.

It is evident now whence these attacks on the Indian religio-philosophical culture take their rise. But we have still to see whether the farther charge by which they justify themselves, can itself at all be justified, namely, that Indian culture depresses life and the will and gives no great or vigorous power, no high incentive, no fortifying and ennobling motive for a human living.
The Future Poetry

THE POETS OF THE DAWN

(3)

If Wordsworth and Byron failed by an excess of the alloy of untransmuted intellect in their work, two other poets of the time, Blake and Coleridge, miss the highest greatness they might otherwise have attained by an opposite defect, by want of the gravity and enduring substance which force of thought gives to the poetical inspiration. They are, Coleridge in his scanty best work, Blake almost always, strong in sight, but are unable to command the weight and power in the utterance which arises from the thinking mind, when it is illumined and able to lay hold on and express the reality behind the idea. They have the faculty of revelatory sense in a high degree, but little of the revelatory thought which should go with it; or at least though they can suggest this sometimes with the intense force which comes from spiritual feeling, they cannot command it and constantly give it greatness and distinctness of body. And their sight is only of the middle kind; it is not the highest things they see, but only those of a borderland or middle region. Their poetry has a strange and unique quality and charm, but it stops short of something which would have made it supreme. They are poets of the supernatural and of such spiritual truth as may be shadowed by it or penetrate through it,
but not of the greatest truths of the spirit. And this
supernature remains in them a thing seen indeed and
objectively real, but abnormal; but it is only when super-
nature becomes normal to the inner experience that it
can be turned into material of the very greatest poetry.

Coleridge more than any of his great contemporar-
ies missed his poetic crown; he has only found and left
to us three or four scattered jewels of a strange and
singular beauty. The rest of his work is a failure. There
is a disparateness in his gifts, an inconsequence and
incoherence which prevented him from bringing them

together, aiding one with the other and producing great
work rich in all the elements of his genius. Intellectuality
he had in abundance, a wide, rich and subtle intellect, but
he squandered rather than used it in discursive metaphysics
and criticism and was most at home when pouring it out
in the spontaneity of conversation or rather monologue,
an outlet in which the labour of giving it the firmness
of an enduring form could be avoided. The poet in him
never took into himself the thinker. The consequence is
that very much the greater part of his poetry, though his
whole production is small enough in bulk, is unconvinc-
ing in the extreme. It has at best a certain eloquence or
a turn of phrase and image which has some intellectual
finish but not either force or magic, or a fluidity of move-
ment which fails to hold the ear. But there are three
poems of his which are unique in English poetry, written
in moments when the too active intellect was in abeyance,
an occult eye of dream and vision opened to supraphysical
worlds and by a singular felicity the other senses harmo-
nised, the speech caught strange subtleties and coloured
lucidities of speech and the ear the melodies of other
realms. It is indeed only just over the mystic border that
his sight penetrates and to its most inferior forms, and he
does not enter into these worlds as did Blake, but catches
only their light and influence upon the earth life; but it is
caught with a truth and intensity which makes magical
the scenes and movements of the earth life and transforms
light of physical nature into light of supernature. This is
to say that for the first time, except for rare intimations,
the middle worlds and their beings have been seen and
described with something of reality and no longer in the
crude colours of vulgar tradition or in the forms of myth.
The Celtic genius of second sight has began to make its
way into poetry. It is by these poems that he lives, though
he has also two or three others of a more human charm
and grace; but here Coleridge shows within narrow limits
a superlative power and brings in a new element and
opens a new field in the realms of poetic vision.

Blake lives ordinarily far up in this middle world of
which Coleridge only catches some glimpses or at most
stands occasionally just over its border. His seeing teems
with its images, he hears around him the echoes of its
sounds and voices. He is not only a seer, but almost an in-
habitant of other planes and other worlds; or at least
thus second subtle sight is his normal sight. But his power
of expression is not equal to his power of vision. When
he would catch the very words and express the very im-
ges of these middle realms, he speaks very often things
which are unintelligible symbols to any other intelligence
than his own. He is unable to translate his experience to
our comprehension. It is only when he casts into some
echo of the language of the luminous children of those
shores the songs of their childhood and their innocence,
that he becomes limpid to us and sheds upon our earth
some clear charm, felicity, wonder of a half divine other-
where. Here again we have something unique, a voice of
things which had not been heard before nor has it been
heard since; for the Celtic poets who sometimes gives us
something that is in its source akin, bring a ripe reflective
knowledge and a colour of intellectuality into their speech
and vision, but Blake seeks to put away from him as much
as possible the intellectual mind, to see only and sing. By this effort and his singularity and absorption he stands apart solitary and remote and produces only a half effect because he has cut away the link which would help us to reach him and share his illumination.

A greater poet by nature than almost any of these, Shelley was alone of them all very nearly fitted to be a sovereign voice of the new spiritual force that was at the moment attempting to break into poetry and possess there its kingdom. He has on the one hand, one feels, been a native of the heights to which he aspires and the memory of them, not indeed quite distinct, but still environing his imagination with its luminous ethereality, is yet with him. If the idea of a being not of our soil fallen into the material life and still remembering his skies can be admitted as an actual fact of human birth, then Shelley was certainly a living example of one of these luminous spirits half obscured by earth; the very stumbling of his life came from the difficulty of such a nature moving in the alien terrestrial environment in which he is not at home nor capable of accepting its muddy vesture and iron chain, attempting impatiently to realise there the law of his own being in spite of the obstruction of the physical clay.

This mind and nature cannot live at ease in their dusk day and time, but escape to dwell prophetically in a future heaven and earth in which the lower life shall have accepted the law of his own celestial worlds. As a poet his intellect is suffused and his imagination is bathed with their light; they are steeped in the brilliances of a communion with a higher law, another order of existences, another meaning behind Nature and terrestrial things. But in addition he possesses the intellectual equipment possible in his age and can speak with a subtle beauty and perfect melody the tongue of the poetic intelligence. He is a seer of spiritual realities, much more radiantly near to them than Wordsworth, has, what Coleridge had not, a poetic grasp
of metaphysical truths, can see the forms and hear the voices of higher elemental spirits and natural godheads than those seen and heard by Blake, while he has a knowledge too of some fields of the same middle realm, is the singer of a greater and deeper liberty and a purer and nobler revolt than Byron, has the constant feeling of a high spiritual and intellectual beauty, not sensuous in the manner of Keats, but with a hold on the subtler beauty of sensible things which gives us not their glow of vital warmth and close material texture, but their light and life and the rarer atmosphere that environs them on some meeting line between spirit and body. He is at once seer, poet, thinker, prophet, artist. In his own day and after the strangeness of his genius made him unintelligible to the rather gross and mundane intellectual mind of the nineteenth century; those who admired him most, were seized only by the externalities of his work, its music, delicacy, diffusely lavish imaginative opulence, enthusiasm, but missed its inner significance. Now that we are growing more into the shape of his ideas and the forms of his seeing, we can get nearer to the hidden heart of his poetry. Still high pinnacled as is his flight, great as is his work and his name, there is in him too a limitation which prevents the perfect self-expression that we find only in the few supreme poets.

This was due to the conditions under which the evolution of his poetry had to take place and to the early death which found him at the time when it was rounding towards the full orb of its maturity. His earlier poetry shows him striving with the difficulty of the too intellectual manner of speech from which these poets of supra-intellectual truth had to take their departure. Shelley uses language throughout as a poet; he was incapable of falling into the too hard and outward manner of Byron or yielding to the turn towards mere intellectuality which always beset Wordsworth. The grain of his mind was
too saturated with the hues of poetic vision, he had too splendid and opulent an imagination, too great a gift of flowing and yet uplifted and inspired speech for such descents, and even in his earlier immature poetry, _Queen Mab, Alastor, the Revolt of Islam_, these powers are there and sustain him, but still the first form of his diction is a high, sometimes a magnificent poetic eloquence, which sometimes enforces the effect of what he has to say, but more often loses it in a flood of diffuse and overabundant expression. It is not yet the native language of his spirit. As his power develops, the eloquence remains, but is subdued to the growing splendour of his vision and its hints and images, but the thought seems almost to disappear from the concrete grasp of the intelligence into a wonder of light and a music of marvellous sound. The _Prometheus and Epipsychidion_ show this turn of his genius at its height; they are two of the three greatest things he has left to us on the larger scale. Here he does come near to something like the natural speech of his strange, beautiful and ethereal spirit; but the one thing that is wanting is a more ascetic force of _tapasya_ economising and compressing its powers to bring in a new full and seizing expression of the thought element in his poetry, not merely opulent and eloquent or bright with the rainbow hues of imagination, but sovereign in poetic perfection and mastery. Towards this need his later style is turning, but except once in _Adonais_ he does not seize on the right subject matter for his genius. Only in the lyric of which he has always the secret,—for of all English poets he has perhaps the most natural, spontaneous, sweet and unfailing gift of melody, and his emotion and lyrical cry are at once of the most delicate and the most intense,—is he frequently and constantly equal alike in his thought, feeling, imagery, music. But it is not often that he uses the pure lyrical form for his greatest sight, for what would now be called his "message." When he turns
to that, he attempts always a larger and more expansive form. The greatness of *Prometheus Unbound* which remains, when all is said, his supreme effort and one of the masterpieces of poetry, arises from the combination of this larger endeavour and profounder substance with the constant use of the lyrical mould in which he most excelled, because it agreed with the most intimate turn of his temperament and subtly exalted spirit.

The spiritual truth which had possession of Shelley's mind was higher than anything opened to the vision of any of his contemporaries, and its power and reality which was the essence of his inspiration can only be grasped, when it is known and lived, by a changed and future humanity. Light, Love, Liberty are the three godheads in whose presence his pure and radiant spirit lived; but a celestial light, a celestial love, a celestial liberty. To bring them down to earth without their losing their celestial lustre and hue is his passionate endeavour, but his wings constantly buoy him upward and cannot beat strongly in an earthlier atmosphere. The effort and the unconquered difficulty are the cause of the ethereality, the want of firm earthly reality that some complain of in his poetry. There is an air of luminous mist surrounding his intellectual presentation of his meaning which shows the truths he sees as things to which the mortal eye cannot easily pierce or the life and temperament of earth rise to realise and live; yet to bring about the union of the mortal and the immortal, the terrestrial and the celestial is always his passion. He is himself too much at war with his age to ignore its contradictions and pass onward to the reconciliation. He has to deny God in order to affirm the Divine, and his denial brings in a note too high, discordant and shrill. He has not the symbols or the thought-forms through which he can make the spirit of light, love and freedom intimate and near to men; he has, as in the *Prometheus*, to go for them to his imagination or to some
remote luminous experience of ideal worlds and to combine these beautiful ideal images, too delicately profound in their significance, too veiled in robe upon robe of light to be distinct in limb and form, with traditional names and symbols which are converted into this other sense and fail to be perfect links because by the conversion they cease to be familiar to the mind. To bring his difficult significance home he lavishes inexhaustibly image on radiant image, line on dazzling beauty of line, the sense floats in a storm of coruscations and dissolving star-showers; the more we look and accustom our eyes to this new kind of light, the more loveliness and light we see, but there is not that immediate seizing and taking captive of the whole intelligence which is the sign of an assured and sufficient utterance.

He is in revolt too against the law of earth, in arms against its dominations and powers, and would substitute for it by some immediate and magical change the law of heaven; but so he fails to make the needed transition and reconciliation and his image of the thing to be remains too ideal, too fine and abstract in spite of the beauty of the poetical forms he gives it as its raiment or atmosphere. Heaven cannot descend to take possession of the gross, brute and violent earth he sees around him, therefore he carries up the delivered earth into a far and ideal heaven. Something of the same excess of another light than ours surrounds and veils his intercourse with the spirit in Nature. He sees her earthly forms in a peculiar radiance and light and through them the forms and spirits of his ideal world. He has not Wordsworth's distinctness and intimate spiritual communion with Nature as she is on earth; the genii of the worlds of dream and sleep cluster too thickly round all that his waking eye seizes. He tries to let them in through the force of crowding images, brilliant tossings aside of the lucent curtain, tiraskaranî, which veils them from us: but they remain half-hidden in
their means of revelation. The earth-nature is seen in the light of another nature more than in its own, and that too is only half visible in the mixed luminosity, "burning though the vest that hides it." Tradition governs very largely his choice of rhythms, but wonderfully melodious as is his use or conversion of them to the mould of his spirit, one feels that he would have done better to seek more often for self-formed movements. Shelley is the bright archangel of this dawn and he becomes greater to us as the light he foresaw and lived in returns and grows, but he sings half concealed in the too dense halo of his own ethereal beauty.

As with Wordsworth and Byron, so too we find Shelley and Keats standing side by side, but with a certain antinomy. They are perhaps the two most purely poetic minds that have used the English tongue; but one sings from the skies earthwards, the other looks from earth towards Olympus. Keats is the first entire artist in word and rhythm in English poetry,—not grandiose, classical and derived like Milton, but direct and original in his artistry, he begins a new era. His astonishing early performance leaves us wondering what might have been the masterpieces of his prime, of which even Hyperion and the Odes are only the unfulfilled promise. His death in the beginning of his powers is the greatest loss ever suffered by human achievement in this field. Alone of all the chief poets of his time he is in possession of a perfect or almost perfected instrument of his native temperament and genius, but he had not yet found the thing he had to say, not yet seen what he was striving to see. All the other high things that interested his great equals, had for him no interest; one godhead only he worshipped, the image of divine Beauty, and through this alone he wished to see Truth and by her to achieve spiritual delight and not so much freedom as completeness. And he saw her in three of her four forms, sensuous beauty, imaginative beauty, intellec-
tual and ideal beauty. But it is the first only which he had entirely expressed when his thread was cut short in its beginning; the second he had carried far, but it was not yet full-orbed; towards the third and highest he was only striving, "to philosophise he dared not yet", but it was from the first the real sense and goal of his genius.

On life he had like the others—Byron alone excepted—no hold; such work as Lamia, Isabella, the Eve of St. Agnes, in which he followed the romantic tendency of the time, was not his own deeper self-expression; they are wonderful richly woven robes of sound and word and image curiously worked and brocaded, but they clothe nothing. The Odes, where fulfilment of imaginative beauty rises out of a higher sensuous seeking and satisfaction to an admirable sweetness, fullness, largeness and opulence and admits intimations of the ideal goddess, are almost all of them among the scanty number of the chief masterpieces in this high and deliberate lyrical form. But the real soul of Keats, his inner genius, the thing he was striving to bring out of himself is not to be altogether found even here; it lay in that attempt which, first failing in Endymion, was again resumed in Hyperion. It was the discovery of the divine Idea, Power and living norm of Beauty which by its breath of delight has created the universe, supports it and moves towards a greater perfection, inspires the harmonies of inward sight and outward form, yearns and strives towards the fullness of its own self-discovery by love and delight. Not yet in possession of his idea, he tries to find and to figure it in Endymion by sensuous images of a rich and dim moonlit dream with a sort of allegory or weft of symbols behind the words and thoughts, but his hand is still inexpert and fails in the execution. In Hyperion the idea is clearer and in bolder relief, but it is misconceived under a too intellectual, external and conventionally epic Miltonic influence, and in his second version he turns not quite happily to a renewal
of the form of his first attempt. He has found a clue in thought and imagination, but not quite its realisation in the spiritual idea, has already its imaginative, sensuous, something of its intellectual suggestion, but not yet what the spirit in him is trying to reveal, its mystically intellectual, mystically sensuous, mystically imaginative vision, form and word. The intimation of it in his work, his growing endeavour to find it and the unfulfilled promise of its discovery and unique fullness of expression are the innermost Keats and by it he belongs in spirit to these prophetic, but half-foiled singers of the dawn. He lives more than any other poet in the very temple of Beauty, traverses its sculptured and frescoed courts with a mind hued and shaped to her forms and colours and prepares, but is never permitted, to enter the innermost sanctuary. The time had not yet come when these spiritual significances could be more than hinted. Therefore Keats and Shelley were taken before their powers could fully expand, Byron led far out of the path, Blake obscured in his own remoteness, Coleridge and Wordsworth drawn away to lose the poet and seer in the mere intellectual mind. All wandered round their centre of inspiration, missed something needed and stopped or were stopped short. Another age had to arrive which worshipped other and lesser godheads.
The Significance of Rebirth

The one question which through all its complexities
is the sum of philosophy and to which all human enquiry
comes round in the end, is the problem of ourselves,—why
we are here and what we are, and what is behind and
before and around us, and what we are to do with our-
selves, our inner significances and our outer environment.
In the idea of evolutionary rebirth, if we can once find it to
be a truth and recognize its antecedents and consequences,
we have a very sufficient clue for an answer to all these
connected sides of the one perpetual question. A spiritual
evolution of which our universe is the scene and earth its
ground and stage, though its plan is still kept back above
from our yet limited knowledge,—this way of seeing exist-
tence is a luminous key which we can fit into many doors
of obscurity. But we have to look at it in the right focus,
to get its true proportions and, especially, to see it in its
spiritual significance more than in its mechanical process.
The failure to do that rightly will involve us in much phi-
losophical finessing, drive on this side or the other to ex-
aggerated negations and leave our statement of it, however
perfect may be its logic, yet unsatisfying and unconvinc-
ing to the total intelligence and the complex soul of hu-
manity.

The bare idea of repeated births as the process of our
soul existence does not carry us much farther than the
THE SIGNIFICANCE OF REBIRTH

simple material reality of this single life in the body, that first fact of our conscious sensation and memory which is the occasion of all our speculations. Behind our present starting-point and preceding this one lappet of our race in the fields of being rebirth reminds us indeed of a past, of pregnant anterior courses, a soul-existence in many previous bodies which have immediately created what we now are. But to what use or advantage if there is no progressive significance in our preexistence and our persevering continuity? In front of us it rolls far back from our vision the obstruction of the near blank wall of death; our journeying upon earth becomes less of a long or brief unretrogradable road ending abruptly and perplexingly in a cul-de-sac; our physical dissolution is robbed of the cruellest poison of its sting. For the burden of death to man the thinking, willing, feeling creature is not the loss of this poor case or chariot of body, but it is the blind psychical finality death suggests, the stupid material end of our will and thought and aspiration and endeavour, the brute breaking off of the heart's kind and sweet relations and affections, the futile convicting discontinuity of that marvellous and all-supporting soul-sense which gives us our radiant glimpses of the glory and delight of existence,—that is the discord and harsh in consequence against which the thinking living creature revolts as incredible and inadmissible. The fiery straining to immortality of our life, mind, psyche, which can assent to cessation only by turning in enmity upon their own flame of nature, and the denial of it which the dull acquiescence of a body consenting inertly to death as to life brings in on us, is the whole painful irreconcilable contradiction of our double nature. Rebirth takes the difficulty and solves it in the sense of a soul continuity with a beat of physical repetition. Like other non-materialistic solutions it gives the right to the soul's suggestion as against the body's and sanctions the demand for survival, but unlike some others it justifies the bodily
life by its utility to the soul's continued self-experience; our too swift act in the body ceases to be an isolated accident or an abrupt interlude, it gets the justification of a fulfilling future as well as a creating past for its otherwise haphazard actions and relations. But simple persistence, mechanical continuity is not enough; that is not all our psychical being signifies, not the whole luminous meaning of survival and continuity; without ascension, without expansion, without some growing up straight into light in the strength of our spirit our higher members toil here uncompleted, our birth in matter is not justified by any adequate meaning. We are very little better off than if death remained our ending; for our life in the end becomes then an indefinitely continued and renewed and temporarily consequent in place of an inconsequent, abruptly ended and soon convicted futility.

By rebirth, too, this world around us, our environment, its suggestions, its opportunities are no longer left as the field of an ephemeral physical flowering or as a Life which cares very little for and means very little to the individual, though it may offer much perhaps during its uncertain longer time to the species. The world grows to us a field of soul-experience, a system of soul recurrences, a means of self-effectuation, perhaps a crystallising of the conscious being’s effective self-reflections. But to what end if our recurrence is only a repetition or a hesitating fluctuation within a few set types with a very limited, always uncompleted circle of accomplishment? For that is what it comes to, if there is no upward outlet, no infinite progression or no escape or enlarging into the soul’s infinities. Rebirth tells us that what we are is a soul performing constantly the miracle of self-embodiment; but why this embodiment, what this soul has to do here with itself and what use it is to make of this world which is given to it for its grandiose scene, its difficult, plastic material and its besieging battery of multiform stimulus and suggestions, is hardly
at all clearer than before. But the perception of rebirth as an occasion and means for a spiritual evolution fills in every hiatus. It makes life a significant ascension and not a mechanical recurrence; it opens to us the divine vistas of a growing soul; it makes the worlds a nexus of spiritual self-expansion; it sets us seeking, and with a sure promise to all of a great finding now or hereafter, for the self-knowledge of our spirit and the self-fulfilment of a wise and divine intention in our existence.

The oppressing sense of a circle of mechanical recurrence and the passionate seeking for an outlet of absolute escape haunted the earlier statements of the truth of rebirth and have left upon them in spite of the depths they fathomed a certain stamp of unsatisfactory inadequacy,—not illogical, for they are logical enough, once their premisses are admitted, but unsatisfying, because they do not justify to us our being. For, missing the divine utility of the cosmic workings, they fail to explain to us with a sufficiently large, patient, steadfast wholeness God and ourselves and existence, negate too much, miss the positive sense of our strain and leave sounding an immense note of spiritual futility and cosmic discord. No statement of the sense of our being or our non-being has laid a more insistent stress on rebirth than did the Buddhistic; but it affirms strongly only the more strongly to negate. It views the recurrence of birth as a prolonged mechanical chain; it sees, with a sense of suffering and distaste, the eternal revolving of an immense cosmic wheel of energy with no divine sense in its revolutions, its beginning an affirmation of ignorant desire, its end a nullifying bliss of escape. The wheel turns uselessly for ever disturbing the peace of Non-being and creating souls whose one difficult chance and whole ideal business is to cease. That conception of being is only an extension from our first matter-governed sense of the universe, of our creation in it and of our decisive cessation. It takes up at every point our first obvious view of the bodily life and restates all its circumstances in the terms of a more psychical and spiritual idea of our existence.

What we see in the material universe is a stupendous system of mechanical recurrences. A huge mechanical recurrence rules that which is long-enduring and vast; a similar but trailer mechanical recurrence sways all that is
ephemeral and small. The suns leap up into being, flame wheeling in space, squander force by motion and fade and are extinct, again perhaps to blaze into being and repeat their course, or else other suns take their place and fulfil their round. The seasons of Time repeat their unending and unchanging cycle. Always the tree of life puts forth its various flowers and sheds them and breaks into the same flowers in their recurring season. The body of man is born and grows and decays and perishes, but it gives birth to other bodies which maintain the same futile cycle. What baffles the intelligence in all this intent and persistent process is that it seems to have in it no soul of meaning, no significance except the simple fact of causeless and purposeless existence dogged or relieved by the annulling or the compensating fact of individual cessation. And this is because we perceive the mechanism, but do not see the Power that uses the mechanism and the intention in its use. But the moment we know that there is a conscious Spirit self-wise and infinite brooding upon the universe and a secret slowly self-finding soul in things, we get to the necessity of an idea in its consciousness, a thing conceived, willed, set in motion and securely to be done, progressively to be fulfilled by these great deliberate workings.

But the Buddhistic statement admits no self, spirit or eternal Being in its rigorously mechanical economy of existence. It takes only the phenomenon of a constant becoming and elevates that from the physical to the psychological level. As there is evident to our physical mind an Energy, action, motion, capable of creating by its material forces the forms and powers of the material universe, so there is for the Buddhistic vision of things an Energy, action, Karma, creating by its psychic powers of idea and association this embodied soul life with its continuity of recurrences. As the body is a dissoluble construction, a composite and combination, so the soul too is a dissoluble construction and combination; the soul life like the physical life sustains itself by a continuous flux and repetition of the same workings and movements. As this constant hereditary succession of lives is a prolongation of the one universal principle of life by a continued creation of similar bodies, a mechanical recurrence, so the system of soul rebirth too is a constant prolongation of the
principle of the soul-life by a continued creation through Karma of similar embodied associations and experiences, a mechanical recurrence. As the cause of all this physical birth and long hereditary continuation is an obscure will to life in Matter, so the cause of continued soul birth is an ignorant desire or will to be in the universal energy of Karma. As the constant wheelings of the universe and the motions of its forces generate individual existences who escape from or end in being by an individual dissolution, so there is this constant wheel of becoming and motion of Karma which forms into individualised soul-lives that must escape from their continuity by a dissolving cessation. An extinction of the embodied consciousness is our apparent material end; for soul too the end is extinction, the blank satisfaction of Nothingness or some ineffable bliss of a superconscient Non-Being. The affirmation of the mechanical occurrence or recurrence of birth is the essence of this view; but while the bodily life suffers an enforced end and dissolution, the soul life ceases by a willed self-extinction.

The Buddhistic theory adds nothing to the first obvious significance of life except an indefinite prolongation by rebirth which is a burden, not a gain, and the spiritual greatness of the discipline of self-extinction,—the latter, no doubt, a thing of great value. The illusionist solution adds something, but does not differ very greatly in its motive from the Buddhistic. It sets against the futile cosmic repetition an eternity of our own absolute being; from the ignorance which creates the illusory mechanism of a recurrence of rebirth, it escapes into the self-knowledge of our ineffable existence. That seems to bring in a positive strain and to give to our being an initial, a supporting and an eventual reality. But the hiatus here is the absence of all true and valid relation between this real being of ours and all our birth and becoming. The last event and end of our births is not represented as any absolute fulfilment of what we are,—that would be a great, fruitful and magnificently positive philosophy, nor as the final affirmation of a progressive self-finding,—that too would give a noble meaning to our existence; it is a turning away from the demand of the universal Spirit, a refusal of all these cosmic ideas, imaginations, aspirations, action and effectuation. The way to find our being given us is an
absolute denial of all our becoming. We rise to self by a liberating negation of ourselves, and in the result the Idea in the universe pursues its monstrous and aimless road, but the individual ceases and is blest in the cessation. The motive of this way of thought is the same oppressive sense of an ignorant mechanical cosmic recurrence as in the Buddhistic and the same high impatient passion of escape. There is recognition of a divine source of life, but a non-recognition of any divine meaning in life. And as for rebirth it is reduced in its significance to a constant mechanism of self-deception, and the will not to live is shown us as the last acquisition, the highest good and the one desirable result of living. The satisfaction which Illusionism gives,—for it does give a certain high austere kind of satisfaction to the intellect and to a certain spiritual tendency,—is the pressing to a last point of the obvious antinomy between this great burdensome and tyrannous mechanism, the universe, and the spirit which feels itself of another and a diviner nature, the great relief to a soul passioning for freedom, but compelled to labour on as a spring of the dull machine, of being able to cast away the cosmic burden, and finally the free and bare absoluteness of this spiritual conclusion. But it gives no real, because no fruitful answer to the problem of God and man and the significance of life; it only gets away from them by a skilful evasion and takes away from them all significance, so that any question of the sense and will in all this tremendous labour and throb and seeking loses meaning. But the challenge of God's universe to the knowledge and strength of the human spirit cannot in the end be met by man with a refusal or solved by an evasion, even though an individual soul may take refuge from the demand, as a man may from the burden of action and pain in unconsciousness, in spiritual trance or sleep or escape through its blank doors into the Absolute. Something the Spirit of the universe means by our labour in existence, some sense it has in these grandiose rhythms, and it has not undertaken them in an eternally enduring error or made them in a jest. To find and fulfil consciously the universal being's hidden significances is the task given to the human spirit.

* The magnificent and pregnant phrase of the Koran, "Thinkest thou that I have made the heavens and the earth and all that is between in a jest?"
There are other statements or colourings of the idea of rebirth which admit a more positive sense for existence and nourish a robuster confidence in the power and delight of being which are its secret fountains; but they all stumble in the end over the limitations of humanity and an inability to see any outlet from their bondage in the order of the universe, because they suppose this to be a thing fixed from of years sempiternal—cāsvalībhyah samābhyah, not an eternally developing and creative, but an immutable cycle. The Vaishnava idea of the play of God, striking as it does into the secret of the hidden delight at the core of things, is a luminous ray shot into the very heart of the mystery; but isolated it cannot solve all its enigma. There is more here in the world than a play of secret delight; there is knowledge, there is power, there is a will and a mighty labour. Rebirth so looked at becomes too much of a divine caprice with no object but its playing, and ours is too great and strenuous a world to be so accounted for. Such chequered delight as is given to our becoming, is a game of disguises and seekings with no promise here of any divine completeness; its circles seems in the end not worth following out and the soul turns gladly to its release from the game’s unsatisfying mazes. The Tantric solution shows us a supreme superconscient Energy which casts itself out here into teeming worlds and multitudinous beings and in its order the soul rises from birth to birth and follows its million forms, till in a last human series it opens to the consciousness and powers of its own divinity and returns through them by a rapid illumination to the eternal superconscience. We find at last the commencement of a satisfying synthesis, some justification of existence, a meaningful consequence in rebirth, a use and a sufficient though only temporary significance for the great motion of the cosmos. On lines very like these the modern mind, when it is disposed to accept rebirth, is inclined to view it. But there is a too minor stress on the soul’s divine potentialities, a haste of insistence on the escape into superconscience; the supreme Energy constructs too long and stupendous a preparation for so brief and so insufficient a flowering. There is a lacuna here, some secret is still missing.

There are certain limitations of our own thought over which all these solutions stumble, and the chief of these
obstacles are our sense of the mechanical nature of the universe and our inability to see forward to a greater than our present type of humanity. We see the superconscient Spirit in its effulgence and freedom and we see the universe in its unconscious bondage to the cycle of its mechanical recurrences, or we see existence as an abstract entity and Nature as a mechanical force; the conscient soul stands between as a link between these opposites, but it is itself so incomplete that we cannot find in this link the secret or make of it a strong master of reconciliation. Then we pronounce birth to be an error of the soul and see our one chance of liberation in a shaking off of these natal shackles and a violent reversion to supracosmic consciousness or the freedom of abstract being. But what if rebirth were in truth no long dragging chain, but rather at first a ladder of the soul's ascension and at last a succession of mighty spiritual opportunities? It will be so if the infinite existence is not what it seems to the logical intellect, an abstract entity but what it is to intuition and in deeper soul experience, a conscious spiritual Reality, and that Reality as real here as in any far off absolute Superconscience. For then universal Nature would be no longer a mechanism with no secret but its own unconscious mechanics and no intention but the mere recurrent working; it would be the conscient energy of the universal Spirit hidden in the greatness of its processes, mahimānau asya. And the soul ascending from the sleep of matter through plant and animal life to the human degree of the power of life and there battling with ignorance and limit to take possession of its royal and infinite kingdom would be the mediator appointed to unfold in Nature the spirit who is hidden in her subtleties and her vastnesses. That is the significance of life and the world which the idea of evolutionary rebirth opens to us; life becomes at once a progressive ascending series for the unfolding of the Spirit. It acquires a supreme significance: the way of the Spirit in its power is justified, no longer a foolish and empty dream, an eternal delirium, great mechanical toil or termless futility, but the sum of works of a large spiritual Will and Wisdom: the human soul and the cosmic spirit look into each other's eyes with a noble and divine meaning.

The questions which surround our existence elucidate themselves at once with a certain satisfactory full-
ness. What we are is a soul of the transcendent Spirit and Self unfolding itself in the cosmos in a constant evolutionary embodiment of which the physical side is only a pedestal of form corresponding in its evolution to the ascending degrees of the spirit, but the spiritual growth is the real sense and motive. What is behind us is the past terms of the spiritual evolution, the upward gradations of the spirit already climbed, by which through constant rebirth we have developed what we are, and are still developing this present and middle human term of the ascension. What is around us is the constant process of the unfolding in its universal aspect: the past terms are there contained in it, fulfilled, overpassed by us, but in general and various type still repeated as a support and background; the present terms are there not as an unprofitable recurrence, but in active pregnant gestation of all that is yet to be unfolded by the spirit, no irrational decimal recurrence helplessly repeating for ever its figures, but an expanding series of powers of the Infinite. What is in front of us is the greater potentialities, the steps yet unclimbed, the intended mightier manifestations. Why we are here is to be this means of the spirit’s upward self-unfolding. What we have to do with ourselves and our significances is to grow and open them to greater significances of divine being, divine consciousness, divine power, divine delight and multiplied unity, and what we have to do with our environment is to use it consciously for greater spiritual purposes and to make it more and more a mould for the ideal unfolding of the perfect nature and self-conception of the Divine in the cosmos. This is surely the Will in things which moves, great and deliberate, unhasting, unresting, through whatever cycles, towards a greater and greater informing of its own finite figures with its own infinite Reality.

All this is to the mind that lives in the figures of the present, as it must be to the careful sceptical mind of positive inquiry, no more than a hypothesis; for if evolution is an acknowledged idea, rebirth itself is only a supposition. Take it so, but still it is a better hypothesis than the naive and childlike religious solutions which make the world an arbitrary caprice and man the breathing clay puppet of an almighty human-minded Creator, and at least as good a hypothesis as the idea of a material
inconscient Force somehow stumbling into a precarious, ephemeral, yet always continued phenomenon of consciousness, or a creative Life labouring in the Bergsonian formula oppressed but constant in the midst of a universal death, as good too as the idea of a mechanical working of Prakriti, Maya, Shakti into which or in which a real or unreal individual stumbles and wanders, danda-
myamáno andhena nivamáno yatháundhah,* until he can get out of it by a spiritual liberation. To a large philosophical questioning it will not seem in disagreement with the known lines of existence or out of tune with the facts and necessities of being or the demands of reason and intuition, because it admits a yet unrealised factor, things yet to be; for that is implied in the very idea of evolution. It may modify, but does not radically contradict any religious experience or aspiration,—for it is not inconsistent either with a union with Superconscience or bliss in heavens beyond or any personal or impersonal relation with the Divine, since these may well be heights of the spiritual untolding. Its truth will depend on spiritual experience and effectuation; but chiefly on this momentous issue, whether there is anything in the soul-powers of man which promises a greater term of being than his present mentality and whether that greater term can be made effective for his embodied existence? That is the question which remains over to be tested by psychological inquiry and the problem to be resolved in the course of the spiritual evolution of man.

* "Beating about like the blind led by the blind."
CONTENTS

ESSAYS ON THE GITA................ Aurobindo Ghose
   The Vision of God the World-Spirit (2)

THE SYNTHESIS OF YOGA............... A. G.
   Chapter LV. Purification—
   Intelligence and Will

THE ETERNAL WISDOM................. Paul Richard
   The Victory of the Divine—
   The Great Choice

A RATIONALISTIC CRITIC ON INDIAN CULTURE (5)

THE FUTURE POETRY
   The Victorian Poets

THE ASCENDING UNITY
A PHILOSOPHICAL REVIEW

CONTENTS

- The Psychology of Life
- The Psychology of Matter
- The Psychology of Numbers
- The Psychology of Time
- The Psychology of Space
- The Psychology of Mind
- The Psychology of Reason
Essays on the Gita

THE VISION OF GOD THE WORLD-SPRITI

(2)

Even while the effect of the terrible aspect of this vision is still upon him, the first words uttered by Arjuna after the Godhead has spoken are eloquent of a greater uplifting and reassuring reality behind this face of death and this destruction. "Rightly and in good place" he cries, "O Krishna, does the world rejoice and take pleasure in thy name, the Rakshasas in terror are fleeing from thee to all the quarters and the companies of the Siddhas bow down before thee in adoration. How should they not do thee homage, O great Spirit? for thou art the original Creator and Doer of works and greater even than creative Brahma. O thou Infinite, O thou Lord of the gods, O thou abode of the universe, thou art the Immutable and thou art what is and is not and thou art that which is the Supreme. Thou art the ancient Soul and thou the first and original Godhead and thou the supreme resting-place of this All; thou art the knower and that which is to be known and the highest status; O infinite in form, by thee was extended the universe. Thou art Yama and Vayu and Agni and Soma and Varuna, and Prajapati, father of creatures,

" XI-35-55
and the great-grand sire. Salutation to thee a thousand
times over and again and yet again salutation, in front
and behind and from very side, for thou art each and all
that is. Infinite in might and inmeasurable in strength of
action thou pervadest all and art every one."

But this supreme universal Being has been here be-
fore him with the human face, in the mortal body, divine
Man, the embodied Godhead, the Avatar, and till now he
has not known him. He has seen the humanity and has
treated the Divine as a mere human creature; he has not
seen through to the Godhead of which the humanity was
a vessel and a symbol, and he prays now for the God-
head's forgiveness of that unseeing carelessness and negli-
gent ignorance. "For whatsoever I have spoken to thee
in rash vehemence, thinking of thee only as my human
friend and companion, 'O Krishna, O Yadava, O comrade,'
not knowing this thy greatness, in negligent error or in
love, and for whatsoever disrespect was shown by me to
thee in jest, on couch and seat and in the banquet, alone
or in thy presence, I pray forgiveness from thee the Im-
measurable One. Thou art the father of all this people
moving and unmoving, one to be worshipped, and the
most solemn object of veneration. None is equal to thee;
whence is there another and greater in all the three worlds,
O incomparable in might? Therefore bowing down and
prostrating my body I demand grace of thee the adorab-
le Lord. As a father to his son, as a friend to his friend and
comrade, as one dear with him he loves, so shouldst thou,
O God, bear with me. I have seen what never was seen
before and I rejoice, but my mind is troubled with fear.
O God, show to me that other form of thine. I would see
thee even as before crowned and with thy mace and di-
cus; assume that four-armed shape, O thousand-armed,
O Form universal."

From the first words there comes the suggestion
that what is the truth behind these terrifying forms is a
reassuring, heartening and delightful truth; there is something that makes the heart of the world to rejoice and take pleasure in the name and being of the Divine, the profound sense of that which makes us see in the dark face of Kali the face of the Mother and to embrace even in the midst of destruction the nearness of the Friend of beings, in the midst of evil the presence of a pure unalterable Benignity and in the midst of death the Master of Immortality. From the terror of the King of the divine action the Rakshasas, the clouded powers of evil, flee destroyed, defeated, overpowered; but the Siddhas, but the complete and perfect who know and sing the names of the Immortal and live in the truth of his being, bow down before every form of Him and know what every form enshrines and signifies. Nothing has real need to fear except that which is to be destroyed, the evil, the ignorance, the veilers in Night, the Rakshasa powers. All the movement and action of Rudra the Terrible is towards perfection and divine light and completeness. For this Spirit, this Divine is only in outward form the Destroyer, Time who undoes all these finite forms; but in himself he is the Infinite, the Master of the cosmic Godheads, in whom the world and all its action is securely seated, he is the original and ever originating Creator, one greater than that figure of creation called Brahma which he shows to us in the form of things as only one aspect of a trinity, creation chequered by a balance of preservation and destruction. The real divine creation is eternal; it is the Infinite manifesting himself eternally in finite things, the Spirit who conceals and reveals himself for ever in his innumerable infinity of souls and in the wonder of their actions and in the beauty of their forms. He is the eternal Immutable; he is the dual appearance of the Is and Is-not, of things that were and seem to be no more, are and appear doomed to perish, shall be and shall pass; but what he is beyond both these things is That, the supreme,
who holds all things mutable in the single eternity of a Time to which all is ever present and possesses his immutable self in a timeless eternity.

This is the Truth of him in which all is reconciled, a harmony of simultaneous and interdependent truths that start from and amount to one reality. It is the truth of the supreme Soul of whose supreme nature the world is a derivation; of the Ancient of Days who for ever presides over the long evolutions of Time; of the original Godhead of whom Gods and men and all beings are the children, the powers, the souls, and spiritually justified in their being by his spiritual reality; of the Knower who develops in man the knowledge of himself and world and God; the object of all knowledge who reveals himself to man's heart and mind and soul, so that every new opening form of our knowledge is a partial unfolding of him up to the highest by which he is intimately, profoundly and integrally seen and known; of the high supreme Stability who originates and supports and receives to himself all that are in the universe. By him in his own existence the world is extended by his omnipotent power and self-conception and energy; all is the infinity of his material and spiritual forms. He is all the many gods from the least to the greatest, he is the father of creatures and all are his children and his people; he is the origin of Brahma, the father to the first father of the divine creators of these different races of beings. On this point there is a constant insistence. Again it is repeated that he is the All, *sarvatiḥ*, infinite Universal and each individual and everything that is, the one Force and Being in every one of us, the infinite Energy that throws itself out in these multitudes, the immeasurable Will and mighty Power of motion and action that forms out of itself all the courses of Time and all the happenings of the spirit in Nature.

From that insistence the thought naturally turns to the presence of this one great Godhead in man. There the
soul of the seer of the vision is impressed by three successive suggestions. First, it is borne in upon him that in the body of this son of Man who moved beside him as a mortal being upon earth and sat by his side and lay with him on the same couch and eat with him in the banquet and was the object of jest and careless word, actor in war and council and common things, in this figure of mortal man was all the time something great, concealed, of tremendous significance, a Godhead, an Avatar, a universal being, a One Reality, a supreme Transcendence. To this inner divinity in which all the significance of man and his long existence was wrapped and all world existence received its inner meaning of ineffable greatness, he had been blind. Now only he sees the universal Spirit in the individual being, the Divine embodied in humanity, the Transcendence which inhabits this symbol of Nature. He has seen this tremendous, infinite, immeasurable reality of all these apparent things, this boundless universal Form which so exceeds every individual form, and yet of whom each individual thing is the habitation; for that great reality is equal and infinite and the same in the individual and in the universe. At first his blindness, his treatment of this Divine as the mere outward man, his seeing of only the mental and physical relation seems to him a sin against the Mightiness that was there. For the being whom he called Krishna, Yadava, comrade, was this immeasurable Greatness, this incomparable Might, this spirit one in all of whom all beings are the creations. That and not the veiling outward humanity, avajànau mānushīṁ tanum ācīritam, he should have seen with awe and veneration.

But the second suggestion is that what was figured in the human manifestation and the human relation is also a reality which accompanies and mitigates for the human mind the tremendous character of the universal vision. The transcendence and cosmic aspect have to be
seen, for without that seeing the limitations of humanity cannot be exceeded. In that unifying oneness all has to be included. But by itself that would set too great a gulf between that transcendent spirit and this soul in Nature, the Universal Being would be too overwhelming for the separated littleness of the limited individual and natural man. A link is needed by which he can see this universal Godhead in his own individual being, close to him, not only governing all he is by universal and immeasurable Power, but supporting him and raising him to unity by an intimate individual relation. The adoration by which the finite being bows down before the Infinite, receives all its sweetness and draws near to a closer truth of companionship and oneness when it deepens into the more intimate adoration which lives in the sense of the fatherhood of God, the friendhood of God, the love between the Divine and the human soul. For the Divine inhabits the human soul and body, he draws around him the human nature; he assumes the human relations which the soul affects in the mortal body and they find in God their own fullest sense and greatest realisation. This is the Vaishnava bhakti of which the seed is here in the Gita's words, but which received afterwards a more deep, ecstatic and significant extension.

From this suggestion a third arises. The form of the transcendent and universal Being is to the strength of the liberated spirit mighty, fortifying, an equalising, sublimating, all-justifying vision; but to the normal man it is overwhelming and appalling; the reassuring truth, even when known, is grasped with difficulty behind the formidable and mighty aspect of all-destroying Time and an incalculable Will and a vast immeasurable inextricable working. But there is too the gracious mediating form of divine Narayana, the God who is so close to man and in man, the Charioteer of the battle and the journey, with his four arms of helpful power, a humanised symbol of
Godhead, not this million-armed universality. It is this mediating aspect which man for his support has to have constantly before him. For it is this figure of Narayana which symbolises the reassuring truth of that spiritual joy in which for the inner spirit and life of man the universal workings behind all their stupendous process culminate, the auspicious upshot, the union, closeness, constant companionship of man and God, man living in the world for God, God dwelling in man and turning to his divine ends in him the enigmatic world-process.

The Godhead in answer to Arjuna's prayer reassumes his own normal Narayana image, *swakam rūpam*, the desired form of grace and love and sweetness and beauty; but first he declares the incalculable significance of the mighty Image which he is about to veil. This that thou now seest, he tells him, is my supreme shape, my form of luminous energy, the universal, the original which none but thou amongst men has yet seen. I have shown it by my self-Yoga; that is to say, it is an image of my very Self and Spirit, the Supreme self-figured in cosmic being which the soul in a perfect Yoga with me sees without any trembling of the nervous being or any bewilderment and confusion of the mind, because he descries not only what is terrible and overwhelming in its appearance, but also its high and reassuring significance. Thou also should-st so envisage it without fear, without confusion of mind; but since the lower nature in thee is not yet prepared to look upon it with that high strength and tranquillity, I will reassume again for thee my Narayana figure in which the human mind sees, isolated and toned to its humanity, the calm, helpfulness, delight of a friendly Godhead. But this greater Form,—and this is repeated again after it has disappeared,—is only for the rare highest souls; the gods themselves ever desire to look on it; it cannot be won by Veda or austerities or gifts or sacrifice, but can be seen, known, entered into only by that bhakti which regards,
adores and loves Me alone in all things.

What then is the uniqueness of this Form which lifts it beyond cognizance by all the ordinary effort of human knowledge and its spiritual effort of austerity? It is this that man can know by other means this or that exclusive aspect of the one existence individual, cosmic or world-excluding, but not this greatest reconciling Oneness of all the aspects of the Divinity in which at one and the same time and in one and the same vision all is manifested, all is exceeded, all is consummated. For here Transcendent, universal, individual, Spirit, Nature, Infinite, finite, space, time, timelessness, Being, Becoming, all that we can strive to think and know of the Godhead, of the one or the manifested existence, are wonderfully revealed in an ineffable unity. This can only be got by an absolute adoration, love and unity crowning the fullness of works and knowledge. To know it, to see it, to enter into and become one with this supreme form of the Supreme becomes then possible, and it is that end which the Gita proposes for its Yoga,—to enter into the transcendent Being which contains in itself immutable Self and all mutable Becoming, to be one with all, yet above all, to exceed world and yet embrace the whole being of the cosmic and the supracosmic Godhead. This is difficult for limited man. But, says the Godhead, "be a doer of my works, accept me as the supreme being and object, become my bhakta, free from attachment, and without enmity to all existences; for such a man cometh to me." In other words superiority to the lower nature, unity with all beings, oneness with the cosmic Godhead and the Transcendence, oneness of will with the Divine in works, absolute love for the One and for God in all, is the way to this spiritual self-exceeding and transformation.
The Synthesis of Yoga

CHAPTER LV

PURIFICATION—INTELLIGENCE AND WILL

To purify the buddhi we must first understand its rather complex composition. And first we have to make clear the distinction, ignored in ordinary speech, between the manas, mind, and buddhi, the discerning intelligence and the enlightened will. Manas is the sense mind. Man's initial mentality is not at all a thing of reason and will; it is an animal, physical or sense mentality which constitutes its whole experience from the impressions made on it by the external world and by its own embodied consciousness which responds to the outward stimulus of this kind of experience. The buddhi only comes in as a secondary power which has in the evolution taken the first place, but is still dependent on the inferior instrument it uses; it depends for its workings on the sense mind and does what it can on its own higher range by a difficult, elaborate and rather stumbling extension of knowledge and action from the physical or sense basis. A half-enlightened physical or sense mentality is the ordinary type of the mind of man.

In fact the manas is a development from the external chitta; it is a first organising of the crude stuff of the consciousness excited and aroused by external contacts,
bāhyā-sparsha. What we are physically is a soul asleep in matter which has evolved to the partial wakefulness of a living body pervaded by a crude stuff of external consciousness more or less alive and attentive to the outward impacts of the external world in which we are developing our conscious being. In the animal this stuff of externalised consciousness organises itself into a well-regulated mental sense or organ of perceiving and acting mind. Sense is in fact the mental contact of the embodied consciousness with its surroundings. This contact is always essentially a mental phenomenon; but in fact it depends chiefly upon the development of certain physical organs of contact with objects and with their properties to whose images it is able by habit to give their mental values. What we call the physical senses have a double element, the physical-nervous impression of the object and the mental-nervous value we give to it, and the two together make up our seeing, hearing, smell, taste, touch with all those varieties of sensation of which they, and the touch chiefly, are the starting-point or first transmitting agency. But the manas is able to receive sense impressions and draw results from them by a direct transmission not dependent on the physical organ. This is more distinct in the lower creation. Man, though he has really a greater capacity for this direct sense, the sixth sense in the mind, has let it fall into abeyance by an exclusive reliance on the physical senses supplemented by the activity of the buddhi.

The manas is therefore in the first place an organiser of sense experience; in addition it organises the natural reactions of the will in the embodied consciousness and uses the body as an instrument, uses, as it is ordinarily put, the organs of action. This natural action too has a double element, a physico-nervous impulse and behind it a mental-nervous power-value of instinctive will-impulse. That makes up the nexus of first perceptions and actions
which is common to all developing animal life. But in addition there is in the manas or sense mind a first resulting thought-element which accompanies the operations of animal life. Just as the living body has a certain pervading and possessing action of consciousness, *chitta*, which forms into this sense-mind, so the sense-mind has in it a certain pervading and possessing power which mentally uses the sense data, turns them into perceptions and first ideas, associates experience with other experiences, and in some way or other thinks and feels and wills on the sense basis.

This sensational thought-mind which is based upon sense, memory, association, first ideas and resultant generalisations or secondary ideas, is common to all developed animal life and mentality. Man indeed has given it an immense development and range and complexity impossible to the animal, but still, if he stopped there, he would only be a more highly effective animal. He gets beyond the animal range and height because he has been able to disengage and separate to a greater or less extent his thought action from the sense mentality, to draw back from the latter and observe its data and to act on it from above by a separated and partially freed intelligence. The intelligence and will of the animal are involved in the sense-mind and therefore altogether governed by it and carried on its stream of sensations, sense-perceptions, impulses; it is instinctive. Man is able to use a reason and will, a self-observing, thinking and all-observing, an intelligently willing mind which is no longer involved in the sense-mind, but acts from above and behind it in its own right, with a certain separateness and freedom. He is reflective, has a certain relative freedom of intelligent will. He has liberated in himself and has formed into a separate power the buddhi.

But what is this buddhi? From the point of view of Yogic knowledge we may say that it is that instrument
of the soul, of the inner conscious being in nature, of the Purusha, by which it comes into some kind of conscious and ordered possession both of itself and its surroundings. Behind all the action of the chitta and manas there is this soul, this Purusha; but in the lower forms of life it is mostly subconscious, asleep or half-awake, absorbed in the mechanical action of Nature; but it becomes more and more awake and comes more and more forward as it rises in the scale of life. By the activity of the buddhi it begins the process of an entire awakening. In the lower actions of the mind the soul suffers Nature rather than possesses her; for it is there entirely a slave to the mechanism which has brought it into conscious embodied experience. But in the buddhi we get to something, still a natural instrumentation, by which yet Nature seems to be helping and arming the Purusha to understand, possess and master her.

Neither understanding, possession nor mastery is complete, either because the buddhi in us is itself still incomplete, only yet half developed and half formed, or because it is in its nature only an intermediary instrument and before we can get complete knowledge and mastery, we must rise to something greater than the buddhi. Still it is a movement by which we come to the knowledge that there is a power within us greater than the animal life, a truth greater than the first truths or appearances perceived by the sense-mind, and can try to get at that truth and to labour towards a greater and more successful power of action and control, a more effective government both of our own nature and the nature of things around us, a higher knowledge, a higher power, a higher and larger enjoyment, a more exalted range of being. What then is the final object of this trend? Evidently, it must be for the Purusha to get to the highest and fullest truth of itself and of things, greatest truth of soul or self and greatest truth of Nature, and to an action and a status of being
which shall be the result of or identical with that Truth, the power of this greatest knowledge and the enjoyment of that greatest being and consciousness to which it opens. This must be the final result of the evolution of the conscious being in Nature.

To arrive then at the whole truth of our self and Spirit and the knowledge, greatness, bliss of our free and complete being must be the object of the purification, liberation and perfection of the buddhi. But it is a common idea that this means not the full possession of Nature by the Purusha, but a rejection of Nature. We are to get at self by the removal of the action of Prakriti. As the buddhi, coming to the knowledge that the sense-mind only gives us appearances in which the soul is subject to Nature, discovers more real truths behind them, the soul must arrive at this knowledge that the buddhi too, when turned upon Nature, can give us only appearances and enlarge the subjection, and must discover behind them the pure truth of the Self. The Self is something quite other than Nature and the buddhi must purify itself of attachment to and preoccupation with natural things; so only can it discern and separate from them the pure Self and Spirit: the knowledge of the pure Self and Spirit is the only real knowledge, Ananda of the pure Self and Spirit is the only spiritual enjoyment, the consciousness and being of the pure Self and Spirit are the only real consciousness and being. Action and will must cease because all action is of the Nature; the will to be pure self and Spirit means the cessation of all will to action.

But while the possession of the being, consciousness, delight, power of the Self is the condition of perfection,—for it is only by knowing and possessing and living in the truth of itself that the soul can become free and perfect, we hold that Nature is an eternal action and manifestation of the Spirit; Nature is not a devil’s trap, a set of misleading appearances created by desire, sense, life and
mental will and intelligence, but these phenomena are hints and indications and behind all of them is a truth of Spirit which exceeds and uses them. We hold that there must be an inherent spiritual gnosis and will by which the secret Spirit in all knows its own truth, wills, manifests and governs its own being in Nature; to arrive at that, at communion with it or participation in it, must be part of our perfection. The object of the purification of the buddhi will then be to arrive at the possession of our own truth of self-being, but also at the possession of the highest truth of our being in Nature. For that purpose we must first purify the buddhi of all that makes it subject to the sense mind and, that once done, purify it from its own limitations and convert its inferior mental intelligence and will into the greater action of a spiritual will and knowledge.

The movement of the buddhi to exceed the limits of the sense-mind is an effort already half accomplished in the human evolution; it is part of the common operation of Nature in man. The original action of the thought-mind, the intelligence and will in man, is a subject action. It accepts the evidence of the senses, the commands of the life-cravings, instincts, desires, emotions, the impulses of the dynamic sense-mind and only tries to give them a more orderly direction and effective success. But the man whose reason and will are led and dominated by the lower mind, is an inferior type of human nature, and the part of our conscious being which consents to this domination is the lowest part of our manhood. The higher action of the buddhi is to exceed and control the lower mind, not indeed to get rid of it, but to raise all the action of which it is the first suggestion into the nobler plane of will and intelligence. The impressions of the sense-mind are used by a thought which exceeds them and which arrives at truths they do not give, ideative truths of thought, truths of philosophy and science; a thinking, disco-
vering, philosophic mind overcomes, rectifies and dominates the first mind of sense impressions. The impulsive reactive sensational mentality, the life-cravings and the mind of emotional desire are taken up by the intelligent will and are overcome, are rectified and dominated by a greater ethical mind which discovers and sets over them a law of right impulse, right desire, right emotion and right action. The receptive, crudely enjoying sensational mentality, the emotional mind and life mind are taken up by the intelligence and are overcome, rectified and dominated by a deeper, happier aesthetic mind which discovers and sets above them a law of true delight and beauty. All these new formations are used by a general Power of the intellectual, thinking and willing man in a soul of governing intellect, imagination, judgment, memory, volition, discerning reason and ideal feeling which uses them for knowledge, self-development, experience, discovery, creation, effectuation, aspires, strives, inwardly attains, endeavours to make a higher thing of the life of the soul in Nature. The primitive desire-soul no longer governs the being. It is still a desire soul, but it is repressed and governed by a higher power, something which has manifested in itself the godheads of Truth, Will, Good, Beauty and tries to subject life to them. The crude desire-soul and mind is trying to convert itself into an ideal soul and mind, and the proportion in which some effect and harmony of this greater conscious being has been found and enthroned, is the measure of our increasing humanity.

But this is still a very incomplete movement. We find that it progresses towards a greater completeness in proportion as we arrive at two kinds of perfection; first, a greater and greater detachment from the control of the lower suggestions; secondly, an increasing discovery of a self-existent Being, Light, Power and Ananda which surpasses and transforms the normal humanity.
ethical mind becomes perfect in proportion as it detaches itself from desire, sense suggestion, impulse, customary dictated action and discovers a self of Right, Love, Strength and Purity in which it can live accomplished and make it the foundation of all its actions. The aesthetic mind is perfected in proportion as it detaches itself from all its cruder pleasures and from outward conventional canons of the aesthetic reason and discovers a self-existent self and spirit of pure and infinite Beauty and Delight which gives its own light and joy to the material of the aesthetics. The mind of knowledge is perfected when it gets away from impression and dogma and opinion and discovers a light of self-knowledge and intuition which illuminates all the workings of the sense and reason, all self-experience and world-experience. The will is perfected when it gets away from and behind its impulses and its customary ruts of effectuation and discovers an inner power of the Spirit which is the source of an intuitive and luminous action and an original harmonious creation. The movement of perfection is away from all domination by the lower nature and towards a pure and powerful reflection of the being, power, knowledge and delight of the Spirit and Self in the buddhi.

The Yoga of self-perfection is to make this double movement as absolute as possible. All immiscence of desire in the buddhi is an impurity. The intelligence coloured by desire is an impure intelligence and it distorts Truth; the will coloured by desire is an impure will and it puts a stamp of distortion, pain and imperfection upon the soul's activity. All immiscence of the emotions of the soul of desire is an impurity and similarly distorts both the knowledge and the action. All subjection of the buddhi to the sensations and impulses is an impurity. The thought and will have to stand back detached from desire, troubling emotion, distracting or mastering impulse and to act in their own right until they can discover a greater guide a
Will, Tapas or divine Shakti which will take the place of desire and mental will, and impulse, an Ananda or pure delight of the spirit and an illumined spiritual knowledge which will express themselves in the action of that Shakti. This complete detachment, impossible without an entire self-government, equality, calm, *çāma, samatā, çānti*, is the surest step towards the purification of the buddhi. A calm, equal and detached mind can alone reflect the peace or base the action of the liberated spirit.

The buddhi itself is burdened with a mixed and impure action. When we reduce it to its own proper forms, we find that it has three stages or elevations of its functioning. First, its lowest basis is a habitual, customary action which is a link between the higher reason and the sense mind, a kind of current understanding. This understanding is in itself dependent on the witness of the senses and the rule of action which the reason deduces from the sense-mind’s perception of and attitude to life. It is not capable of itself forming pure thought and will, but it takes the workings of the higher reason and turns them into coin of opinion and customary standard of thought or canon of action. When we perform a sort of practical analysis of the thinking mind, cut away this element and hold back the higher reason free, observing and silent, we find that this current understanding begins to run about in a futile circle, repeating all its formed opinions and responses to the impressions of things, but incapable of any strong adaptation and initiation. As it feels more and more the refusal of sanction from the higher reason, it begins to fail, to lose confidence in itself and its forms and habits, to distrust the intellectual action and to fall into weakness and silence. The stilling of this current, running, circling, repeating thought-mind is the principal part of that silencing of the thought which is one of the most effective disciplines of Yoga.

But the higher reason itself has a first stage of dyna-
mic, pragmatic intellectuality in which creation, action and will are the real motive and thought and knowledge are employed to form basic constructions and suggestions which are used principally for effectuation. To this pragmatic reason truth is only a formation of the intellect effective for the action of the inner and the outer life. When we cut it away from the still higher reason which seeks impersonally to reflect Truth rather than to create personally effective truth, we find then that this pragmatic reason can originate, progress, enlarge the experience by dynamic knowledge, but it has to depend on the current understanding as a pedestal and base and put its whole weight on life and becoming. It is in itself therefore a mind of the Will to life and action, much more a mind of Will than a mind of knowledge: it does not live in any assured and constant and eternal Truth, but in progressing and changing aspects of Truth which serve the shifting forms of our life and becoming or, at the highest, help life to grow and progress. By itself this pragmatic mind can give us no firm foundation and no fixed goal; it lives in the truth of the hour, not in any truth of eternity. But when purified of dependence on the customary understanding, it is a great creator and in association with the highest mental reason it becomes a strong channel and bold servant for the effectuation of Truth in life. The value of its work will depend on the value and the power of the highest truth-seeking reason. But by itself it is a sport of Time and a bondservant of Life. The seeker of the Silence has to cast it away from him; the seeker of the integral Divinity has to pass beyond it, to replace and transform this thinking mind intent on Life by a greater effectuating spiritual Will, the Truth-Will of the spirit.

The third and noblest stage of the intellectual will and reason is an intelligence which seeks for some universal reality or for a still higher self-existent Truth for its own sake and tries to live in that Truth. This is pri-
marily a mind of knowledge and only secondarily a mind of Will. In its excess of tendency it often becomes incapable of Will except the one will to know; for action it is dependent on the aid of the pragmatic mind and therefore man tends in action to fall away from the purity of the Truth his highest knowledge holds into a mixed inferior, inconstant and impure effectuation. The disparity, even when it is not an opposition, between knowledge and will is one of the principal defects of the human buddhi. But there are other inherent limitations of all human thinking. This highest Buddhi does not work in man in its own purity; it is assailed by the defects of the lower mentality, continually clouded by it, distorted, veiled, and prevented or lamed in its own proper action. Purified as much as may be from that habit of mental degradation, the human buddhi is still a power that searches for the Truth, but is never in full or direct possession of it; it can only reflect truth of the spirit and try to make it its own by giving it a limited mental value and a distinct mental body. Nor does it reflect integrally, but seizes either an uncertain totality or else a sum of limited particulars. First it seizes on this or that partial reflection and by subjection to the habit of customary mind turns it into a fixed imprisoning opinion; all new truth it judges from the standpoint it has thus formed and therefore puts on it the colour of a limiting prejudget. Release it as much as possible from this habit of limiting opinion, still it is subject to another affliction, the demand of the pragmatic mind for immediate effectuation, which gives it no time to proceed to larger truth, but fixes it by the power of effective realisation in whatever it has already judged, known and lived. Freed from all these chains, the buddhi can become a pure and flexible reflector of Truth, adding light to light, proceeding from realisation to realisation. It is then limited only by its own inherent limitations.
These limitations are mainly of two kinds. First, its realisations are only mental realisations; to get to the Truth itself we have to go beyond the mental buddhi. Again, the nature of the mind prevents it from making an effective unification of the truths it seizes. It can only put them side by side and see oppositions or effect some kind of partial, executive and practical combination. But it finds finally that the aspects of the Truth are infinite and that none of its intellectual forms are quite valid, because the spirit is infinite and in the spirit all is true, but nothing in the mind can give the whole truth of the spirit. Either then the buddhi becomes a pure mirror of many reflections, reflecting all truth that falls on it, but ineffective and when turned to action either incapable of decision or chaotic, or it has to make a selection and act as if that partiality were the whole truth, though it knows otherwise. It acts in a helpless limitation of Ignorance, though it may hold a Truth far greater than its action. On the other hand, it may turn away from life and thought and seek to exceed itself and pass into the Truth beyond it. This it may do by seizing on some aspect, some principle, some symbol or suggestion of reality and pushing that to its absolute, all-absorbing, all-excluding term of realisation or by seizing on and realising some idea of indeterminate Being or Non-Being from which all thought and life fall away into cessation. The buddhi casts itself into a luminous sleep and the soul passes away into some ineffable height of spiritual being.

Therefore in dealing with the buddhi, we must either take one of these choices or else try the rarer adventure of lifting the soul from the mental being into the spiritual gnosis to see what we can find in the very core of that supernal light and power. This gnosis contains the sun of the divine Knowledge-Will burning in the heavens of the supreme conscious Being, to which the mental intelligence and will are only a focus of diffused and deflec-
ted rays and reflections. That possesses the divine unity and yet or rather therefore can govern the multiplicity and diversity: whatever selection, self-limitation, combination it makes is not imposed on it by Ignorance, but is self-developed by a power of self-possessing divine Knowledge. When the gnosis is gained, it can then be turned on the whole nature to divinise the human being. It is impossible to rise into it at once; if that could be done, it would mean a sudden and violent overshooting, a breaking or slipping through the gates of the Sun, sūryasya dwārā, without near possibility of return. We have to form as a link or bridge an intuitive or illuminated mind, which is not the direct gnosis, but in which a first derivative body of the gnosis can form. This illumined mind will first be a mixed power which we shall have to purify of all its mental dependence and mental forms so as to convert all willing and thinking into thought-sight and truth-seeing will by an illumined discrimination, intuition, inspiration, revelation. That will be the final purification of the intelligence and the preparation for the siddhi of the gnosis.
The Eternal Wisdom

BOOK II

IV

THE VICTORY OF THE DIVINE

THE GREAT CHOICE

1. Four kinds of men have I found in the world, and what are the four? Men who are their own torturers, but cause no suffering to others; men who prepare suffering for others, but not for themselves; men who do evil both to themselves and to others; men who are the cause of pain neither to others nor to themselves. And I have found still four other kinds of men in the world, and what are the four? Men who think only of themselves and not of others; men who think of others and not of themselves; men who think of others as much as of themselves; men who think neither of themselves nor of others.

2. And I have found still four other kinds of men in the world, and what are the four? Men who work only for their own deliverance and not for the deliverance of others; men who work for the deliverance...
ce of others and not for their own; men who work as much for their own deliverance as for the deliverance of others; men who care neither for others' deliverance nor for their own. And I have found yet four other kinds of men in the world, and what are the four? Men who instruct themselves without instructing others; men who instruct others without instructing themselves; men who instruct themselves in instructing others; men who instruct none, neither others nor themselves.

3 And I have found still four other kinds of men in the world and what are they? Men who do only the actions that are good; men who do only the actions that are evil; men who do actions that are in part good and in part evil; and men who do actions neither good nor evil, they who consecrate themselves to a work that leads to the cessation of works.

4 Who really crosses over the Illusion? One who has renounced evil company, associates with men of noble mind, has put away the idea of property, frequents solitary places, tears himself away from the servitude of the world, transcends the qualities of Nature and abandons all anxiety for his existence, renounces the fruit of his works, renounces works, is freed from the dualities, renounces even the Vedas, and helps others to the passage, such is the one who crosses over the Illusion; he indeed traverses it and he helps others to pass.

5 Ten knots of bondage; the illusion of personality; doubt; belief in the efficacy of rites and religious practices; sensuality; ill will; desire of a future life.

in the world of form; desire of a future life in the
world of the formless; pride; unquietness; igno-
rance.
6 Ten high virtues: benevolence; spiritual life; intel-
ligence; renunciation; perseverance; energy; pati-
ence; truthfulness; love for others; equality of soul.
7 What is the root of evil? Greed, disliking and
delusion are the roots of evil. And what then are the
roots of good? To be free from greed and disliking
and delusion is the root of good.
8 What are the roots of evil? Desire, disliking, igno-
rance. And what then are the roots of good? Libe-
ration from desire, disliking and ignorance.
9 Three roots of evil: desire, disliking and ignor-
ce.—Three roads to good: knowledge, the spiritual
life and the control of the mind.
10 Three kinds of thirst; the thirst of sensation, of
existence and of annihilation.—The contemplation of
the impermanence of things, that wonderful gateway
to Truth, leads us to victory over the thirst for the
satisfaction of our desires.
11 Whether on earth or in the abodes of the gods,
all beings are upon three evil paths; they are in the
power of existence, desire and ignorance.—But the
fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering,
gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance.
12 By righteousness is the way to a higher region,
but by unrighteousness to a lower region; by know-
ledge cometh freedom, but by ignorance the prolon-
gation of bondage.
13 What are the four mighty combats? The battle
to keep from waking the evil which yet is not; the

6) Sangiti Sutta.—7) id.—8 Magghima Nikaya.—9) Buddhist
Texts.—10) Sangiti Sutta.—11) id.—12) id.—13) Lalita Vistara.—
14) id.—15) Galatians. V. 23.—16) Sankhya Karika.
battle to repel the evil that is already in existence; the battle to awaken the good which yet is not; the battle to preserve and develop the good that is already in existence.

17 Four roads to perfection: the way of the novice, the way of the warrior, the way of the conqueror, the way of the saint. Four conditions that we may enter into the way: the society of the just, an ear given to instruction, vigilance, a life of righteousness.

18 Two kinds of joy are there, O my brothers, and what are they? The noisy and the silent joy; but nobler is the joy that is silent.

19 Two kinds of joy are there, O my brothers, and what are they? The joy of distraction and the joy of vigilance; but nobler is the joy that is heedful.

20 Two kinds of joy are there, O my brothers, and what are they? The joy of the sated senses and the joy of the equal soul; but nobler is the joy of equality.

21 Two kinds of joy are there O my brothers, and what are they? The joy of the senses and the joy of the spirit; but nobler is the joy of the spirit.

22 Two kinds of joy are there, O my brothers, and what are they? The joy to possess and the joy to renounce; but nobler is the joy of renunciation.

23 Two kinds of joy are there, O my brothers, and what are they? The joy of egoism and the joy to forget oneself; but nobler is the joy of self-obli-vion.

24 There is an internal war in man between reason

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17) Anguttara Nikaya.—18) Sangiti Sutta.—19) Buddhist Texts. —20) id.—21) id.—22) id.—23) id.—24) id.
and the passions. He could get some peace if he had only reason without passions or only passions without reason, but because he has both, he must be at war, since he cannot have peace with one without being at war with the other. Thus he is always divided and in opposition to himself.—For the good that I would do, I do not; but the evil that I would not, that I do...I find then a law that, when I would do good, evil is present with me.—I approve the better way, but I follow the worse.

We have the choice; it depends on us to choose the good or the evil by our own will. The choice of evil draws us to our physical nature and subjects us to fate.—The union of the soul and nature has for its only object to give the soul the knowledge of nature and make it capable of eternal freedom.

No man can serve two masters.—It is not possible, O my son, to be attached at once to perishable things and to things divine; the one or the other one must choose, one cannot cling to both at once.—Endeavour maketh wisdom to grow, but negligence increaseth perdition. Perceive the double way of descent and ascension and choose the way that increaseth wisdom.

Behold, there is the goal of beatitude and there the long road of suffering. Thou canst choose the one or the other across the cycles to come.

I have chosen the way of truth.—I would follow the road of straightness, the unstained way of which.

the sages speak, which has no windings and leads straight to deliverance.

35 One road conducts to the goods of this world, honour and riches, but the other to victory over the world. Seek not the goods of the world, riches and honour. Let your aim be to transcend the world.

36 Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction.

37 Walk in the spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh; for the flesh lusteth against the spirit and the desire of the spirit is against the flesh; and these are contrary the one to the other.

38 O friends, despise not the eternal Beauty for the mortal beauty, and be not held back by the things of the earth.

39 You shall wander in the darkness and see not till you have found the eternal Light.

40 Aspire to the regions where oneness has its dominion.—Beyond fugitive Time reigns in the silence the kingdom of the Permanent. O happy he who conquers here and penetrates into the country of peace!

A Rationalistic Critic on Indian Culture

(5)

The question whether Indian culture has a sufficient power for the fortifying and ennobling of the normal human life, a pragmatic, non-ascetic, dynamic value, a power for expansion of life as well as a power for control of life, is one of central importance. For if, as certain critics pretend, it has nothing of this kind to give us, then whatever its other cultural greatness, it cannot live: it becomes a cis-Himalayan hot-house splendour which could flourish in a peninsular seclusion, but must perish in the keen and arduous air of the modern struggle of life. No anti-vital culture can survive: a civilisation void of strong vital stimulus and motive, too intellectual or too ethereal must languish for want of sap and blood. A culture to be permanently, wholly serviceable to man, must give him something more than some kind of transcendental uprush towards an exceeding of all life-values; it must do more than adorn with a great curiosity of knowledge, of science, of philosophic enquiry or a rich light and blaze of art, architecture, poetry the long stability and orderly well-being of an old, ripe and humane society. All this Indian culture did in the past to a noble purpose. But it must
satisfy too the tests of a progressive Life-power. There must be some inspiration for the terrestrial endeavour of man, an object, a stimulus, a power and a will to live. Whether or not our end is silence and Nirvana, a spiritual cessation or the material death, that the world itself is a mighty labour of a Life-Spirit and man its crown on earth or the hero of its endeavour, is a thing that is inspiringly certain. A great culture must see this truth in some fullness and give it some conscious and ideal power of self-effectuation. To give a stable base to life is not enough, to adorn it not enough, to shoot up sublimely to summits beyond life not enough; the greatness and growth of man on earth must be its equal care. Imperfection and failure will dog any missing of this great intermediate reality.

Our critics will have it that the whole body of Indian culture bears the stamp of just such a failure. The western impression is that it is a metaphysical and otherworldly system turned by a depressing sense of the unreality of life or an intoxication of the Infinite from the nobility, vitality and greatness of human effort and aspiration. Its philosophy may be sublime in speculation, its religious spirit fervent, its ancient social system strong, symmetrical and stable, its literature and its art good in their own way, but the salt of life, will, power, a living endeavour, is absent. This new journalistic Apollo, our archer who is out to cleave the python coils of Indian barbarism, abounds in outcries in this sense. But, if that is so, evidently India can have done nothing great, contributed no invigorating power to human life, produced no men of mighty will, no potent personality, no strong significant human lives, no vital human figures in art and poetry. And that is what our devil's advocate tells us in graphic phrases. He tells us of a general undervaluing in the religion and philosophy of life and endeavour, life conceived as a shoreless expanse in which generations
rise and fall as helplessly and purposelessly as waves in mid-ocean, the individual life everywhere dwarfed and depreciated, one solitary great character, Gautama Buddha, who "perhaps never existed," the sole contribution to the world's pantheon, and for the rest a pale featureless Asoka, the characters of drama and poetry lifeless exaggerations or puppets of supernatural powers, an art empty of life and reality,—this is the whole dull, drab, effete, melancholy picture of Indian civilisation. No power of life in religion or in philosophy, no breath of life in history, no colour of life in art and poetry, that it appears is the blank result of Indian culture. Whoever knows anything about the matter, has seen at first hand the literature, followed the history, studied the civilisation, can see that this is a misrepresentation, a caricature, an absurdity and a falsity. But it is an extreme and violent way of putting an impression often given. As before, we must see why different eyes see the same object in such different colours. We find again the same primary misunderstanding. India has lived and lived, richly, splendidly, greatly, but with a different will in life from Europe. Her idea and her plan have been peculiar to her temperament, original and unique, and therefore difficult to seize and easily open to hostile misrepresentation.

Three powers we must seize in order to judge the life-value of a culture; the power of the conception of life, the power of the forms, types, rhythms given to life, the inspiration, vigour, vital execution of the power in the actual lives of men and the life of the community. The European conception of life is one with which we in India are now very familiar, because our present thought and effort are filled and obscured with its presence or its shadow; we have been trying to assimilate it, even to shape ourselves,—our political, our economical, outward self has been especially dominated,—into some imitation of its form and rhythm. The European idea is the con-
ception of a Force manifesting itself in the material universe and a Life in it of which man is almost the whole meaning,—in spite of the recent stress of Science on a mechanical Nature,—and in man an effort to arrive at some light and harmony of understanding and ordering reason, efficient power, adorning beauty, strong utility, economical well-being. The free power of the individual ego and the organised will of the corporate ego are the great forces which this life needs for its flowering; therefore the development of individual personality and organised efficient national individuality are of the first importance to the European ideal. They have sometimes run riot and much of the restless and often violent vividness of the historic stir and literary and artistic vivacity of Europe is due to their powerful colours. The enjoyment of life and force and egoistic passion and satisfaction is a constant motive, a loud and insistent strain. But there is the other opposite effort to govern life by reason, science, ethics, art, a restraining and harmonising utility. At different times different powers have taken the lead. Christian religiosity has come in and added new tones, modified some, deepened other tendencies. Each age and period has increased the wealth and helped the complexity and greatness of the conception. At present the sense of the corporate being dominates, the idea of a great intellectual and material progress, an ameliorated state of the political and social human being governed by science, intelligent utility, liberty, equality, organisation, efficiency, general well-being. The endeavour has become too outward and mechanical, but some renewed power of a more humanistic idea is trying to beat its way in and man may perhaps before long refuse to be conquered by his apparatus and tied on the wheel of his own triumphant machinery: we must not lay too much emphasis on what may be a passing phase. The broad permanent conception of life remains and it is in its own limits a great and
invigorating conception.

But the Indian conception of life starts from a deeper centre and moves on less external lines to a very different objective. The peculiarity of the Indian eye of thought is that it sees or searches everywhere for the Spirit, and the peculiarity of the Indian will in life is that it feels itself to be still unfulfilled, not in touch with perfection, not justified in any intermediate satisfaction so long as it has not found and does not live in the truth of the Spirit. Its idea of the world, of Nature, of existence is not physical, but psychological and spiritual, Spirit, soul, consciousness are not only greater than inconscient matter and force, but they precede and originate, and force and matter cannot exist without them. The Force that creates the world is a conscious will or an executive power of the Spirit; the material universe is only a form and movement of the Spirit. Man himself is not a life and mind born of and eternally subject to physical Nature, but a spirit using life and body. It is an understanding faith in this conception of existence and the attempt to live it out and get from the materialised and into a spiritual consciousness which constitutes the much-talked of Indian spirituality. It is evidently very different from the European idea, different even from the form given by Europe to the Christian conception of life. But it does not mean that Indian culture concedes no reality to life and follows no material or vital aims and satisfactions. Nor can it be contended that such a conception of existence can give no powerful and inspiring motive to the human effort of man. If matter, mind, life, reason, form are only powers of the spirit and valuable not for their own sake, but because of the Spirit within them,—\textit{atmārtham}, for the sake of the Self, says the Upanishad, and this is certainly the Indian attitude to these things,—that does not depreciate them or deprive them of their value. On the contrary it enhances and increases a hundredfold their significance. Form and
body become of an immense importance when they are felt to be instinct with the life of the Spirit and a support for the rhythm of its workings. And human life was held by ancient Indian thought to be no vile and unworthy existence, but the greatest thing known to us, desired even, the Purana boldly says, by the gods in heaven. The deepening and raising of its richest or its most potent energies is the means by which the spirit proceeds to its own self-discovery. Mind and reason heightening to their greatest lights and powers make embodied life capable of opening to all the greatest light and power of the individual, universal and transcendent being. These are no sterilising and depressing ideas; they exalt and divinise the life of man.

The dignity of human existence, given to it by the thought of the Vedantic and the classical ages of Indian culture, exceeded anything conceived by the noblest western idea of humanity. Man is a spirit veiled in the works of energy and moving to self-discovery. He is a soul growing in Nature to self, a divinity and eternal existence, a wave of the God-ocean, an inextinguishable spark of the supreme Fire, identical even in reality with the ineffable Transcendence from which he came, greater even than the godheads he worships. The natural half-animal being which he chooses for a while to seem, is not his whole or his real being. To find his real and divine Self, to exceed his outward, apparent, natural self, is the greatness of which he alone of beings is capable. He has the spiritual capacity to pass to a supreme and extraordinary pitch of manhood, and that is the first aim which Indian culture proposes to him, to live no more in the first crude type of an undeveloped humanity, na yathā prá-krito janah, but to become a perfected semi-divine man. But he can do more, become one with God, one self with the Spirit of the universe, one with a Self that transcends the universe. To be shut up in his ego is not his perfec-
tion; he can become one with others, with all beings, a universal soul, one with the supreme Unity. To aspire to that perfection and transcendence through his mind, reason, thought and their illuminations, his heart and its unlimited power of love and sympathy, his will, his ethical and dynamic being, his aesthetic sense of delight and beauty or through an absolute spiritual calm, largeness and peace, is the high ultimate sense of his humanity. This is that spiritual liberation and perfection of which Indian thought is so full and which appears to it, however high and arduous, yet in a way quite near, possible and normal to spiritual realisation, but of which the positivist western mind finds it difficult to form a living and intelligible idea,—the status of the siddha, bhāgwa, mukta. In ancient Europe there was some approach made to it by the Stoics, Platonists, Pythagoreans; it has often been envisaged or pursued by a few rare souls; it is now percolating into the western imagination, but more as yet by poetry and certain aspects of general thought than by philosophy and religion. But the distinction of Indian culture is to have seized on it, kept it a living and practicable thing, sounded all the ways to this spiritual way of perfect existence and made it the common highest aim and universal spiritual destiny of every human being.

The value of the Indian conception for life must depend on the relations and gradations by which this perfection is connected with our normal living. Put over against the latter without any connection, without any gradations leading up to it, it would either be a high unattainable ideal or the detached remote passion of a few exceptional spirits, or discourage the springs of our natural life by the too great contrast between this spiritual being and natural being. Something of the kind has happened in later times and given some room for the current western impression about the exaggerated asceticism and otherworldliness of Indian religion and philosophy. But
we must not be misled by the extreme over-emphasis of certain tendencies. To get to the real meaning of the Indian idea of life we must go back to its best times and look not at this or that school of philosophy or at some side of it, but at the totality of the ancient philosophical thinking, religion, literature, art, society. The Indian conception in its soundness made no such mistake; it did not imagine that this great thing can or even ought to be done by some violent, intolerant, immediate leap. Even the most extreme philosophies do not go so far. Whether the workings of the Spirit in the universe are a reality or only a half reality, self-descriptive Lila or illusory Maya, whether it be an action of the Infinite Energy, Shakti, or a figment of some secondary paradoxical consciousness in the Eternal, Maya, life as an intermediate reality is nowhere denied by any school of Indian thinking. Indian thought recognised that the normal life of man has to be passed through conscientiously, developed with knowledge, its forms perused, interpreted, fathomed, its values worked out, possessed and lived, its enjoyments taken on their own level, before we can go on to self-existence or a supra-existence. The spiritual perfection which opens before man is the crown of a long, patient, millennial outflowering of the spirit in life and nature. This belief in a gradual spiritual progress and evolution is the secret of the almost universal Indian acceptance of the truth of reincarnation. By millions of lives in inferior forms the secret soul in the universe, conscious even in the inconscient, chetano achetaneshu, has arrived at humanity: by hundreds, thousands, perhaps millions of lives man grows into his divine self-existence. Every life is a step which he can take backward or forward; by his action, his will in life, by the thought and knowledge that governs it, he determines what he is yet to be, yathā karma yathā cru-tam.

This conception of a spiritual evolution with a final
spiritual perfection or transcendence of which human life is the means and an often repeated opportunity, is the pivot of the Indian conception of existence. It gives to our life a figure of ascent, in spirals or circles, which has to be filled in with knowledge and action and experience. There is room within it for all human aims, activities and aspirations; there is place in the ascent for all types of human character and nature. The spirit in the world assumes hundreds of forms, follows many tendencies, gives many shapes to his play or lila, and all are part of the mass of necessary experience; each has its justification, its law, its reason of being, its utility. The claim of sense satisfaction is not ignored, nor the soul’s need of labour and heroic action, nor the hundred forms of the pursuit of knowledge, nor the play of the emotions or the demand of the aesthetic faculties. Indian culture did not deface nor impoverish the richness of the grand game of human life or depress or mutilate the activities of our nature. On the contrary it gave them, subject to a certain principle of harmony and government, their full, often their extreme value; it bade man fathom on his way all experience, fill in life opulently with colour and beauty and enjoyment and give to his character and action a large rein and heroic proportions. This side of the Indian idea is stamped in strong relief over the epic and the classical literature, and to have read the Ramayana, Mahabharata, the dramas, the literary epics, the romances, the lyric and the great abundance of gnomic poetry, to say nothing of the massive remains of other cultural work and social and political system and speculation without perceiving this breadth, wealth and greatness, one must have read without eyes to see or without a mind to understand. But while the generous office of culture is to enrich, enlarge and encourage human life, it must also find in it a clue, give it a guiding law and subject it to some spiritual, moral and rational government. The greatness of
the ancient Indian civilisation consists in the power with which it did this work and the high and profound wisdom and skill with which, while basing society, ordering the individual life, encouraging and guiding human nature and propensity, it turned them all towards the realisation of its master idea and never allowed the mind it was training to lose sight of the use of life as a passage to the Infinite and a discipline for spiritual perfection.

Two main truths are always kept in sight by the Indian mind whether in the government of life or in the discipline of spirituality. First, our being in its growth has stages through which it must pass. Then again, life is complex, the nature of man is complex, and in each life man has to figure a certain sum of its complexity. The initial movement of life is that form of it which develops the powers of the ego in man; kāma, artha, self-interest and desire are the original human motives. Indian culture gave a large recognition to this primary turn of our nature. These powers have to be accepted; the ego-life must be lived and the forces it evolves in the human being brought to fullness. But to get its full results and inspire it eventually to go beyond itself, it must be kept from making any too unbridled claim or heading furiously towards its satisfaction. There must be no internal or external anarchy. A life governed in any absolute or excessive degree by self-will, by passion, sense-attraction, self-interest, desire cannot be the whole natural rule of a human or a humane existence. The tempting imagination that it can, with which the western mind has played in leanings or outbursts of what has been called Paganism,—not at all justly, for the Greek or Pagan intelligence had a noble thought for self-rule, law and harmony,—is alien to the Indian mentality. It perceived very well the possibility of a materialistic life and its attraction worked on certain minds and gave birth to the Charvaka philosophy; but this could not take hold or stay. Even it allowed to it
when lived on a grand scale a certain perverse greatness, but a colossal egoism was regarded as the nature of the Asura and Rakshasa, the Titanic, gigantic or demoniac type of spirit, not the proper life for man. Another power claims man, overtopping desire and self-interest and self-will, the power of the Dharma.

The Dharma, religious law of action, is not as in the western idea, only a religious creed and cult inspiring an ethical and social rule, but the complete rule of our life, the harmony of the whole tendency of man to find a right and just law of his living. Every thing has its dharma, its law of life imposed on it by its nature, but the dharma for man is a conscious imposition of a rule of ideal living on all his members. This Dharma develops, evolves, has stages, gradations of spiritual and ethical ascension. All men cannot follow in all things one common and invariable rule of action. Nature, the position, the work, aim and bent, the call of life, the call of the spirit within, the degree and turn of development, the adhikara or capacity differ too much in different men; life is too complex to admit of such an ideal simplicity. Man lives in society and by society, and every society has its own general dharma, its law of right stability and right functioning, and into this law the individual life must be fitted; but the individual's part in society, his own nature, the needs of his capacity and temperament all vary, and the social law on its side must make room for this variety. The man of knowledge, the man of power, the productive and acquisitive man, the priest, scholar, poet, artist, ruler, fighter, trader, tiller of the soil, craftsman, labourer, servant cannot all have the same training, be shaped in the same pattern, follow the same way of living or be all put under the same tables of the law. Each has his type of nature and there must be a rule for the perfection of that type, or each his function and there must be a canon and ideal of the function. The main necessity is that, that there
must be in all things some wise and understanding car.on and ideal; a lawless impulse of desire and interest and propensity cannot be allowed; even in the frankest following of desire and interest and propensity there must be a rule, a guidance, an ethic and science arising from and answering to some truth of the thing sought, a restraint, an order, a standard of perfection. The rule and training and result differ with the type of the man and the type of the function. The idea of the Indian social system was a harmony of this complexity of artha, kāma and dharma.

At the same time there is a universal embracing dharma, but this is a law of perfection of the human soul; it is a growth of the developing mind and spirit of man into the power and force of certain universally ideal qualities which make up in their harmony the highest type of manhood. This was the ideal of the best, the good or noble man, the self-perfecting individual, ārya, ārṣeha, sajīna, sādhu. The ideal was, if preponderatingly, by no means purely an ethical conception, but also intellectual, social, sympathetic, religious, the flowering of the whole ideal nature of man. The most various qualities met in the best, the good and noble man. Benevolence, beneficence, love, compassion, altruism, patience, kindliness, long-suffering, liberality; courage, heroism, energy, loyalty, continence, truth, honour, justice, faith, obedience and reverence where these were due, but power to govern and direct, a fine modesty and yet a certain strong independence and noble pride; wisdom, intelligence, love of learning, knowledge of all the best thought, an openness to poetry, art and beauty, an educated capacity and skill in works; a strong religious sense, piety, the spiritual turn, in social relations a strict observance of all the dharma, as father, son, husband, brother, kinsman, friend, ruler or subject, master or servant, priest or warrior or worker, king or sage, member of clan or caste; this is the total ideal of the
Arya, the man of noble nature and upbringing, which disengages itself and indeed is clearly portrayed in the written records of ancient India during two millennia. An ideal and rational, a spirit-wise and wordly-wise, a deeply religious, nobly ethical, a firmly yet flexibly intellectual, a scientific and aesthetic, a patient and tolerant, but an arduously self-disciplining culture with a strong eugenistic element was the base of Indian civilisation.

But all this was only foundation and preparation for that highest thing by whose presence human life is exalted beyond itself into something spiritual and divine. As Indian culture raised the crude human life of desire, self-interest and satisfied propensity beyond its first intention to a noble self-exceeding and shapeliness by infusing into it the order and high aims of the Dharma, so it raised the nobler life of the self-perfecting human being beyond its own intention to a mightier self-exceeding and freedom by infusing into it the great aim of liberation, mukti, moksha. The Law and its observance is neither the beginning nor the end of man; for beyond the law he climbs to a great spiritual freedom. Not a noble but ever death-bound manhood, but immortality, freedom, divinity are the highest height of man's perfection. Indian culture held always this highest aim constantly before the eye and insistently inspired with its prospect and light the whole conception of existence, ennobled with its aim the whole life of the individual and cast into a scale of ascension to it the whole ordering of society. The well-governed system of the individual and communal existence, which is always in the first instance a natural functioning, a pursuit of interest, a satisfaction of desire and human need, a combination of knowledge and labour with these ends, but must be controlled and uplifted by the ideals of the Dharma, was founded on an education which, while it fitted man for his role in life, while it stamped on his mind a generous ideal of an accomplished humanity, gave
him at the same time the theory of the highest liberating knowledge and familiarised him with the conditions of a spiritual existence. The symbols of his religion were filled with suggestions which led towards it; at every step he was reminded of lives behind and in front and worlds beyond the material existence, of the Spirit who is greater than the life he informs, of the final goal, of the high immortal freedom. He was not allowed to forget that he had a highest self and that always he was living, moving and had his being in God, in the Spirit, he knew that there were systems and disciplines provided by which the great liberating truth could be realised and to which he could turn and follow them according to his adhikāra, the claim of his nature and his capacity, he saw around him and revered the practicants and the mighty masters of these disciplines. They were the teachers of youth, the summits of his society, the great lights of his culture, the inspirers and fountain-heads of his civilisation. Spiritual freedom and perfection were not figured as a high and far-off ideal, but presented as the common human necessity, a thing for all to grow into, made possible to all on the basis of life and the Dharma, and the spiritual idea governed, enlightened and gathered towards itself all the other life-motives of a great civilised community.
The Future Poetry

THE VICTORIAN POETS

The epoch associated in England with the name of Victoria was in poetry, like that of Pope and Dryden, an age of dominant intellectualism; but, unlike that hard and sterile period, it has been an imaginative, artistic intellectualism, touched with the greater and freer breath of modern thought and its wide interest and fullness of matter, not brass-bound in furbished and narrow bands of social ease and polite refinement, but alive, astir, capable of personal energy and inspiration, aesthetical in its refinements, above all not entirely satisfied with itself, but opened up to some mountain-top prospects, struck across by some moments of prophecy. But still whether we compare it with the inspirations from which it turned or with the inspiration which followed and replaced it, it is a depression, not a height, and without being either faultily faultless or splendidly null, as epochs of a too self-satisfied intellectual enlightenment tend to look in the eyes of the more deeply thinking ages,—as the Roman Augustan, the French grand century, the pinchbeck English Augustan,—it leaves an impression of a too cramped fullness and a too level curiosity. It is a descent into a comfortable and pretty hollow or a well-cultured flatness between high, wild or beautiful mountain ranges behind
and in front a great confused beginning of cliff and sea-shore, sands and rocks and breakers and magic of hills and sea-horizons. There is much in this work to admire, something here and there to stimulate, but only a little that lifts off the feet and carries to the summits of the poetic enthusiasm.

The descent from the uncertain but high elevations of the first romantic, half spiritual outbreak is very marked, baffling and sudden. This is not in the nature of a revolt, an energetic audacity of some new thing,—except for a moment in Swinburne,—but a change of levels, a transition to other more varied but less elevated interests, the substitution of a more curious but less impetuous movement. The rich beauty of Keats is replaced by the careful opulent cultivated picturesqueness of Tennyson, the concentrated personal force of Byron by the many-sided intellectual robustness and energy of Browning, the intense Nature poetry and the strong and grave ethical turn of Wordsworth by the too intellectually conscious eye on Nature and the cultured moralising of Arnold, the pure ethereal lyricism of Shelley by Swinburne's turgid lyrical surge and all too self-conscient fury of foam-tossing sound, and in place of the supernatural visions of Blake and Coleridge we have the mediaeval glamour and languorous fields of dream of Rossetti and Morris. There is a considerable gain, but a deep loss; for this poetry has a more evolved richness, but in that greater richness a greater poverty. The gain is in fullness of language, a more conscious and careful art, a more informed and varied range of thought and interest; but the loss is in spiritual substance and the Pythian height of inspiration. There is a more steady working, but with it a clogged and heavier breath; a wealth of colour and nearer strain of thinking, but a lower flame of the spirit. This labour is assured and in its way always good, but it has a paucity of greatness and a too temperate impulsion.
The intellectual preparation of the previous poetry, the depth and wealth of experience which must have been most audacies of spiritual vision, had been insufficient, coming as it did after a shallow and superficial age of the acute, but limited cult of Reason. The work of the middle nineteenth century was to prepare anew the intellectual ground and to lead up to a more conscious, enriched and careful artistic execution. But it was a truant of intellectual effort in which there was much width of a kind and considerable invention, but a very insufficient height and profundity. In England there was the added misfortune of a reign of rampant philistinism. The Victorian period for all its activity and fruitfulness was by no means one of those great intellectual humanistic ages which the world will look back to with a satisfied sense of clarity or of uplifting. The great flood of free thinking, free inquiry, scientific and artistic vivacity, the rapid breaking of fresh ground, the noble political enthusiasms which stirred France and Germany and Italy and created a new force of democratic humanism in Russia, swept in vain past the English shores defended by their chalk cliffs and downs of self-content, or only broke across them in a few insignificant waves. It is the most unlovely and uninspiring period of the English spirit. Never was the aesthetic sense so drowned in pretentious ugliness, seldom the intelligence crusted in such an armoured imperviousness to fine and subtle thinking, the ebb of spirituality so far out and low. It was a period of smug commercial middle-class prosperity, dull mechanism, hard utilitarianism and a shoddy liberalism bursting and running over with self-content in its narrow practical rationality, spiritual poverty and intellectual ineptitude. Unteachable, it bore with a scornful complacency or bewildered anger or a listening ear of impervious indulgence the lightning shafts of Arnold’s irony, the turbid fulminations of Carlyle, the fiery raids of Ruskin or saw
unaffected others of its fine or great spirits turn for refuge to mediaevalism or socialistic utopias. The work of these forerunners was done in a wilderness of intellectual commonness and busy mediocre energy; it bore fruit afterwards, but only when the century was in its wane and other infant powers of the immenser future were beginning to raise their heads of cloud and light.

But this work of revolt and preparation was done chiefly in prose. Poetry flourishes best when it is the rhythmical expression of the soul of its age, of what is greatest and deepest in it, but still belongs to it, and the poetry of this period suffers by the dull smoke-laden atmosphere in which it flowered; though it profited by the European stir of thought and seeking around and held its own, achieved beauty, achieved in one or two poets a considerable energy, some largeness, occasional heights, there is still something sickly in its luxuriance, a comparative depression and poverty in its thought, a lack in its gifts, in its very accomplishment a sense of something not done. It cannot compare in power, wing, abundance of genius and talent with the contemporary work done in France: as in all intellectual ages the grand stream of poetical achievement is to be found, in spite of the greater poetic energy of the Anglo-Celtic mind, on the continent, in the clear and competent labour of the Latin intelligence. There is certainly much imaginative beauty, much artistic or fine or strong technical execution,—a great deal more in fact of this element than at any previous time,—much excellent work high enough in the second rank, but the inner surge and satisfaction of a free or deep spirit, the strong high-riding pinion or the skyward look, these things are rare in Victorian poetry.

The fame of Tennyson, now a little dimmed and tarnished by the breath of Time, occupied this epoch with a great and immediate brilliance. He is unquestionably the representative English poet of his time. He mirrors
its ordinary cultivated mind as it shaped in the English temperament and intelligence, with an extraordinary fidelity and in a richly furnished and heavily decorated mirror set round with all the art and device that could be appreciated by the contemporary taste. There has been no more consummate master of the language, and this mastery is used with a careful, sure and unfailing hand. Whatever has to be expressed, whether it be of considerable, mediocre or no worth, is yet given a greater than its intrinsic value by a power of speech which without any such remarkable or astonishing energy as would excite or exalt the mind or disturb it from a safe acquiescence and a luxurious ease of reception, has always a sufficient felicity, curiously worked even when it affects simplicity, but with a chastened if not quite chaste curiosity. The turn of phrase almost always hits the mind with a certain, sometimes easy, sometimes elaborate poetic device. It turns always to find and does find the pictorial value of the thing to be described, and even, if such a phrase can be used, the pictorial value of the thought to be seized. There is a similar happiness of device and effect in the verse; if there are no great lyrical, odic or epic outbursts to sweep us out of ourselves, there is the same well-governed craft of effective turn and invention as in the language, the same peculiar manner of easily carried elaborateness, a leisurely but never sluggish self-considering self-adorning flow which succeeds in being immediately received and accepted. The art with which the subject matter is dressed up is of the same kind; a restrained elaborateness, a curious picturesqueness of presentation, a taking, opulent and effective form. The refinement and felicity are not of a kind which call for any unusual receptive power or aesthetic fineness to meet it and feel all its beauty; there is enough and to spare to attract the cultured, nothing to baffle or exceed the ordinary mind. This art is that of a master craftsman, a goldsmith, silver-
smith, jeweller of speech and substance with much of the
decorative painter in his turn, who never travels beyond
general, well-understood and popular ideas and forms,
but gives them by his fineness of manner and felicity of
image a charm and distinction which belong more properly
to rarer and greater or lovelier motives. The achievement
is of a kind which would hardly be worth doing more
than once, but done that once and with such mastery it
takes its place and compels admiration. The spirit is not
filled, but the outer aesthetic mind is caught and for a
time held captive.

But it is doubtful whether the future will attach to
Tennyson's poetry anything at all near to the value it
assumed for the contemporary English mind. When we
try to estimate the substance and see what it permanently
gives or what new thing it discovers for the poetic vision,
we find that there is extraordinarily little in the end.
Tennyson wrote much narrative poetry, but he is not a
great narrative poet. There is a curious blending of incompa-
tible intentions in all his work of this kind and even his
exceptional skill could not save him from a brilliant failure.
He has on the one side a will to convey some high spiri-
tual and ethical intention of life through the imaginative
use of tale and legend, and that gives a scope for a very
noble kind of poetry, but he has not the power to lay a
great hold on the ancient figures and recreate them to be
symbols of a new significance. The Idylls of the King
miss both the romantic and the idyllic beauty and arrive
only at a graceful decorated effective triviality. The grand
old Celtic myths and traditions already strangely mediae-
valised by Malory, but full still of life and large humanity
and colour are modernised into a baffling and disappoin-
ting superficiality and miss all greatness and power of life.
There is no congruity between the form and symbol and
the feeling and substance. They seem solely to be used to
frame a conventional sentimentalism of Victorian domesti-
city and respectable social ethics. But the wearing of the white and scentless flower of a blameless life in a correct button-hole and a tepid sinning without the least tinge of passion or conviction by decorated puppets who are too evidently lay-figures of very modern ladies and gentlemen disguised as knights and dames, was hardly a sufficient justification for evoking the magic figures of old legend and romance. The life so masqueraded misses reality and it does not arrive at any great compensating imaginative or interpretative representation; modernism and the affectation of mediaevalism, conventional reality and the falsetto tones of pseudo-romance destroy each other and produce a glittering incongruity. There is a void of the true sincerity of poetic vision at the heart of the original conception and no amount of craft and skill in language or descriptive detail and picture can cure that original deficiency. The poet has no meditative, no emotional, impassioned, no close or revealing grasp on life, and on the other hand no deep interpretative idea, and without one or other of these things narrative poetry of the modern kind cannot succeed; it becomes a body without soul or life-breath. Even when Tennyson confines himself to the poetic modern tale without these disguises or any motive but the ethically pointed telling, he arrives at the same result, a richly coloured triviality.

This principal work of his maturity fails; its popularity springs from its work of detail and its appeal to the superficial sentiment of the time; but some earlier work of the kind had a nobler success. In the *Morte d'Arthur* there is some natural magic and vision which if it had been sustained and kept the same delicate and mystic strain, might have made the cycle of idylls a new poetic revelation. In other poems, in the *Lotus-eaters, Ulysses, Oenone*, where set narrative is avoided and the legend is a starting-point or support for thought, vision and beauty, some fullness of these things is reached; but still the
form is greater than the substance which has no heights and only occasionally strikes depths. Tennyson does not figure largely as a lyrical poet in spite of one or two inspired and happy moments; for he has neither the lyrical passion and intoxication nor the profounder depth of lyrical feeling. In his description of Nature there is no greater seeing, but a painting of vivid details detached for simile and ornament, and though he worked up a great accuracy of observation and colour, the deeper sincerity of the born Nature-poets is absent. Finally he gives us a good deal of thinking of a kind in often admirably telling phrase and with much art of setting, but he is not a revealing poetical thinker. His thought seldom escapes from the conventional limits of a cultivated, but not a large or original Victorian mind; it beautifies most often the obvious and commonplace or the current and acceptable ideas; with rare exceptions he has neither exaltations nor profundities nor subtleties nor surprises. A great poetical craftsman turning many forms to account for the displaying of an unusual power of descriptive and decorative language and a verse of most skilled device, but no very great purpose and substance, this he is from beginning to end of his creation. His art suffers from the excess of value of form over value of content; it incurs a liability to a besetting note of artificiality, a frequent falsetto tone of prettiness, an excessive stress, a colouring which is often too bright for the stuff it hues and is unevenly laid, but it is always taking and effective. By his very limitation of mind he becomes the representative poet of a certain side of the English mentality, not in its originality and adventurous power, but in its temperate convention and fixity, renders its liberalism and its conservatism, its love of freedom and dislike of idealism, its surface common sense of doubt and traditional belief, its successful way of dealing with its material, its formal ethicism and its absence of passion. But to all these things he brings an
artistic decorative quality which is new in English poetry. He has left his stamp on the language and has given starting-points and forms for poets of a rarer force to turn to greater uses and pass beyond them to a new construction.

Tennyson is the most representative and successful poet of the Victorian epoch. Others who have not the same limitations, either fall below him in art or have a less sustained and considerable bulk and variety of work. Swinburne brings in into the poetry of the time an element to which the rest are strangers, passion, fire, lyrical sublimity and some strains of prophecy. He brings in too the continental note of denial, atheistic affirmation, sceptical revolt, passionate political idealism, but to these things he gives the Anglo-Celtic aggressiveness and vehemence, not the Latin sureness and clarity. He is a great lyrist, but like many of his contemporaries revels too much in device and virtuosities of form and his lyrical thought and sentiment turned always towards the choric ode and dithyramb loses itself too often in a sonorous gurge and violence of sound. The quieter classical power of Arnold which voices the less confident search of a self-doubting scepticism, has more lucidity, balance and grace, a fine though restricted and tenuous strain of thought and a deep and penetrating melancholy, the mediaevalism and aesthetic mysticism of Rossetti, the slow dreamy narrative of Morris which takes us to a refuge from the blatancy and ugliness of the Victorian environment into the gracious world of old story and legend, bring in each their own significance for the age and help towards that enrichment of the language of thought and artistic poetical feeling which is the chief work of this intervening time. They have all three this characteristic that they are studious artists,—it is significant that two of them are painters and decorative craftsmen,—who are concerned to give beauty and finish to the material of poetry rather than original poets with
a large power of inspiration. Their range is small, but they have brought into English poetry a turn for fine execution which is likely to be a long-abiding influence.

Browning stands apart from the contemporary poets in his striking force and originality. He is in many ways the very opposite of them all. He is the one robust and masculine voice among these artists, sceptics, idealists or dreamers, always original, vigorous, inexhaustible; with a great range of interests, a buoyant hold on life, a strong and clear eye, an assured belief and hope but no traditional conventionality, he alone adequately represents the curious, critical, eager, exploring mind of the age. He has depth and force and abundance of thought, which it not of the very first greatness and originality, is open to all manner of questioning and speculation and new idea. His regard ranges over history and delights in its pictures of the stir and energy of life and its changing scenes, over man and his thought and character and emotion and action, looks into every cranny, follows every tortuous winding, seizes on each leap and start of the human machine. He is a student, critic, psychologist, thinker. He seeks to interpret, like certain French poets, the civilisations and the ages. His genius is essentially dramatic; for though he has written in many lyrical forms, the lyric is used to represent a moment in the drama of life or character, and though he uses the narrative, his treatment of it is dramatic and not narrative, as when he takes an Italian fait-divers and makes each personage relate or discuss it in such a way as to reveal his own motive, character, thought and passion. He does not succeed as a dramatist in the received forms because he is too analytic, too much interested in the mechanism of temperament, character, emotion and changing idea to concentrate sufficiently on their results in action; but he has an unrivalled force in seizing on a moment of the soul or mind and in following its convolutions as they start into dramatic thought, feel-
ing and impulse. He of all these writers has hold of the
substance of the work marked out for a poet of the age.
And with all these gifts we might have had in him the
great interpretative poet, one might almost say, the Sha-
kespeare of his time. But by the singular fatality which
so often pursues the English poetical genius, the one gift
needed to complete him was denied. Power was there
and the hold of his material; what was absent was the
essential faculty of artistic form and poetic beauty, so
eminent in his contemporaries, a fatal deficiency. This
great creator was no artist; this strength was too robust
and direct to give forth sweetness. There was no lack of
a certain kind of skill. If not an artist in verse, Browning
is a consummate technician, one might almost say a
mechanician in verse; his very roughnesses and crudities
and contortions have the appearance of device and calcu-
lation. He had an immense command of language and
was never at a lack for forcible and efficient expression,
but in its base it was the language of a prosaist and not a
poet, of the intellect and not the imagination. He could
throw into it strong colours, has sometimes though too
seldom a vigorous richness and strong grace, achieves
often a lyric elevation, but they supervene upon this base
and do not ordinarily suffuse and change it or elevate it
to a high customary level. Much strong and vigorous work
he did of a great and robust substance, won many victo-
ries, but the supreme greatness cannot come in poetry
without the supreme beauty.

This is the balance of the Victorian epoch; a con-
siderable intellectual and artistic endeavour, contradicting,
overcoming but still hampered by an ungenial atmos-
phere; two remarkable poets held back from the first
greatness, one by imperfection of form, the other by im-
perfection of substance; four artists of small range, but
with work of an accomplished, but overpitched or thin
or languorous beauty; an enrichment and strengthening of
the language which makes it more capable of fine and varied and curious thought, and the creation of an artistic conscience which may impose in the future a check on the impulse of an overabundant energy to imperfection of eager haste and vagary in execution. If the promise of the coming age is fulfilled, it may be remembered as a fine, if limited period of preparation for the discovery of new, more beautiful and grander fields of poetry.
The Ascending Unity

The human mind loves a clear simplicity of view; the more trenchant a statement, the more violently it is caught by it and inclined to acceptance. This is not only natural to our first crudity of thinking, and the more attractive because it makes things delightfully easy to handle and saves an immense amount of worry of enquiry and labour of reflection, but, modified, it accompanies us to the higher levels of a more watchful mentality. Alexander's method with the fateful knot is our natural and favourite dealing with the tangled web of things, the easy cut, the royal way, the facile philosophy of this and not this, that and not that, a strong yes and no, a simple division, a pair of robust opposites, a clean cut of classification. Our reason acts by divisions, even our ordinary illogical thought is a stumbling and bungling summary analysis and arrangement of the experience that offers itself to us with such unending complexity. But the cleanest and clearest division is that which sets us most at ease, because it impresses on our still childlike intelligence a sense of conclusive and luminous simplicity.

But the average mind enamoured of a straight and plain thinking, for which, for a famous instance, that great doctor Johnson thought with the royal force dear to all strong men when he destroyed Berkeley's whole philosophy by simply kicking a stone and saying "There I prove
the reality of matter," is not alone affected by this turn towards simple solutions. Even the philosopher, though he inclines to an intricate reasoning by the way, is best delighted when he can get by it to some magnificently conclusive conclusion, some clean-cutting distinction between Brahman and non-Brahman, Reality and unreality or any of the host of mental oppositions on which so many "isms" have been founded. These royal roads of philosophy have the advantage that they are highly and grandly cut for the steps of the metaphysical intellect and at the same time attract and overpower the ordinary mind by the grandiose eminence of the peak in which they end, some snow-white heaven-cutting Matterhorn of sovereign formula. What a magnificent exterminating sweep do we hear for instance in that old renowned sentence, \textit{Brahma satyam jagan mithyā}, the Eternal alone is true, the universe is a lie, and how these four victorious words seem to settle the whole business of God and man and world and life at once and for ever in their uncompromising antithesis of affirmation and negation. But after all perhaps when we come to think more at large about the matter, we may find that Nature and Existence are not of the same mind as man in this respect, that there is here a great complexity which we must follow with patience and that those ways of thinking have most chance of a fruitful truth-yielding, which like the inspired thinking of the Upanishads take in many sides at once and reconcile many conflicting conclusions. One can hew material for a hundred philosophies out of the Upanishads as if from some bottomless Titans' quarry and yet no more exhaust it than one can exhaust the opulent bosom of our mother Earth or the riches of our father Ether.

Man began this familiar process of simple cuttings by emphasizing his sense of himself as man; he made of himself a being separate, unique and peculiar in this world, for whom or round whom everything else was sup-

\textit{...}
posed to be created,—and all the rest, the subhuman existence, animal, plant, inanimate object, everything to the original atom seemed to him a creation different from himself, separate, of another nature; he condemned all to be without a soul, he was the one ensouled being. He saw life, defined it by certain characters that struck his mind, and set apart all other existence as non-living, inanimate. He looked at his earth, made it the centre of the universe, because the one inhabited scene of embodied souls or living beings; but the innumerable other heavenly bodies were only lights to illumine earth's day or to relieve her night. He perceived the insufficiency of this one earthly life only to create another opposite definition of a perfect heavenly existence and set it in the skies he saw above him. He perceived his "I" or self and conceived of it as a separate embodied ego, the centre of all his earthly and heavenly interests, and cut off all other being as the not-I which was there for him to make the best use he could out of it for this little absorbing entity. When he looked beyond these natural sense-governed divisions, he still followed the same logical policy. Conceiving of spirit, he cut it off sharply as a thing by itself, the opposite of all that was not spirit; an antinomy between spirit and matter became the base of his self-conception, or else more amply between spirit on the one side and on the other mind, life and body. Then conceiving of self as a pure entity, all else being not-self was separated from it as of quite another character. Incidentally, with the eye of his inveterate dividing mind, he saw it as his own separate self and, just as before he had made the satisfaction of ego his whole business on earth, so he made the soul's own individual salvation its one all-important spiritual and heavenly transaction. Or he saw the universal and denied the reality of the individual, refusing to them any living unity or co-existent reality, or saw a transcendent Absolute separate from individual and universe so that
these became a figment of the unreal, Asat. Being and Becoming are to his clean-cutting confidently trenchant mind two opposite categories, of which one or the other must be denied, or made a temporary construction or a sum, or sicklied over with the pale hue of illusion, and not Becoming accepted as an eternal display of Being. These conceptions of the sense-guided or the intellectual reason still pursue us, but a considering wisdom comes more and more to perceive that conclusive and satisfying as they may seem and helpful though they may be for action of life, action of mind, action of spirit, they are yet, as we now put them, constructions. There is a truth behind them, but a truth which does not really permit of these isolations. Our classifications set up too rigid walls; all borders are borders only and not impassable gulfs. The one infinitely variable Spirit in things carries over all of himself into each form of his omnipresence; the self, the Being is at once unique in each, common in our collectivities and one in all beings. God moves in many ways at once in his own invisible unity.

The conception of man as a separate and quite peculiar being in the universe has been rudely shaken down by a patient and disinterested examination of the process of nature. He is without equal or peer and occupies a privileged position on earth, but is not solitary in his being; all the evolution is there to explain this seeker of spiritual greatness embodied in a fragile body and narrow life and bounded mind who in turn by his being and seeking explains to itself the evolution. The animal prepares and imperfectly prefigures man and is itself prepared in the plant as that too is foreseen obscurely by all that precedes it in the terrestrial expansion. Man himself takes up the miraculous play of the electron and atom, draws up through the complex development of the protoplasm the chemical life of subvital things, perfects the original nervous system of the plant in the physiology of the completed animal being, consummates and repeats
rapidly in his embryonic growth the past evolution of the animal form into the human perfection and, once born, rears himself from the earthward and downward animal proneness to the erect figure of the spirit who is already looking up to his farther heavenward evolution. All the terrestrial past of the world is there summarised in man, and not only has Nature given as it were the physical sign that she has formed in him an epitome of her universal forces, but psychologically also he is one in his subconscious being with her obscurer subanimal life, contains in his mind and nature the animal and rises out of all this substratum into his conscious manhood.

Whatever soul there is in man is not a separate spiritual being which has no connection with all the rest of the terrestrial family, but seems to have grown out of it by a taking up of it all and an exceeding of its sense by a new power and meaning of the spirit. This is the universal nature of the type man on earth, and it is reasonable to suppose that whatever has been the past history of the individual soul, it must have followed the course of the universal nature and evolution. The separative pride which would break up the unity of Nature in order to make of ourselves another as well as a greater creation, has no physical warrant, but has been found on the contrary to be contradicted by all the evidence; and there is no reason to suppose that it has any spiritual justification. The physical history of humankind is the growth out of the subvital and the animal life into the greater power of manhood; our inner history as indicated by our present nature, which is the animal plus something that exceeds it, must have been a simultaneous and companion growing on the same curve into the soul of humanity. The ancient Indian idea which refused to separate nature of man from the universal Nature or self of man from the one common self, accepted this consequence of its seeing. Thus the Tantra assigns eighty millions of plant and animal lives as the sum of the preparation for a human
birth, and without binding ourselves to the figure, we can, appreciate the force of its idea of the difficult soul evolution by which humanity has come or perhaps constantly comes into being. We can only get away from this necessity of an animal past by denying all soul to subhuman nature.

But this denial is only one of the blind, hasty and presumptuous isolations of the human mind which shut up in its own prison of separate self-perception refuses to see its kinship with the rest of natural being. Because soul or spirit works in the animal on a lower scale, we are not warranted in thinking that there is no soul in him any more than a divine or superhuman being would be justified in regarding us as soulless bodies or soulless minds because of the grovelling downward drawn inferiority of our half-animal nature. The figure which we use when sometimes we say of one of our own kind that he has no soul, is only a figure; it means only that the animal type of soul predominates in him over the more developed soul type which we expect in the finer spiritual figure of humanity. But this animal element is present in every mother's son of us; it is our legacy, our inheritance from the common earth-mother: and how spiritually do we get this element of our being or incur the burden of this inheritance, if it is not the earning of our own past, the power we have kept from a bygone formative experience? The spiritual law of Karma is that the nature of each being can be only the result of his past energies; to suppose a soul which assumes and continues a past karma that is not its own, is to cut a line of dissociation across this law and bring in an unknown and unverified factor. But if we admit it, we must account for that factor, we must explain or discover by what law, by what connection, by what necessity, by what strange impulsion of choice a spirit pure of all animal nature assumes a body and nature of animality prepared for it by a lower order of being. If there is no affinity and no con-
sequence of past identity or connection, this becomes an unnatural and impossible assumption. Then it is the most reasonable and concordant conclusion that man has the animal nature,—and indeed if we consider well his psychology, we find that he houses many kind of animal souls or rather an amalgam of animal natures,—because the developing self in him like the developed body has had a past subhuman evolution. This conclusion preserves the unity of Nature and its developing order; and it concurs with the persistent evidence of an interaction and parallelism which we perceive between the inward and the outward, the physical and the mental phenomenon,—a correspondence and companionship which some would explain by making mind a result and notation of the act of nerve and body, but which can now be better accounted for by seeing in vital and physical phenomenon a consequence and minor notation of a soul-action which it at the same time hints and conceals from our sense-bound mentality. Finally, it makes of soul or spirit, no longer a miraculous accident or intervention in a material universe, but a constant presence in it and the secret of its order and its existence.

The concession of an animal soul existence and of its past subhuman births slowly and guardedly preparing the birth into humanity cannot stop short at this abrupt line in the natural gradation. For man epitomises in his being not only the animal existence below him, but the obscurer subanimal being. But if it is difficult for us to concede a soul to the despised animal form and mind, it is still more difficult to concede it to the brute subconsciousness of the subanimal nature. Ancient belief made this concession with the happiest ease, saw a soul, a living godhead everywhere in the animate and in the inanimate and nothing was to its view void of a spiritual existence. The logical abstracting intellect with its passion for clean sections intermediately swept away these large beliefs as an imaginative superstition or a primitive animism and,
mastered by its limiting and dividing definitions, it drove a trenchant sectional cleavage between man and animal, animal and plant, animate and inanimate being. But now to the eye of our enlarging reason this system of intolerant cleavages is in rapid course of disappearance. The human mind is a development from what is inchoate in the animal mentality; there is, even, in that inferior type a sort of suppressed reason, for that name may well be given to a power of instinctive and customary conclusion from experience, association, memory and nervous response, and man himself begins with these things though he develops out of this animal inheritance a free human self-detaching power of reflective will and intelligence. And it is now clear that the nervous life which is the basis of that physical mentality in man and animal, exists also in the plant with a fundamental identity; not only so, but it is akin to us by a sort of nervous psychology which amounts to the existence of a suppressed mind. A subconscious mind in the plant, it is now not unreasonable to suggest,—but is it not at the summits of plant experience only half subconscious?—becomes conscious in the animal body. When we go lower down, we find hints that there are involved in the subvital most brute material forms the rudiments of precisely the same energy of life and its responses.

And the question then arises whether there is not an unbroken continuity in Nature, no scissions and sections, no unbridgeable gulls or impassable borders, but a complete unity, matter instinct with a suppressed life, life instinct with a suppressed mind, mind instinct with a suppressed energy of a diviner intelligence, each new form or type of birth evolving a stage in the succession of suppressed powers, and there too the evolution not at an end, but this large and packed intelligence the means of liberating a greater and now suppressed self-power of the Spirit. A spiritual evolution thus meets our eye in the world which an inner force raises up a certain scale of
gradations of its births in form by the unfolding of its own hidden powers to the greatness of its complete and highest reality. The word of the ancient Veda stands, out of all the ocean of inconscience, apraketam salilam sarvam idam, it is that one spiritual Existent who is born by the greatness of his own energy, tapasas tan mahind aadyata ekaṃ. Where in this evolution does the thing we call soul make its first appearance? One is obliged to ask, was it not there must it not have been there from the beginning, even though asleep, or, as we may say, somnambulist in matter? If man were only a superior animal with a greater range of physical mind, we might conceivably say that there was no soul or spirit, but only three successive powers of Energy in a series of the forms of matter. But in this human intelligence there does appear at its summit a greater power of spirit; we come to a consciousness which is not limited by its physical means and formulas. This highest thing is not as it might first appear, an unsubstantial sublimation of mind and mind a subtle sublimation of living matter. This greatness turns out to be the very self-existent substance and power of our being; all other things seem in comparison only its lesser forms of itself which it uses for a progressive revelation; spirit in the end proves itself the first and not only the last, Alpha as well as Omega, and the whole secret of existence from its beginning. We come to a fathomless conception of this all, sarvam idam, in which we see that there is an obscure omnipresent life in matter, activised by that life a secret sleeping mind, sheltered in that sleep of mind an involved all-knowing all-originating Spirit. But then soul is not to be conceived of as a growth or birth of which we can fix a date of its coming or a stage in the evolution which brings it to a first capacity of formation, but rather all here is assumption of form by a secret soul which becomes in the self-seeking of life increasingly manifest to a growing self-conscience. All assumption of form is a constant and yet progressive birth
or becoming of the soul, sambhava, sambhāti,—the dumb and blind and brute is that and not only the finely, mentally conscious human or the animal existence. All this infinite becoming is birth into form of the Spirit. This is the truth, obscure at first or vague to the intelligence, but luminous to an inner experience, on which the ancient Indian idea of rebirth took its station.

But the repeated birth of the same individual does not at first sight seem to be indispensable in this overpowering universal unity. To the logical intellect it might appear to be a contradiction; for all is the one self, spirit, existence born into nature, assuming a multitude of forms, ascending many gradations of its stages of self-revelation. That summary cutting of existence into the I and the not-I which was the convenience of our egoistic notion of things, a turn of mind so powerful for action, would seem to be only a practical or mechanical device of the one Spirit to support its separative phenomenon of birth and conscious variation of combined proceeding, a sorcerer's trick of the universal intelligence; it is only apparent fact of being, not its truth,—there is no separation, only a universal unity, one spirit. But may not this again be a swinging to the opposite extreme? As the ego was an excessive scission in the unity of being, this idea of an ocean of unity in which our life would be only an inconstant momentary wave, may be a violent excision of something indispensable to the universal order. Individuality is as important a thing to the way of the spirit of existence as universality. The individual is that potent secret of its being upon which the universal stresses and leans and makes the knot of power of all its workings: as the individual grows in consciousness and knowledge and all divine power and quality, increasingly he becomes aware of the universal in himself, but of himself too in the universality, of his own past not begun and ended in the single body, but opening to future consummations. If the aim of the universal in birth is
to become self-conscient and possess and enjoy its being, still it is done through the individual's flowering and perfection; if to escape from its own workings be the last end, still it is the individual that escapes while the universal seems content to continue its multitudinous births to all eternity. Therefore the individual would appear to be a real power of the Spirit and not a simple illusion or device, except in so far as the universal too may be, as some would have it, an immense illusion or a grand imposed device. On this line of thinking we arrive at the idea of some great spiritual existence of which universal and individual are two companion powers, pole and pole of its manifestation, indefinite circumference and multiple centre of the activised realities of its being.

This is a way of seeing things, harmonious at least in its complexity, supple and capable of an all-embracing scope, which we can take as a basis for our ideas of rebirth,—an ascending unity, a spirit involved in material existence which scales wonderfully up many gradations through life to organised mind and beyond mind to the evolution of its own complete self-consciousness, the individual following that gradation and the power for its self-crowning. If human mind is the last word of its possibility on earth, then rebirth must end in man and proceed by some abrupt ceasing either to an existence on other planes or to an annulment of its spiritual circle. But if there are higher powers of the spirit which are attainable by birth, then the ascent is not finished, greater assumptions may lie before the soul which has reached and is lifted to a perfecting of the high scale of humanity. It may even be that this ascending rebirth is not the long upward rocket shooting of a conscious being out of matter or its whirling motion in mind destined to break up and dissolve in some high air of calm nothingness or silent timeless immity, but a progress to some great display of the Divinity which shall give a wise and glorious significance to his persistent intention in an eternal creation. Or that at least may be one power of the Eternal's infinite potentiality.
AARYA

A PHILOSOPHICAL REVIEW

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CONTENTS

ESSAYS ON THE GITA................ Aurobindo Ghose
    The Way and the Bhakta

THE SYNTHESIS OF YOGA............. A. G.
    Chapter LVI
    The Liberation of the Spirit

THE ETERNAL WISDOM................. Paul Richard
    The Victory of the Divine—To choose today

A RATIONALISTIC CRITIC ON INDIAN CULTURE (6)

THE FUTURE POETRY
    Recent English Poetry

INVOLUTION AND EVOLUTION
    1919
Essays on the Gita

THE WAY AND THE BHAKTA

In the eleventh chapter of the Gita the main object of the teaching has been completed and the command to the divine action for the sake of the world in union with the Spirit who dwells in the world and all its beings and in whom all its action takes place, has been given. The disciple has been led from the old poise of the normal man and the standards, motives, outlook, egoistic consciousness of his ignorance, all that had finally failed him in the hour of his spiritual crisis; the same action which on that basis he had rejected, he has now been brought to admit and accept for the doing on a new basis of a reconciling greater knowledge, a diviner consciousness, a high impersonal motive, a spiritual standard of oneness with the will of the Divine acting on the world from the fountain light and with the motive power of the spiritual nature. A knowledge by which he embraces oneness with the Divine and through the Divine oneness with all things and beings, a will emptied of egoism and acting only by the command and as an instrumentation of the secret Master of works, a divine love whose one aspiration is towards close union with the supreme Soul of all existence, and by the unity of these three perfected powers a unity with the transcendent and universal Spirit and all Nature and all creatures is the basis of action offered to the liberated.
From that foundation the soul in him can suffer the instrumental nature to act in safety, delivered from egoism and its limitations, rescued from all fear of sin and evil and consequence, exalted out of that bondage to the outward nature and the limited action which is the knot of the Ignorance. The difficulty which had been raised by the antinomy between the freedom of the Spirit and the bondage of the soul in Nature, has been solved by a supreme reconciliation. That antinomy exists for the mind in the ignorance; it ceases to exist for the spirit in its knowledge.

But there is something more to be said in order to bring out all the meaning of this great spiritual change. The twelfth chapter leads up to this remaining knowledge and the last six that follow develop it to a grand final conclusion. This thing that remains still to be said, turns upon the difference between the current Vedantic view of spiritual liberation and the larger comprehensive liberation which the teaching of the Gita opens to the spirit: that difference there is now a pointed return. The current Vedantic way led through the door of an austere and exclusive knowledge; the Yoga, the oneness which was recognised as the means and the absorbing essence of the spiritual release, was a Yoga of knowledge, the oneness with a supreme immutable indefinable unmanifested Brahman, infinite, silent, intangible above all this universe of relations. But in the way proposed by the Gita knowledge is indeed the indispensable foundation, but impersonal works are the first indispensable means and love and divine adoration—the relationless unmanifest immovable Brahman is beyond love and adoration, for these things imply a relation,—are the supreme power for the release and the spiritual perfection: and the Godhead with whom the soul of man has to enter into oneness, is indeed in his supreme status transcendent, unthinkable, greater than the manifestation. Parabrahman: but he is too at
the same time the supreme soul of all things, he is the supreme Master of works and universal nature, he is the supreme Lord inhabiting as its self the soul and mind and body of the creature; he is Purushottama, Parameshwara, Paramatman. And in all these equal aspects he is the same eternal Godhead. It is an awakening to this integral knowledge which is the basis of the release and perfection; it is this Godhead in the unity of all his aspects to whom the works and the adoration and the knowledge have to be directed as an inner sacrifice; it is this supreme soul, Purushottama, transcending the universe, but also containing, possessing, inhabiting it, as figured in the vision of Kurukshetra, into whom the liberated spirit has to enter after knowledge and vision of him in all the principles of his being and to enjoy his oneness, \( jn\acute{\text{a}}tum \, d\acute{\text{r}}\acute{\text{a}}shtum \, tat\acute{\text{t}}\acute{\text{e}}\acute{\text{n}}a \, p\acute{\text{r}}\acute{\text{a}}v\acute{\text{e}}s\acute{\text{h}}\acute{\text{t}}\acute{\text{u}}m \, \text{cha} \). The liberation of the Gita is not a self-oblivious abolition of the soul’s personal being in the absorption of the One, \( s\acute{\text{a}}vy\acute{\text{u}}\acute{j}y\acute{\text{a}} \, m\acute{\text{u}}\acute{k}t\acute{i} \), it is all kinds of union at once. There is a becoming one with the supreme Godhead in essence of being and consciousness and bliss, \( s\acute{\text{a}}vy\acute{\text{u}}\acute{j}y\acute{\text{a}} \),—for one object of this Yoga is to become Brahman, \( b\acute{\text{r}}\acute{\text{a}}\acute{\text{m}}\acute{\text{a}}b\acute{\text{h}}\acute{\text{u}}\acute{\text{t}}\acute{\text{a}} \); an eternal dwelling in the being of the supreme, \( s\acute{\text{a}}l\acute{\text{o}}k\acute{\text{y}}\acute{\text{a}} \),—for it is said “Thou shalt dwell in me, \( n\acute{\text{i}}\acute{\text{v}}\acute{\text{i}}\acute{\text{a}}\acute{s}\acute{\text{i}}\acute{\text{h}}\acute{\text{y}}\acute{\text{u}}\acute{s} \, m\acute{\text{a}}\acute{\text{y}}\acute{\text{y}}\acute{\text{e}}\acute{\text{r}} \); an eternal love and adoration in this uniting nearness and the embrace of the liberated spirit by its Lover and enveloping Self of infinity, \( s\acute{\text{a}}m\acute{\text{i}}\acute{\text{p}}\acute{\text{y}}\acute{\text{a}} \); and a unity of the soul’s liberated nature with the divine nature, \( s\acute{\text{a}}d\acute{\text{r}}\acute{\text{i}}\acute{\text{t}}\acute{\text{y}}\acute{\text{a}} \, m\acute{\text{u}}\acute{k}t\acute{i} \),—for the perfection of the free spirit is to become even as the Divine, \( m\acute{\text{u}}\acute{\text{a}}\acute{\text{d}}\acute{\text{h}}\acute{\acute{\text{v}}\acute{\acute{\text{a}}}v\acute{\acute{\text{a}}}m \, \acute{\acute{\text{a}}t\acute{\acute{\text{g}}}\acute{\acute{\text{a}}}\acute{\acute{\text{t}}}\acute{\acute{\text{a}}}h} \), to be one with him in the law of its being, \( s\acute{\text{a}}d\acute{\text{h}}\acute{\text{a}}\acute{\text{r}}\acute{\text{m}}\acute{\text{y}}\acute{\text{a}}m \, \acute{\acute{\text{a}}t\acute{\acute{\text{g}}}\acute{\acute{\text{a}}}\acute{\acute{\text{t}}}\acute{\acute{\text{a}}}h} \). The orthodox Yoga of knowledge aims at immergence in the one infinite being, \( s\acute{\text{a}}\acute{\text{y}}\acute{\text{u}}\acute{j}y\acute{\text{a}} \), and looks upon that alone as the real liberation; the Yoga of adoration envisages eternal habitation or nearness as the greater release, \( s\acute{\text{a}}l\acute{\text{o}}k\acute{\text{y}}\acute{\text{a}} \, s\acute{\text{a}}m\acute{\text{i}}\acute{\text{p}}\acute{\text{y}}\acute{\text{a}} \); the Yoga of works leads to oneness in power of being and nature,
sadriya: but the Gita with its catholic integrality fuses them all into one divine freedom and perfection.

Arjuna is made to raise the question of this difference. It must be remembered that the distinction between the impersonal immutable Akshara Purusha and the greater supreme Soul of impersonality and divine personality, implied in the later chapters and in the divine "I" of which Krishna has constantly spoken, aham, mam, has as yet not been quite expressly and distinctly drawn; we have been throughout anticipating this crucial distinction in order to understand from the beginning the full significance of the Gita's message and not have to go back again, as we would otherwise be obliged, over the same ground in the light of this greater truth. Arjuna has been enjoined first to sink his separate personality by knowledge of oneness in the calm impersonality of the one eternal and immutable self, a teaching which agreed well with his previous notions; but he has been now confronted by the vision of this transcendent and universal Godhead and commanded to seek unity with him by knowledge, works and adoration. Therefore he asks now in order to have a doubt cleared which might otherwise have arisen, "Those devotees who thus by a constant union seek after thee, tvam, and those who seek after the unmanifest Immutable, which of these have the greater knowledge of Yoga?"

This recalls the distinction made in the beginning by such phrases as "in the self, then in me, athmani atho mayi": Arjuna points the distinction, tvam, aksharam avyaktam.

Thou, he says in substance, art the supreme source and origin of all beings, immanent in all things, pervading the universe with thy forms, manifest in thy Vibhutis, manifest in creatures, manifest in Nature, dwelling as the Lord of works in the world and in our hearts by thy mighty world-Yoga: as such I have to know, adore, unite myself with thee in all my being, consciousness, thoughts, feelings, actions, satata-yuktam. But what then of this Im-
mutable who never manifests, never puts on any form, stands back and apart from all action, enters into no relation, is eternally silent and one and impersonal and immobile? This eternal Self is the greater Principle according to all current notions, not the Godhead in the manifestation; the unmanifest, not the manifest is the eternal Spirit. How then is the union which admits the manifestation the greater Yoga-knowledge?

To this question Krishna replies with an emphatic decisiveness, "Those who found their mind in Me and by constant union, possessed of a supreme faith, seek after Me, I hold to be the most perfectly in union of Yoga." The supreme faith is that which sees God in all, in the manifestation and the non-manifestation; the perfect union is that which meets the Divine at every moment, in all action, with all the integralty of the being. But those also who seek after the indefinable unmanifest Immutable alone, says the Godhead, arrive at me. They are not mistaken in their aim, but they follow not only a more difficult, but a less complete and perfect path. The Immutable is my own all-pervading impersonality, unthinkable, immobile, constant, omnipresent, supporting the action of personality though not sharing in it. It offers no hold to the mind, but can only be gained by a motionless spiritual impersonality; those who follow after it have to restrain and draw in completely the action of the mind and senses. But still by the equality of their understanding, their seeing of one self in all things, their tranquil benignancy of silent will for the good of all existences they too meet me in all beings. As those who unite themselves with the Divine in all ways of their existence, sarva-bhūvena, enter largely and fully into the fountainhead of universal things, so too the seekers who climb through this more difficult exclusive oneness, find in the end the same Eternal. But this is a more arduous way; it is not the full and natural movement of the spi-
ritualised human being.

But it must not be thought that because it is more arduous, therefore it is a higher and more effective process. The way of the Gita leads more early, naturally, normally to the same liberation; for its acceptance of the divine Personality does not imply any attachment to the mental and sensuous limitations of embodied Nature; on the contrary it brings a swift and effectual unchaining from the phenomenal bondage of death and birth. The Yogi of exclusive knowledge imposes on himself a painful struggle with the manifold demands of his being, denies them even their highest satisfaction, cuts away from him even the upward impulses of his spirit whenever they imply relations; but the way of the Gita finds out the upward trend of all our being and by turning it Godwards uses knowledge, will, feeling, the instinct for perfection as so many puissant wings of a mounting liberation. The unmanifest Brahman in its indefinable unity is a thing which embodied beings can only arrive at with a constant mortification, a suffering of all the repressed members, a stern difficulty, duhkham avāpyate, klesho adhikalaras tesham. The indefinable oneness accepts all that climb to it, but offers no help of relation, gives no foothold to the climber. All has to be done by a severe individual effort and austerity. How different is it for those who seek after the Purushottama in the way of the Gita! When they meditate on him with a Yoga which sees none else, because it sees all to be Vasudeva, he meets them at every point, with innumerable forms and faces, holds up the lamp of knowledge within and floods with it the whole of existence, so that they discern the supreme Spirit in every form and face, arrive at once through all Nature to the Lord of Nature, through all beings to the Soul of all being, through themselves to the Self of all that they are, so that they break through a hundred opening issues at once into that from which everything has its origin. The
other method of a difficult relationless stillness tries to get away from all action even though that is impossible to embodied beings; but here the actions are all given up to the supreme Master of action and he as the supreme Will meets the will of sacrifice and takes from it its burden, assumes to himself the charge of all the actions of the divine Nature in him. And when too in the high passion of love the devotee of the Lover and Friend of beings casts upon him all his heart of consciousness, then swiftly the Supreme comes to him as the saviour and deliverer and exalts him by a happy embrace of his being out of the waves of the sea of death in his mortal nature into the secure bosom of Eternity.

This then is the swiftest, largest and greatest way. On me, says the Divine to the soul of man, repose all thy mind, in me lodge all thy understanding, I will lift them up into the blaze of the divine love and will and knowledge to myself from whom these things flow. Doubt not that thou shalt dwell in Me above this mortal existence. The chain of the limiting earthly nature cannot hold the spirit exalted by the passion, the power and the light of the eternal love, will and knowledge. No doubt, in this way too there are difficulties; for there is the lower nature with its downward gravitation which resists the motion of ascent and clogs the wings of the exaltation. The divine consciousness even when found at first in great moments or in calm and splendid durations, cannot at first be altogether held; there is felt perhaps an inability to keep the consciousness fixed steadily in the Divine. But by the practice of union, by constant repetition of the highest experience, that grows upon the being and takes permanent possession. Is this also found too difficult because of the power of the outward-going movement of mind? Then the way is simple, to do all actions for the sake of the Lord of the action, so that every outward-going movement of the mind shall be associated with the
supreme inner truth of the being and called back even in
the very movement to the reality and connected with its
source. Then the presence of the Purushottama will grow
upon the natural being, till it is filled with it; all life will
become a constant remembering of God and so the per-
fection will come, the unity of the whole existence of the
human soul with the supreme Existence. But it may be
that even this constant remembering of God and lifting
up of the actions to him is felt to be beyond the power
of the limited mind, because in its forgetfulness it turns
to the action and its outward object and will not remem-
ber to look within and lay the action on the divine altar
of the Spirit. Then the way is to control the lower self
in the act and do works without desire of the fruit; all
fruit has to be renounced, to be given up to the Power that
directs the work and yet the work done that is imposed
on the nature. For by this means the obstacle diminishes
and disappears, the mind is left free to remember the
Lord and fix itself in the liberty of the divine conscious-
ness. And here the Gita gives an ascending scale of po-
tencies which assigns the palm to this Yoga of desireless
action. **Abhyāsa**, practice of a method, is a great and
powerful thing; but better than this is knowledge, the
turning of the thought to the Truth behind things; this
knowledge too is excelled by a concentration on the
Truth so that the consciousness shall live in it and be one
with it; but more powerful still is the giving up of the
fruit of one's works, because that immediately brings calm
and peace, and calm and peace are the foundation on
which all else becomes secure and perfect in its possession
by the tranquil spirit. Then the consciousness can fix itself
in the Divine and rise undisturbed to the supreme per-
fection. Knowledge, will, devotion can lift their pinnacles
from that divine soil of calm into the ether of Eterni-
ity.

What then will be the divine nature, the greater state
of consciousness and being of the bhakta who has followed this way and turned to the adoration of the Eternal? The Gita in a number of verses rings the changes on its first insistent demand, on equality, on desirelessness, on freedom of spirit; this is to be the base always,—and that was why so much stress was laid on it in the beginning,—but in that equality bhakti, the love and adoration of the Purushottama, must rear the spirit towards some greatest, highest perfection of which this calm equality will be the wide foundation. Several formulas of this fundamental consciousness are given. First, an absence of egoism, of illness and my-ness, nārāmam nirahankārah; the bhakta of the Purushottama is one who has a universal heart and mind which has broken down all the narrow walls of the ego; a universal love dwells in his heart, a universal compassion; he will have friendship and pity for all beings, but hate for no living thing; he is patient, long-suffering, enduring; a desireless content is his, a tranquil equality to pleasure and pain, suffering and happiness, the control of self, the firm unshakeable will and resolution of the Yogi, a love and devotion which gives up the whole mind and reason to the Lord, to the Master of his consciousness and knowledge. Or, simply, he will be one who is freed from the troubled agitated lower nature, from its joy and fear and anxiety and resentment, a spirit of calm by whom the world is not afflicted or troubled, nor he afflicted nor troubled by the world, a soul of peace with whom all are at peace.

Or he will be one who has given up all desire and action to the Master of his being, pure and still, indifferent to whatever comes, not pained or afflicted by any result or happening, one who has flung away from him all egoistic, personal, mental initiative of inner or outer action and lets the divine will and divine knowledge act through him undeflected by his own resolves, preferences, desires, yet for that very reason is swift and skilful in all
his nature’s action, because such unity with the supreme will, such pure instrumentation is the condition of the greatest skill in works. Again, he will be one who neither desires the pleasant and rejoices at its touch nor hates the unpleasant and grieves at its burden, but has abolished the distinction between fortunate and unfortunate happenings, because his devotion receives all things equally as good from the hands of the Lover and Master of his being. The God-lover dear to God is a soul of wide equality, equal to friend and enemy, equal to honour and insult, pleasure and pain, praise and blame, grief and happiness, heat and cold, to all that troubles with opposite affections the normal nature; he will have no attachment to person or thing, place or home, but will be content and well-satisfied with whatever surroundings or whatever relation men adopt to him, whatever station or fortune, and keep a firm mind in all things, because it is seated in self and fixed on the one divine object of his love and adoration. Equality, desirelessness, freedom from the lower egoistic nature and its claims, this is the one perfect foundation which the Gita demands for its greater realisation. There is an emphatic repetition of its first fundamental teaching, its original desideratum of the calm soul of knowledge which sees the one self in all things, the tranquil ego-less equality which results from that knowledge, the desireless action offered to the Master of works, the giving up of the whole mental nature of man into the hands of the mightier indwelling spirit, the love, founded on knowledge, fulfilled in instrumental action, extended to all things and beings, for the divine self who is Creator and Master of the universe, suhridam sarva-bhūtānām sarva-loka-maheshwaram.

But this is only the foundation, the condition, the means by which a supreme spiritual perfection is to be won. Those who have it in any way are all dear to me, says the Godhead, bhaktimān me priyāh, but exceedingly
dear, _ativa me priyāh_, are those whose love is completed by the still wider greatest perfection of which I have just shown to you the way,—the bhaktas who making the Purushottama their one supreme aim follow out with a perfect faith this immortalising Dharma just as I have spoken it. Dharma in the language of the Gita means a law of being, an action proceeding from and determined by the nature, _swabhāva-niyatam karma_. In the lower nature there are many dharmas, many rules, standards and laws of being because there are many varying determinations and types of that nature; but the immortal Dharma is that of the highest spiritual divine nature, _parāprakritih_, beyond the three gunas, and to reach it all these lower dharmas have to be abandoned, _sarva-dharmān parityajya_, and in their place that one liberating unifying being has to become the infinite source of action. To rise out of the lower egoism and to attain the calm of the immutable eternal all-pervading Akshara Purusha, to aspire from that by a perfect self-surrender of all one’s nature and being, is the first necessity. By that one can rise to the immortal Dharma, which is to be one in being, consciousness, divine bliss with the greater Uttama Purusha and to know, love, act in the power, the nature, force, _prakriti_, of that perfect freedom and immortality. The rest of the Gita is written to throw a fuller light on this immortal Dharma.
The Synthesis of Yoga

CHAPTER LVI

THE LIBERATION OF THE SPIRIT

The purification of the mental being and the psychic prana—we will leave aside for the time the question of the physical purification, that of the body and physical prana, through that too is necessary to an integral perfection,—prepare the ground for a spiritual liberation. Čuddhi is the condition for mukti. All purification is a release, a delivery; for it is a throwing away of limiting, binding, obscuring imperfections and confusions: purification from desire brings the freedom of the psychic prana, purification from wrong emotions and troubling reactions the freedom of the heart, purification from the obscuring limited thought of the sense mind the freedom of the intelligence, purification from mere intellectuality the freedom of the gnosis. But all this is an instrumental liberation. The freedom of the soul, mukti, is of a larger and more essential character; it is an opening out of mortal limitation into the illimitable immortality of the Spirit.

For certain ways of thinking liberation is a throwing off of all nature, a silent state of pure being, a nirvana or extinction, a dissolution of the natural existence into some indefinable Absolute, moksha. But an absorbed and immersed bliss, a wideness of actionless peace a release of
self-extinction or a self-drowning in the Absolute is not our aim. We shall give to the idea of liberation, mukti, only the connotation of that inner change which is common to all experience of this kind, essential to perfection and indispensable to spiritual freedom. We shall find that it then implies always two things, a rejection and an assumption, a negative and a positive side; the negative movement of freedom is a liberation from the principal bonds, the master knots of the lower soul-nature, the positive side an opening or growth into the higher spiritual existence. But what are these master-knots—other and deeper twistings than the instrumental knots of the mind, heart, psychic life-force? We find them pointed out for us and insisted on with great force and a constant emphatic repetition in the Gita; they are four, desire, ego, the dualities and the three gunas of Nature; for to be desireless, ego-less, equal of mind and soul and spirit and nistraigunya, is in the idea of the Gita to be free, mukta. We may accept this description; for everything essential is covered by its amplitude. On the other hand, the positive sense of freedom is to be universal in soul, transcendently one in spirit with God, possessed of the highest divine nature,—as we may say, like to God, or one with him in the law of our being. This is the whole and full sense of liberation and this is the integral freedom of the spirit.

We have already had to speak of purification from the psychic desire of which the craving of the prana is the evolutionary or, as we may put it, the practical basis. But this is in the mental and psychic nature; spiritual desirelessness has a wider and more essential meaning; for desire has a double knot, a lower knot in the prana, which is a craving in the instruments, and a very subtle knot in the soul itself with the buddhi as its first support or pratisthā, which is the inmost origin of this mesh of our bondage. When we look from below, desire presents
itself to us as a craving of the life force which subtilises in the emotions into a craving of the heart and is farther subtilised in the intelligence into a craving, preference, passion of the aesthetic, ethical, dynamic or rational turn of the buddhi. This desire is essential to the ordinary man; he cannot live or act as an individual without knotting up all his action into the service of some kind of lower or higher craving, preference or passion. But when we are able to look at desire from above, we see that what supports this instrumental desire is a will of the spirit. There is a will, tapas, cakti, by which the secret spirit imposes on its outer members all their action and draws from it an active delight of its being, an ananda, in which they very obscurely and imperfectly, if at all consciously, partake. This tapas is the will of the transcendent spirit who creates the universal movement, of the universal spirit who supports and informs it, of the free individual spirit who is the soul centre of its multiplicities. It is one will, free in all these at once, comprehensive, harmonious, unified; we find it, when we live and act in the spirit, to be an effortless and desireless, a spontaneous and illumined, a self-fulfilling and self-possessing, a satisfied and blissful will of the spiritual delight of being.

But the moment the individual soul leans away from the universal and transcendent truth of its being, leans towards ego, tries to make this will a thing of its own, a separate personal energy, that will changes its character: it becomes an effort, a straining, a heat of force which may have its fiery joys of effectuation and of possession, but has also its afflicting recoils and pain of labour. It is this that turns in each instrument into an intellectual, emotional, dynamic, sensational or vital will of desire, wish, craving. Even when the instruments per se are purified of their own apparent initiative and particular kind of desire, this imperfect tapas may still remain, and
so long as it conceals the source or deforms the type of the inner action, the soul has not the bliss of liberty, or can only have it by refraining from all action; even, if allowed to persist, it will rekindle the panic or other desires or at least throw a reminiscent shadow of them on the being. This spiritual seed or beginning of desire too must be expelled, renounced, cast away: the sadhaka must either choose an active peace and complete inner silence or lose individual initiation, saukalpârambha, in a unity with the universal will, the tapas of the divine Shakti. The passive way is to be inwardly immobile, without effort, wish, expectation or any turn to action, nischeshtha, anítha, nirapeksa, nivritta; the active way is to be thus immobile and impersonal in the mind, but to allow the supreme Will in its spiritual purity to act through the purified instruments. Then, if the soul abides on the level of the spiritualised mentality, it becomes an instrument only, but is itself without initiative or action, nishkriya, sarvârambha-parityági. But if it rises to the gnosis, it is at once an instrument and a participant in the bliss of the divine action and the bliss of the divine Ananda; it unifies in itself the prakriti and the purusha.

The ego turn, the separative turn of the being, is the fulcrum of the whole embarrassed labour of the ignorance and the bondage. So long as one is not free from the ego sense, there can be no real-freedom. The seat of the ego is said to be in the buddhi; it is an ignorance of the discriminating mind and reason which discriminate wrongly and take the individuation of mind, life and body for a truth of separative existence and are turned away from the greater reconciling truth of the oneness of all existence. At any rate in man it is the ego idea which chiefly supports the falsehood of a separative existence; to get rid of this idea, to dwell on the opposite idea of unity, of the one self, the one spirit, the one being of nature is therefore an effective remedy; but it is not by itself ab-
olutely effective. For the ego, though it supports itself by this ego idea, *aham-buddhi*, finds its most powerful means for a certain obstinacy or passion of persistence in the normal action of the sense-mind, the prana and the body. To cast out of us the ego idea is not entirely possible or not entirely effective until these instruments have undergone purification; for, their action being persistently egoistic and separative, the buddhi is carried away by them,—as a boat by winds on the sea, says the Gita,—the knowledge in the intelligence is being constantly obscured or lost temporarily and has to be restored again, a very labour of Sisyphus. But if the lower instruments have been purified of egoistic desire, wish, will, egoistic passion, egoistic emotion and the buddhi itself of egoistic idea and preference, then the knowledge of the spiritual truth of oneness can find a firm foundation. Till then, the ego takes all sorts of subtle forms and we imagine ourselves to be free from it, when we are really acting as its instruments and all we have attained is a certain intellectual poise which is not the true spiritual liberation. Moreover, to throw away the active sense of ego is not enough; that may merely bring an inactive state of the mentality, a certain passive inert quietude of separate being may take the place of the kinetic egoism, which is also not the true liberation. The ego sense must be replaced by a oneness with the transcendental Divine and with universal being.

This necessity arises from the fact that the buddhi is only a *pratisthā* or chief support of the ego-sense in its manifold play, *ahankāra*; but in its source it is a degradation or deformation of a truth of our spiritual being. The truth of being is that there is a transcendent existence, supreme self or spirit, a timeless soul of existence, an eternal, a Divine, or even we may speak of it in relation to current mental ideas of the Godhead as a supra-Divine, which is here immanent, all-embracing, all-initiating and
all-governing, a great universal Spirit; and the individual is a conscious power of being of the Eternal, capable eternally of relations with him, but one with him too in the very core of reality of its own eternal existence. This is a truth which the intelligence can apprehend, can, when once purified, reflect, transmit, hold in a derivative fashion, but it can only be entirely realised, lived and made effective in the spirit. When we live in the spirit, then we not only know, but are this truth of our being. The individual then enjoys in the spirit, in the bliss of the spirit, his oneness with the universal existence, his oneness with the timeless Divine and his oneness with all other being and that is the essential sense of a spiritual liberation from the ego. But the moment the soul leans towards the mental limitation, there is a certain sense of spiritual separativeness which has its joys, but may at any moment lapse into the entire ego-sense, ignorance, oblivion of oneness. To get rid of this separativeness an attempt is made to absorb oneself in the idea and realisation of the Divine, and this takes in certain forms of spiritual askesis the turn of a strain towards the abolition of all individual being and a casting away, in the trance of immersion, of all individual or universal relations with the Divine, in others it becomes an absorbed dwelling in him and not in this world or a continual absorbed or intent living in his presence, śāvyuja, śālokya, śāmīpya mukti. The way proposed for the integral Yoga is a lifting up and surrender of the whole being to him, by which not only do we become one with him in our spiritual existence, but dwell too in him and he in us, so that the whole nature is full of his presence and changed into the divine nature; we become one spirit and consciousness and life and substance with the Divine and at the same time we live and move in and have a various joy of that oneness. This integral liberation from the ego into the divine spirit and nature can only be relatively complete on our present level, but it begins to become
absolute as we open to and mount into the gnosis. This is the liberated perfection.

The liberation from ego, the liberation from desire together found the central spiritual freedom. The sense, the idea, the experience that I am a separately self-existent being in the universe, and the forming of consciousness and force of being into the mould of that experience are the root of all suffering, ignorance and evil. And it is so because that falsifies both in practice and in cognition the whole real truth of things; it limits the being, limits the consciousness, limits the power of our being, limits the bliss of being; this limitation again produces a wrong way of existence, wrong way of consciousness, wrong way of using the power of our being and consciousness, and wrong, perverse and contrary forms of the delight of existence. The soul limited in being and self-isolated in its environment feels itself no longer in unity and harmony with its Self, with God, with the universe, with all around it; but rather it finds itself at odds with the universe, in conflict and disaccord with other beings who are its other selves, but whom it treats as not-self; and so long as this disaccord and disagreement last, it cannot possess its world and it cannot enjoy the universal life, but is full of unease, fear, afflictions of all kinds, in a painful struggle to preserve and increase itself and possess its surroundings,—for to possess its world is the nature of infinite spirit and the necessary urge in all being. The satisfactions it gets from this labour and effort are of a stinted, perverse and unsatisfying kind: for the one real satisfaction it has is that of growth, of an increasing return towards itself, of some realisation of accord and harmony, of successful self-creation and self-realisation, but the little of these things that it can achieve on the basis of ego-consciousness is always limited, insecure, imperfect, transitory. It is at war too with its own self,—first because, since it is no longer in possession of the central
harmonising truth of its own being, it cannot properly
control its natural members or accord their tendencies,
powers and demands; it has not the secret of harmony,
because it has not the secret of its own unity and self-
possession; and, secondly, not being in possession of its
highest self, it has to struggle towards that, is not allowed
to be at peace till it is in possession of its own true highest
being. All this means that it is not at one with God; for
to be at one with God is to be at one with one self, at one
with the universe and at one with all beings. This one-
ness is the secret of a right and a divine existence. But
the ego cannot have it, because it is in its very nature
separative and because even with regard to ourselves, to
our own psychological existence it is a false centre of uni-
ity; for it tries to find the unity of our being in an identi-
fication with a shifting mental, vital, physical personality,
not with the eternal self of our total existence. Only in
the spiritual self can we possess the true unity; for there
the individual enlarges to his own total being and finds
himself one with universal existence and with the transc-
cending Divinity.

All the trouble and suffering of the soul proceeds
from this wrong egoistic and separative way of existence.
The soul not in possession of its free self-existence,
Anatman, because it is limited in its consciousness, is
limited in knowledge; and this limited knowledge takes
the form of a falsifying knowledge. The struggle to return
to a true knowing is imposed upon it, but the ego in the
separative mind is satisfied with shows and fragments of
knowledge which it pieces together into some false or some
imperfect total or governing notion, and this knowledge
fails it and has to be abandoned for a fresh pursuit of the
one thing to be known. That one thing is the Divine,
the Self, the Spirit in whom universal and individual
being find at last their right foundation and their right
harmonies. Again, because it is limited in force, the ego-
prisoned soul is full of many incapacities; wrong knowledge is accompanied by wrong will, wrong tendencies and impulses of the being, and the acute sense of this wrongness is the root of the human consciousness of sin. This deficiency of its nature it tries to set right by standards of conduct which will help it to remove the egoistic consciousness and satisfactions of sin by the egoistic consciousness and self-satisfaction of virtue, the rajasic by the sattwic egoism. But the original sin has to be cured, the separation of its being and will from the divine Being and the divine Will; when it returns to unity with the divine Will and Being, it rises beyond sin and virtue to the infinite self-existent purity and the security of its own divine nature. Its incapacities it tries to set right by organising its imperfect knowledge and disciplining its half-enlightened will and force and directing them by some systematic effort of the reason; but the result must always be a limited, uncertain, mutable and stumbling way and standard of capacity in action. Only when it returns again to the large unity of the free spirit, bhūmā, can the action of its nature move perfectly as the instrument of the infinite Spirit and in the steps of the Right and Truth and Power which belong to the free-soul acting from the supreme centre of its existence. Again, because it is limited in the delight of being, it is unable to lay hold on the secure, self-existent perfect bliss of the spirit or the delight, the Ananda of the universe which keeps the world in motion, but is only able to move in a mixed and shifting succession of pleasures and pains, joys and sorrows, or must take refuge in some conscious insconcience or neutral indifference. The ego mind cannot do otherwise, and the soul which has externalised itself in ego, is subjected to this unsatisfactory, secondary, imperfect, often perverse, troubled or annulled enjoyment of existence; yet all the time the spiritual and universal Ananda is within, in the self, in the spirit, in its secret unity with God and existence,
To cast away the chain of ego and go back to free self, immortal spiritual being is the soul's return to its own eternal divinity.

The will to the imperfect separative being, that wrong Tapas which makes the soul in Nature attempt to individualise itself, to individualise its being, consciousness, force of being, delight of existence in a separative sense, to have these things as its own, in its own right, and not in the right of God and of the universal oneness, is that which brings about this wrong turn and creates the ego. To turn from this original desire is therefore essential, to get back to the will without desire whose whole enjoyment of being and whole will in being is that of a free universal and unifying Ananda. These two things are one, liberation from the will that is of the nature of desire and liberation from the ego, and the oneness which is brought about by the happy loss of the will of desire and the ego, is the essence of Mukti.
The Eternal Wisdom

BOOK II

IV

THE VICTORY OF THE DIVINE

TO CHOOSE TO-DAY

1. Now it is high time to awake out of sleep... The night is far spent, the day is at hand; let us therefore cast off the works of darkness and put on the armour of light.

2. One says, When my son Harish shall have grown up, I will marry him off, give up the burden of the family, renounce the world and begin to practise Yoga. To him the Lord replies: You will never find the opportune moment to practise Yoga; for you will then say, 'Harish and Girish are very fond of me and cannot do without me', you will no doubt desire that Harish should have a son and the son marry. There will never be an end to your desires.

3. The world is an eternal present, and the present is now; what was is no more and who can say what

1) Romans VII 11. 12.—2) Ramakrishna.—3) Anamander.
will come or whether tomorrow morning the dawn will arise. — This is why I would put to profit the present moment, penetrated with the conviction that now has come the right moment to seek for the Truth.

It is easier today to triumph over evil habits than it will be tomorrow.

The present is the most precious moment. Use all the forces of thy spirit not to let that moment escape thee. — Let not the favourable moment pass thee by, for those who have suffered it to escape them, shall lament when they find themselves on the path which leads to the abyss.

How shouldst thou not profit by thy age of strength to issue from the evil terrain? — How then shalt thou discover in thy age what in thy youth thou hast not gathered in?

Seek out swiftly the way of righteousness; turn without delay from that which defiles thee. — Knowest thou not that thy life, whether long or brief, consists only of a few breathings?

Enter not into questions of the vicissitudes of this world, ask not of things to come. Regard as booty won the present moment; trouble not thyself with the past, question not of the future. — Thou hast lost thyself in the search for the mystery of life and death; but seek out thy path before thy life be taken from thee. If living thou find it not, hopest thou to reach this great mystery when thou art dead? — If to-day when thou art with thy self, thou knowest

nothing, what wilt thou know tomorrow when thou shalt have passed out of this self?

15 Thou canst create this day thy chances for tomorrow. In this great journey the causes thou sowest in every hour bear each its harvest of results.

16 One life, one flash of time between two eternities. No second chance for us,—no, never. It will be well for us if we can live like sages in the utter reality.

14) Omar Khayyam.—15) Book of Goldoni's Precepts.
A Rationalistic Critic on Indian Culture

Reduced to the bareness of the essential ideas, these are the principal lines upon which the structure of Indian civilisation was founded; they constitute the power of its conception of life. I do not think it can be said that there is an inferiority in them to any human culture or any human conception of life that has ever held sway over the mind of man in historic times. There is nothing that can be said to discourage life and its flowering or deprive it of impetus and elevation and great motive, but on the contrary a full and frank recognition and examination of the whole of human existence in all its range and power and variety, a clear and wise and noble idea for its right government and ideal tendency, a magnificent call to a highest possible greatness and perfection. These are the serious uses of culture, the things that raise the life of man above a crude, primitive barbarism, and if a civilisation is to be judged by the power of its ideas, their power for these great uses, Indian civilisation was inferior to none. I will not say that it was absolutely complete,—that can be alleged of no past or present cultural idea or system; man is inwardly an infinite being, in his mind and life he is continually growing, with whatever stumblings and long
relapses, and he cannot be permanently bound in any one system of ideas or frame of living. His structures are incomplete and provisional; even those which seem the most comprehensive lose their force to stand and are convicted by time of insufficiency. But this at least can be said of the Indian idea that it seized with a remarkable depth and comprehensiveness upon the main truths and needs of the whole human being, his mind and life and body, his artistic and ethical and intellectual being, his soul and spirit and gave them a subtle and liberal, a profoundly large and high and wise, a sympathetic and yet a nobly arduous direction. More cannot be said for any past or existing civilisation.

But besides the governing and inspiring ideas there must be in any culture aiming at completeness a harmony of forms and rhythms, a mould into which the ideas and the life can run. Here we must be prepared for a lesser perfection, a greater incompleteness. And the reason is that the spirit is vaster than its ideas, the ideas larger than their forms, moulds and rhythms. Form has a certain fixity which limits; no form can exhaust or fully give the potentialities of the ideas that gave it birth; that is the secret of their need of mutation. The idea itself is only a partial expression of the spirit; it has to become more supple, to fill itself out with other views, to rise and broaden to new applications, often to lose itself in uplifting transformations of its own meaning into vaster significances or fuse itself into new and richer syntheses. In the history of all great cultures we find a passage through three periods, a period of large and loose formation, a period in which we see a fixing of forms, moulds, rhythms, a period of superannuation, decay, disintegration. This last stage is the crisis in the life of a civilisation; if it cannot transform itself, it enters into a slow lingering decline or else collapses in a death agony brought about by the rapid impact of stronger and more immediately living
though not necessarily greater or truer powers or formations; but if it is able to shake itself free of limiting forms, to renovate its ideas, to give a new scope to its spirit, to understand, master and assimilate novel growths and necessities, than there is a rebirth, a true renascence, a fresh lease of life and expansion.

Indian civilisation went in a large and leisurely manner though all these stages. Its first period was that of a great spiritual outflowering in which the forms were supple, flexible, freely responsive to its essential spirit; that passed into an age of strong intellectuality fixing itself into distinct, sufficiently complex, but largely treated and still supple forms and rhythms. Then came a period of richly crystallised fixity, of crises met partly by a change of ideas and modification of forms; but the hard binding of forms triumphed and a decline of the spirit, a stagnation of living force, a progressive decay of the outward structure set in accompanied and hastened by the impact of other cultures. Today we are in the midst of a violent crisis, which began by the threat of a death and destruction of the culture, but is now uplifted by the strong hope of a great revival, transmutation and renascence. If we would understand the essential spirit of Indian civilisation, we must go back to the earliest period of the Veda and Upanishads. If we would study the fixed forms of its spirit, the thing it eventually realised as the basic rhythm of its life, we have to look with an observing eye at the later middle period of the Shastras and the classic writings and sciences and philosophies. If we would discover its limitations, the points at which it stopped short and failed to develop its whole spirit and the directions it must follow in its transmutation, we have to consider its period of decline and crisis of renascence. None of these can be cut clean apart from each other, for what developed in one period is already forecast and begun in the age that preceded it, but still on a certain large and im-
precise scale we can make these distinctions. At present we are only concerned with the developed forms and the principal rhythms.

The problem which Indian culture had to solve was that of a firm outward basis on which to found the practical development of its spirit and idea in life,—how to take the natural life of man and, while allowing it sufficient scope and freedom and variety, yet to subject it to a law, canon, dharma, a law of function, a law of type, a law of each human tendency, a law too of highest ideal intention, and again to point that dharma towards its own exceeding by the fulfilment and cessation of its disciplinary purpose in the secure freedom of a spiritual living. From an early stage it seized upon a double idea for its own guidance which it threw into a basic system of the individual life in the frame of the society; this was the double order of the chāturvarnya, the system of the four classes, and the Asramas, the four stages of the developing life. The ancient chāturvarnya must not be judged by its later disintegrated degeneration and gross meaningless parody, the caste system, neither was it precisely the system of the classes which we find in other civilisations, the priesthood, nobility, merchant class and serfs or labourers. It may have had outwardly the same starting point, but it was given a very different significance.

The Indian idea was that man falls by his nature into four types, the man of learning and knowledge, the man of power and action, the economic man, producer and wealth-getter,—these were the twice-born, who received the initiation,—and the more undeveloped type of the mere unintellectual worker, the man fit only for unskilled labour and menial service, Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaishya, Shudra. The economical order of society was cast in this form; the Brahmin class was called upon to give the community its priests, thinkers, men of letters, legists, scholars, religious leaders and guides, the Ksha-
triya its kings, warriors, governors and administrators, the Vaishya its merchants, producers, agriculturists, craftsmen, artisans, the Shudra its menials and servants. So far there was nothing very peculiar in this system except the supreme position given to religion, thought and learning, and that even may be paralleled from certain other early civilisations. The Indian idea in its purity fixed indeed the status of a man in this order not by his birth, but by his nature and capacities, and if this rule had been strictly held to, that would have been a very marked element of distinctness and superiority. But to order the society upon this finer psychological basis would have been in those times a difficult thing,—for even at the best society, being always something of a machine, gravitates towards the material sign and standard,—and we find that in practice birth became the basis of the Varna. At no time was the adherence to the economic rule quite absolute; the early ages show a considerable flexibility which was not quite lost in the process of complex crystallisation, and even in the greater rigidity of the caste system there has been in practice a confusion of economic functions. The vitality of a vigorous community cannot obey at every point the indications of a cut pattern and tradition. The material side of an idea or system has too always its weaknesses, and the defect of such systems is that they stiffen into a fixed hierarchy which cannot maintain permanently its purity or its utility, but becomes a soulless form and prolongs itself in a state of corruption or degeneracy or oppressive formalism when the uses that justified it are no longer in existence or can no longer be made consistent with the developing needs of the growth of humanity. Indian society did not escape this general law; it was overtaken by these deficiencies, lost the true sense of the thing with which it set out, degenerated into a chaos of castes and developed evils which we are now much embarrassed to eliminate. But it was a well-devised and necessary scheme
in its time, it gave the community the firm and nobly built stability it needed for the security of its cultural development, and, as interpreted by the Indian genius, it become a greater thing than an economical, political and social mechanism.

The real greatness of the Indian system of the four varnas did not lie in its well-ordered division of economical function; it consisted in the ethical and spiritual contents which the thinkers and builders of the society poured into these forms. They started with the idea of the intellectual, ethical and spiritual growth of the individual as the principal need of humanity, society as its necessary framework and its system of relations. A secure place had to be found for him in the community from which he could serve these relations, maintain and pay all his debt to the society and proceed to his self-development with the best possible help from the communal life. This place they conceived as one provided for him by the indications of his capacity, temperament and nature. Birth was taken in practice as the first test; the heredity was of a high importance; it was taken even in later thought as a sign of the nature and the needed surroundings which the individual had prepared for himself by his past soul-development in former existences. But birth was not considered as the sole test of Varna. The intellectual capacity, the turn of the temperament, the ethical nature, the spiritual elevation were the important things. A rule of the family living, of individual observance and self-training, of upbringing and education was provided which was intended to bring out these essential things. They trained the individual in the capacities, habits, attainments, sense of honour and duty necessary for the discharge of his function in life; they equipped him with the science of the thing he had to do, the best way to succeed in it as an interest, artha; they fitted him to attain to the the highest rule, canon, recognised perfection of the acti-
vity suited to his capacity, whether economical, political, sacerdotal, literary, scholastic or whatever else it might be: even the most despised pursuits had their education, their law and canon, their ambition of success, their dignity of a standard of perfection, and became in a certain degree a means of self-finding and ordered self-satisfaction. And in addition there were the general accomplishments, sciences, arts, graces of life, which satisfied the intellectual, aesthetic and hedonistic powers of the being; they were many various, taught with minuteness, thoroughness and subtlety and available to all men of culture.

But while all this was provided for, the spirit of Indian culture said to the individual: This is only the substructure, of a pressing importance indeed, but still not the last and greatest thing; when you have paid your debt to society, filled well and admirably your place in its life, helped its maintenance and continuity and taken from it your legitimate and desired satisfactions, there still remains the greatest thing of all, your own self, the inner you, the soul which is a portion of or one with the eternal and universal Being. This you have to find, and from the place I have provided for you in life and by this training you can find it; for to each Varna I have supplied its highest ideal of manhood, the highest way of which your nature is capable. By directing your life and nature in its own law of being, its swadharma, towards that perfection you can grow into the ideal universal nature which is nearest to the nature of divinity. That is the greater real object before you. For from that basis you can by the liberating knowledge which leads to the spiritual release, moksha, grow out of all these limitations in which you are being trained, grow through the fulfilled Dharma and beyond it into the eternity of your self, the fullness, freedom, greatness, bliss of the immortal spirit that each man is behind the veils of his nature.
When you have done that you are free; then you have gone beyond all the dharmas; then you are a universal soul, one with all existence, and can either act in that divine liberty for the good of all living things or turn to enjoy in solitude the bliss of eternity. Thus the whole system of society, founded on the four varnas, was made a harmonious means for the elevation and progress of the soul in man from the natural pursuit of interest and desire to the perfection of the law of his nature, Dharma, and from that to the highest spiritual freedom. His end in life was this self-realisation of his own immortal, infinite and eternal being.

But the Indian system did not entirely leave this growth to the individual’s unaided inner initiative; it gave him a framework, a scale and gradation for his life in that sense; this high convenience was the object of the four Asramas. Life was divided into four natural periods of the working out of this cultural idea of living, the stage of the student, the stage of the householder, the stage of the recluse or forest-dweller, the stage of the free supersocial man, parivrajaka. The student life was so framed as to lay the groundwork by a thorough training not only in the necessary arts, sciences, branches of knowledge, but in the discipline of the ethical nature and a grounding in the Vedic spiritual knowledge. The training was given in the earlier days in suitable surroundings far away from the life of cities under one who had himself passed through the round of the circle of living and arrived at some realisation of the spiritual knowledge; subsequently it became more mundane and was imparted in cities and universities. Thus from the beginning the Aryan man was prepared for the four great objects of his life, artha, kāma, dharma, moksha. He entered into the householder stage to live out his knowledge, serve the three first objects, satisfying his natural being and paying his debt to society, and prepare himself by the way he
discharged them for the last greatest purpose of his existence. In the third stage he retired to the forest, there to work out within himself the truth of his spirit in a broad freedom from the stricter social bonds, while at the same time he left his knowledge to the new rising generation as an educator of men. Finally, he was free to throw off even his last remaining ties and wander over the world in a spiritual detachment from all the forms of social life and all but the barest necessities, communing with the universal spirit and making his soul ready for eternity. The circle must not be considered as obligatory on all; there were many no doubt, the great majority, who never went beyond the two first stages, many who passed away in the vanaprastha or forest stage; only the few took up the life of the parivrajaka. But it gave a scheme which kept the full course of the human spirit in its view and could be taken advantage of by all who were sufficiently developed in this birth to complete the circle.

On this first firm and noble basis Indian civilisation grew to its maturity. While it filled the view with the last mountain prospect of the highest spiritual elevation, it did not neglect the life of the levels; it lived between the city and village and the forest and overarching illimitable ether; moving firmly between life and death it saw beyond both to immortality; it developed nature to draw it into the self and enriched life to raise it into the spirit. So founded, so trained, the ancient Indian race grew to astonishing heights of culture and civilisation, lived with a noble, well-founded, ample and vigorous order and freedom, developed a great literature, sciences, arts, crafts, industries, rose to high ideals of knowledge and culture, arduous greatness and heroism, kindness, philanthropy and human unity, laid the inspired basis of wonderful spiritual philosophies, examined the secrets of nature and of the inner being, discovered the profoundest truths of self and the world, Purusha and Prakriti. As civilisation grew in
richness and complexity, it lost the first grand simplicity of its early order; intellect towered and widened, as intuition waned; a greater stress came to be laid on scientific system, accuracy and order in all the things of the life and mind and even of the spirit; the free flood of intuitive knowledge was forced to run in hewn channels; society became less free and noble, more artificial and complex, more of a bond on the individual and less of a field for the growth of his spiritual faculties; the old fine integral harmony gave place to an exaggerated stress on one or other of its elements; *artha* and *kāma*, interest and desire were in some directions developed even at the expense of the *dharma*; the lines of the dharma were filled and stamped in with so rigid a distinctness as to stand in the way of the freedom of the spirit; *moksha*, liberation was pursued in hostility to life and not as its orbed result and crowning. But still some strong basis of the old knowledge remained to inspire and harmonise. Even when a slow collapse came and the life of the community degenerated into a sort of uneasily petrified ignorance and confusion, the old spiritual aim and tradition remained to sweeten, humanise, save in its worst days the Indian peoples, recurred continually in high outbursts of energy, and now rises once more in all its strength to give the impulse of a great renascence.
The Future Poetry

RECENT ENGLISH POETRY

(1)

The movement away from the Victorian type in recent and contemporary English poetry cannot be said to have yet determined its final orientation. But we may distinguish in its uncertain fluctuations, its attempts in this or that direction certain notes, certain strong tones, certain original indications which may help us to disengage the final whither of its seekings. In the mass it appears as a broadening of the English poetic mind into a full oneness with the great stream of modern thought and tendency, an opening up out of the narrower Victorian insularity to admit a greater strength, subtlety and many-sidedness of the intelligence. For this very reason it is still in the nature of a very uncertain feeling out in several directions which has not found itself and decided what shall be the centre and guide of its inspiration. There are experiments of all kinds in language and rhythm and subject and treatment, many notable names each with his special turn and personality, but no supreme decisive speech and no gathering up of the many threads into a great representative work. The whole of European literature at the present time is of this character; it is a fluid mass with a hundred conflicting tendencies, a multitude of experiments, many minor formations, which has not
yet run into any clear universal mould. All that can be done is to distinguish some common characteristics of an indicative value which emerge in the more significant work and have touched more or less the performance of the lesser writers. Here we can get at least at a certain persistent element, certain potential issues.

The thing that strikes at once in a general view is that it is a period of transition, not yet a new age, but the preparation for a new age of humanity. Everywhere there is a seeking after some new thing, a discontent with the moulds, ideas and powers of the past, a spirit of innovation, a desire to get at deeper powers of language, rhythm, form, because a subtler and vaster life is in birth, there are deeper and more significant things to be said than have yet been spoken, and poetry, the highest essence of speech, must find a fitting voice for them. The claim of tradition is still strong, but even those who keep most in the old ways, are impelled to fill in their lines with more searching things of a more compelling substance, to strike from their instrument sounds, variations, meanings for which it had not before the capacity. The attempt has not yet been supremely successful in its whole purpose, in spite of some poetic achievement of considerable beauty, originality and compass, but it has liberated at least with some initial force novel powers and opened fresh paths; a few bright streams of initiation meet the eye running to form some mighty Brahmaputra or Ganges which is not yet in sight, though we get here and there a blue Yamuna or white Saraswati or some large impetuous torrent making its way through open plain or magic woodland towards the great unseen confluence. There are many widely separate attempts, some fine or powerful beginnings, as yet no large consummation.

The straining for a new power of rhythm is the first indication of the coming change. Not quite so marked, not by any means so successful as the change in the type
and power of poetical expression, it is still indicative; rhythm is the subtle soul of poetry and a change in the spirit of the rhythm must come if this change in the spirit of the poetry is fully to discover itself and altogether realise its own characteristic greatness and perfection. Mankind is moving to another spirit in its thought and life founded on another and deeper and larger truth of its inner being than it has yet in the mass been able to see, hold and put into form of living. This change must find its echo and interpretation or even some of its power of revelation and initiation in poetry, and poetry to express this greater spirit must find out a deeper, larger, more flexible, or, if one may say so, more multitudinously expressive rhythm than the great poets of the past were under the necessity of using; something of the same change has to be achieved as has been successfully accomplished in music. We see accordingly some attempt to break or enlarge, deepen or subtilise the traditional moulds, to substitute others of a more delicate character or with a more varied and flexible principle, to search out new packed or dissolved movements. There have been some considerable successes, but nothing of such a complete, sweeping and satisfying force as would quite content a certain eagerness and impatient urge of the arriving age to find a full rhythmic basis for its own way of self-expression. And so we find too the attempt to initiate a violent and unprecedented revolution in the whole fundamental method of poetic rhythm.

This tendency in some writers goes no farther than an irregular use of metre which does not really carry us any farther towards the desired result and is in no way an improvement on the past since it has no true artistic principle to guide us to freer and more consummate harmonies. But pushed to its logical issue it has created the still growing form of free verse of which we now find examples in most of the great literary languages and coupled
with it a theory that this is the one future chance for poetry. Metre and rhyme are said to be played out, things of the past, which can no longer be allowed to chain and hamper the great and free movement which the enlarging spirit of poetry demands; as rhyme was in Milton's later view only a dainty trifle which he flung aside for the organ harmonies of his blank verse, so metre itself is a petty thing, half ornament, half fetter, which has to be flung aside for some nobly self-governed democratic anarchy that is to develop from this new type. That is a theory of very doubtful validity. In the hands of most of its exponents it seems to be in practice nothing but a license for writing prose in variously cut lengths, prose breaking off at the end of a clause or in the middle of it to go on refreshed in the line below,—I have seen even a line of free verse consisting of a majestic solitary pronoun,—and that is more an eccentric method of printing than a new rhythm. But without accepting the theory in its intolerant entirety one can appreciate the motive which moved the greater masters and more skilful craftsmen of this form, if form it can be called, to make the innovation. There is something large and many-sided and constantly mutable in the life, thought and spirit of today which needs, to express it sympathetically, vast and flowing movements or on the contrary brief, sudden and abrupt paces or the alternation of these and intermediate and variant lengths and turns: there is something at the same time densely full and singularly and minutely subtle in the modern thinking mind which is with difficulty accommodable by the restricted range of subtleties, variations and fullnesses of any given poetic measure. Why not then break away from all the old hampering restrictions and find a new principle of harmony in accordance with the freedom, the breadth and largeness of view, the fineness of feeling and sensation of the modern spirit, some form which shall have the liberty of prose and yet command
the intensified heights and fluctuations and falls of the cadence of poetry? There is no reason why not, if the thing can be done,—the proof of these things lies in the execution; but it may be doubted whether the method used is the right method. At any rate it has not been fully justified even in the hands of its greatest or most skilful exponents. It is used, as in Whitman, to give the roll of the sea of life or the broad and varying movements of the spirit of humanity in its vigorous experience and aspiration, or, as in Carpenter, to arrive at the free and harmonious accession of the human intelligence to profound, large and powerful truths of the spirit, or, as in certain French writers, to mould into accurate rhythm the very substance and soul and characteristic movement of soul-states, ideas or objects described and seen. These are things that need to be done, but it remains to be seen whether they cannot be done in the recognised and characteristic movement of poetry, rather than in a compromise with prose cadences. The genius of poetic measure walking in the path opened by the ancient discovery of cadenced beat and concentrated rhythm has not yet exhausted itself, nor is there any proof that it cannot accommodate its power to new needs or any sign that it can only survive in an arrested senility or fall into a refined decadence.

The most considerable representatives of this new and free form of poetic rhythm are English and American, Carpenter and Whitman. Tagore's translations of his lyrics have come in as a powerful adventitious aid, but are not really to the point in the question at issue; for these translations are nothing but a rhythmically poetic prose and that kind of writing, cadenced prose poetry, a well recognised form, cannot and does not try to complete with the established principle of measure; it is an indulgence, a minor variation which has yet its definite place and serves certain purposes which could not other-
wise be fulfilled with any adequacy. It is perhaps the only method for the work Tagore intended, a poetic translation of poetry reproductive of the exact thought and spiritual intention of the original; for a version in the fixed measures of another language not only substitutes another mould for the original movement, but by the substitution gives it almost another soul, so powerful, distinct and creative a thing is poetic rhythm; but the more flexible, less insistent cadence of poetic prose does not so seize on and recast the spirit of the original movement; it may even give a far-off minimised shadow, echo, illusion of it, if the same or a similar spirit is at work: it can never have the same power, but it may have some echo of a similar suggestion. When for instance Tagore writes in English,—

"Thou settest a barrier in thine own being and thou callest thy severed self in myriad notes. This thy self-separation has taken body in me. The great pageant of thee and me has overspread the sky. With the tune of thee and me all the air is vibrant, and all ages pass with the hiding and seeking of thee and me."—

we have a very beautiful delicately cadenced poetic prose and nothing more. Tagore is what some of the French writers of vers libre are and Whitman and Carpenter are not, a delicate and subtle craftsman, and he has done his work with a perfect grace and spiritual fineness; but there is no attempt to do anything more than the just work in hand, no intention of displacing the old way of poetry in which he has done in his own language such wonderful things, by a new principle of poetic movement. If there were any such intention, it would have to be pronounced a failure. One has only to compare this English prose, beautiful as it is, with the original poetry to see how much has gone out with the change; something is successfully substituted which may satisfy the English reader, but can never satisfy the ear or the mind that has once
listened to the singer's own native and magical melodies. And this is so even though the intellectual substance, the intellectual precision and distinctness of the thought are often more effective, carry home more quickly in the translation, because in the original the intellectual element, the thought limits are being constantly overborne and are sometimes almost swallowed up by the waves of suggestion that come stealing in with the music: so much more is heard than is said that the soul listening goes floating into that infinity and counts the definite contribution of the intelligence as of a lesser value. Precisely there lies the greatest power of poetic rhythm for the very highest work that the new age has to do, and that it can be done by a new use of the poetic method without breaking the whole form of poetry, Tagore's own lyrical work * in his mother tongue is the best evidence.

Whitman's aim is consciently, clearly, professedly to make a great revolution in the whole method of poetry, and if anybody could have succeeded, it ought to have been this giant of poetic thought with his energy of diction, this spiritual crowned athlete and vital prophet of democracy, liberty and the soul of man and Nature and all humanity. He is a great poet, one of the greatest in the power of his substance, the energy of his vision, the force of his style, the largeness at once of his personality and his universality. His is the most Homeric voice since Homer, in spite of the modern's ruder less elevated aesthetic of speech and the difference between that limited Olympian and this broad-souled Titan, in this that he has the nearness to something elemental which makes everything he says, even the most common and prosaic, sound out with a ring of greatness, gives a force even to his

* This cannot quite be said or not in the same degree about other work of Tagore's where this great lyricist is not so much himself in his movement thought he is always a master of rhythm.
barest or heaviest phrases, throws even upon the coarsest, dullest, most physical things something of the divinity; and he has the elemental Homeric power of sufficient straightforward speech, the rush too of oceanic sound though it is here the surging of the Atlantic between continents, not the magic roll and wash of the Aegean around the isles of Greece. What he has not, is the unfailing poetic beauty and nobility which saves greatness from its defects—that supreme gift of Homer and Valmiki—and the self-restraint and obedience to a divine law which makes even the gods more divine. Whitman will remain great after all the objections that can be made against his method or his use of it, but the question is whether what served his unique personality, can be made a rule for lesser or different spirits, and whether the defects which we see but do not and cannot weigh too closely in him, will not be fatal when not saved by his all-uplifting largeness. A giant can pile up Pelion and Ossa and make of it an unhewn chaotic stair to Olympus, but others would be better and more safely employed in cutting steps of marble or raising by music a ladder of sapphires and rubies to their higher or their middle heavens. Personality, force, temperament can do unusual miracles, but the miracle cannot always be turned into a method or a standard.

Whitman's verse, if it can be so called, is not simply a cadenced prose, though quite a multitude of his lines only just rise above the prose rhythm. The difference is that there is a constant will to intensify the fall of the movement so that instead of the unobtrusive ictus of prose, we have a fall of the tread, almost a beat, and sometimes a real beat, a meeting and parting, sometimes a deliberate clash or even crowding together of stresses which recall the spirit of the poetical movement, though they obey no recognised structural law of repetitions and variations. In this kind of rhythm we find actually three diffe-
rent levels—the distinction may be a little rough, but it will serve,—a gradation which is very instructive. First we have a movement which just manages to be other than prose movement, but yet is full of the memory of a certain kind of prose rhythm. Here the first defect is that the ear is sometimes irritated, sometimes disappointed and baulked by a divided demand, memory or expectation, hears always the prose suggestion behind pursuing and dragging down the feet of the poetic enthusiasm. It is as if one were watching the "aerial walk" of a Hatha-yogin who had just conquered the force of gravitation, but only to the extent of a few inches, so that one is always expecting the moment which will bring him down with a bump to mother earth. It is something like a skimming just above the ground of prose, sometimes a dragging of the feet with a frequent touch and upkicking of the dust, for inevitably the poetic diction and imaginative power of style fall to the same level. Much of Whitman’s work is in this manner; he carries it off by the largeness and sea-like roll of the total impression, but others have not the same success,—even the French craftsmen are weighed down,—and in them the whole has a dragged and painful effect of an amphibious waddling incertitude. But there is a nobler level at which he often keeps which does not get out of sight of the prose plain or lift up above all its gravitation, but still has a certain poetic power, greatness and nobility of movement. But it is still below what an equal force would have given in the master measures of poetry.

But the possibilities of an instrument have to be judged by its greatest effects, and there are poems, lines, passages in which Whitman strikes out a harmony which has no kinship to nor any memory of the prose gravitation, but is as far above it as anything done in the greatmetrical cadences. And here, and not only in Whitman, but in all writers in this form who rise to that height, we find
that consciously or unconsciously they arrive at the same secret principle, and that is the essential principle of Greek choric and dithyrambic poetry turned to the law of a language which has not the strong resource of quantity. Arnold deliberately attempted such an adaptation but, in spite of beautiful passages, with scant success; still when he writes such a line as

The too vast orb of her fate,
it is this choric movement that he reproduces. Whitman’s first poem in *Sch-Drift* and a number of others are written partly or throughout in this manner. When he gives us the dactylic and spondaic harmony of his lines,

*Out of the cradle endlessly rocking,*

*Out of the mocking-bird’s throat, the musical shuttle,*

*Out of the ninth-month midnight,*

one of them wanting only one foot to be a very perfect hexameter or the subtly varied movement of this other passage,

*Over the hoarse surging of the sea,*

*Or flitting from brier to brier by day,*

*I saw, I heard at intervals the remaining one,*

the he-bird,

The solitary guest from Alabama,
one has almost the rhythmical illusion of listening to a Sophoclean or Aeschylean chorus. In the opening stanzas of the noble *Prayer of Columbus*, there is a continuous iambic metrical stress, but with the choric movement. One finds the same thing sometimes in French *vers libre*,—one poem at least of the kind I have seen of wonderful beauty,—though the success is not so easy in that language. Tagore has recently attempted a kind of free verse in Bengali, not so good as his regular metres, though melodious enough, as everything must be that is written by this master musician of the word, and throughout there is the same choric or dithyrambic principle
of movement. This then seems to be the natural high-water mark of free poetical rhythm; it is a use of the poetic principle of measure in its essence without the limitations of a set form. Evidently much can be done in this rhythmical method. But it is yet doubtful whether in languages which lack the support of quantitative measure, poetical expression in this form can carry home with at all the same force as in the received ways of word-music.

We may get some idea of the limitations of the form by one or two examples from the poetry of Carpenter I find quoted by Mr. Cousins in his essay. Carpenter with a poetic faculty of a high order, a prophet of democracy and of the Self, like Whitman, but of a higher more spiritual truth of the Self, has like him found it impossible to restrain the largeness of his vision and personality in the bonds of metrical poetry. In both we see that the prophet and thinker predominate over the poet and artist. Less rough and great than the epic voice from the other side of the ocean, his poetry has a more harmonious, limpid and meditative fullness. But the lesser abundance of force and drive makes us feel more the limitations of his form. The thought is not only great, but poetically great and satisfying, the expression as form of thought is noble and admirable, but we miss the subtler rhythmic uplift of the poetic enthusiasm which is given to minds of much less power by the inspiring cadence and the ordered measures of the poetic spirit, chhandas. His flow is ordinarily of the middle kind with occasional choric turns and movements, but the latter do not carry with them the full force of the intenser poetic cadence. To cite one passage,—

"There in the region of equality in the world of Freedom
no longer limited, standing on a lofty peak in heaven above
the clouds,
From below hidden. Yet to all who pass into that region
most clearly visible
He the Eternal appeared."
Whitman would have broken that up into five lines and got by it a more distinct and forcible effect,—for the breath of poetry best rises and falls in brief and intense lengths; so printed, it would be at once apparent that we have a varied choric movement, a little stumbling into half-prose just before the end, but otherwise admirable, with two sudden turns of great poetic force, where the movement is precisely that of the Greek chorus. But the total effect is the sense of what one might almost call a noble and chanting superprose rhythm.

This appears more clearly in another passage where Carpenter's movement is more at its normal level. He begins with a strain which is only just distinguishable from the prose strain, but suddenly rises from it to the beginning of a choric elevation,

"As one shuts a door after a long confinement in the house—so out of your own plans and purposes escaping.—"

then comes the full choric rise,

"Out of the mirror-lined chambers of self (grand though they be, but O how dreary!) in which you have hitherto spent your life.—"

where, if the line had only ended with the parenthesis, it would have been a strain of perfect choric poetry, magnificently thought, imaged and cadenced, but the closing words spoil the effect, for they are a sharp descent towards the prose level. There are too elevations rising up from a rhythmical prose cadence but lifted high by the scriptural nobility of phrase and spiritual turn which we get so often in Carpenter. These fluctuations appear then to be inherent in the form and it seems to me that being in their nature a constant fall from the striving after a sustained perfection, they take away altogether from the claims of this "free verse." In lesser writers there is a similar but much more pronounced inadequacy; they rise little and fall or drag along with the most easily satisfied self-content in lowness. But that poets of great power should be satisfied with these deficiencies of their instru-
ment and their most cultured readers accept them without question, indicates an inferiority, almost a depravation in the modern ear, or at least a great remissness in the austerity of the search after perfection. It is now sometimes said that the lines of poetry should follow the lines of life, and life, it might be contended, is of this kind, thought itself is of this kind, and the rhythm of poetry gains in sincerity by following them. But art is not of this kind, the poetic spirit is not of this kind; the nature of art is to strive after a nobler beauty and more sustained perfection than life can give, the nature of poetry is to soar on the wings of the inspiration to the highest intensities and keep winging, as far as may be, always near to them. A form which in the name of freedom remits and relaxes this effort, whatever its other merits and advantages, means a laxity of effort and is a dangerous downward concession.

But there is another objection which may be denied, but seems to me true, that this kind of verse does not give its full spiritual value to the poet's speech. Carpenter has a power of substance, thought-vision, image, expression which is very rare and in all these respects he would have been recognised as not only equal but superior to many who have enjoyed in their own day the reputation of poets of the first rank. That he is not so recognised is due to the inferior form, a form legitimate enough for lesser uses, but not easily capable of the greatest poetic effects: Whitman too for all his energy loses in this way; even his greatest things do not go absolutely and immediately home, or having entered they do not so easily seize on the soul, take possession and rest in a calm, yet vibrating mastery. The real poetic cadence has that power, and to make the full use of it is the sign of the greatest masters; it has in it then something magical, immediate and miraculous, an unanalysable triumph of the spirit. But this other movement has not that stamp, it does only a little more than a highly concentrated prose
might do, and this is because of the three indispensable intensities of poetry it may have intensity of thought and soul-substance, intensity of expression, but the intensity of rhythm, which is poetry's primal need, is lowered and diluted,—even, one feels, to a certain extent in its choric movements: by that lowering the two other intensities suffer, the poets himself tends to loosen them to the level of his movement. If that is so, those who use the form to meet the demands of the new age, are on the wrong track. But a demand is there and it indicates a real need. It is evident that Whitman and Carpenter could not have expressed themselves altogether in the existing forms, even if they had made the attempt. But if the new age is to express itself with the highest poetical power, it must be by new discoveries within the principle of the intenser poetical rhythm. The recent or living masters may not have done this, though we may claim that some beginnings have been made, but the new age is only at its commencement; the decisive departures, the unforeseen creations may yet be due which will equip it with an instrument or many instruments suited to the largeness, depth and subtlety of the coming spirit.
Involution and Evolution

The western idea of evolution is the statement of a process of formation, not an explanation of our being. Limited to the physical and biological data of Nature, it does not attempt except in a summary or superficial fashion to discover it own meaning, but is content to announce itself as the general law of a quite mysterious and inexplicable energy. Evolution becomes a problem in motion which is satisfied to work up with an automatic regularity its own puzzle, but not to work it out, because, since it is only a process, it has no understanding of itself, and, since it is a blind perpetual automatism of mechanical energy, it has neither an origin nor an issue. It began perhaps or is always beginning; it will stop perhaps in time or is always somewhere stopping and going back to its beginnings, but there is no why, only a great turmoil and fuss of a how to its beginning and its cessation; for there is in it no fountain of spiritual intention, but only the force of an unresting material necessity. The ancient idea of evolution was the fruit of a philosophical intuition, the modern is an effort of scientific observation. Each as enounced misses something, but the ancient got at the spirit of the movement where the modern is content with a form and the most external machinery. The Sankhya thinker gave us the psychological elements of the total evolutionary process, analysed mind and sense and the
subtle basis of matter and divined some of the secrets of the executive energy, but had no eye for the detail of the physical labour of Nature. He saw in it too not only the covering active evident Force, but the concealed sustaining spiritual entity, though by an excess of the analytic intellect, obsessed with its love of trenchant scissions and symmetrical oppositions, he set between meeting Soul and Force an original and eternal gulf or line of separation. The modern scientist strives to make a complete scheme and institution of the physical method which he has detected in its minute workings, but is blind to the miracle each step involves or content to lose the sense of it in the satisfied observation of a vast ordered phenomenon. But always the marvel of the thing remains, one with the inexplicable wonder of all existence,—even as it is said in the ancient Scripture,

\[ \text{áscharyavat paçyati kaschid enam,} \\
\text{áscharyad vadati tathaiva chányah;} \\
\text{áscharyavach chainam anyah çrinoi,} \\
\text{crutvápyenam veda na chaiva kaschit.} \]

"One looks on it and sees a miracle, another speaks of it as a miracle, as a miracle another hears of it, but what it is, for all the hearing, none knoweth." We know that an evolution there is, but not what evolution is; that remains still one of the initial mysteries of Nature.

For evolution, as is the habit with the human reason's accounts and solutions of the deep and unfathomable way of the spirit in things, raises more questions than it solves; it does not do away with the problem of creation, for all its appearance of solid orderly fact, any more than the religious affirmation of an external omnipotent Creator could do it or the illusionist's mystic Maya, aghatana-ghatana-patiyasi, very skilful in bringing about the impossible, some strange existent, non-existent Power with an idea in That which is beyond and without ideas, self-empowered to create an existent non-existent world,
existent because it very evidently is, non-existent because it is a patched up consistency of dreamful unreal transi-
ences. The problem is only prolonged, put farther back, given a subtle and orderly, but all the more challengingly complex appearance. But, even when our questioning is confined to the one issue of evolution alone, the difficulty still arises of the essential significance of the bare outward facts observed, what is meant by evolution, what is it that evolves, from what and by what force of necessity? The scientist is content to affirm an original matter or sub-
stance, atomic, electric, etheric or whatever it may finally turn out to be, which by the very nature of its inherent energy or of an energy acting in it and on it,—the two things are not the same, and the distinction, though it may seem immaterial in the beginning of the process, is of a considerable ultimate consequence,—produces owing to some unexplained law, constant system of results or other unalterable principle a number of different basic forms and powers of matter or different sensible and ef-
teptive movements of energy: these come into being, it seems, when the minute original particles of matter meet together in variously disposed quantities, measures and combinations, and all the rest is a varying, developing, mounting movement of organised energy and its evolu-
tionary consequences, parināma, which depends on this crude constituting basis. All that is or may be a correct statement of phenomenal fact,—but we must not forget that the fundamental theory of science has been going of late through a considerable commotion of an upsetting and a rapid rearrangement,—but it carries us no step far-
ther towards the principal, the all-important thing that we want to know. The way in which man sees and experien-
ces the universe, imposes on his reason the necessity of a one original eternal substance of which all things are the forms and a one eternal original energy of which all mo-
vement of action and consequence is the variation. But
the whole question is what is the reality of this substance and what is the essential nature of this energy?

Then, even if we suppose the least explicable part of the action to be an evolutionary development of the immaterial from Matter, still is that development a creation or a liberation, a birth of what did not exist before or a slow bringing out of what already existed in suppressed fact or in eternal potentiality? And the interest of the question becomes acute, its importance incalculable when we come to the still unexplained phenomenon of life and mind. Is life a creation out of inanimate substance or the appearance of a new, a suddenly or slowly resultant power out of the brute material energy, and is conscious mind a creation out of inconscient or subconscient life, or do these powers and godheads appear because they were always there though in a shrouded and by us unrecognizable condition of their hidden or suppressed idea and activity, Nomen and Numen. And what of the soul and of man? Is soul a new result or creation of our mentalised life,—even so many regard it, because it clearly appears as a self-conscious, bright, distinguishable power only when thinking life has reached some high pitch of its intensity,—or is it not a permanent entity, the original mystery that now unveils its hidden form, the eternal companion of the energy we call Nature, her secret inhabitant or her very spirit and reality? And is man a biological creation of a brute energy which has somehow unexpectedly and quite inexplicably managed to begin to feel and think, or is he in his real self that inner Being and Power which is the whole sense of the evolution and the master of Nature? Is Nature only the force of self-expression, self-formation, self-creation of a secret spirit, and man however hedged in his present capacity, the first being in Nature in whom that power begins to be consciently self-creative in the front of the action, in this outer chamber of physical being, there set to work and bring out by an
increasingly self-conscious evolution what he can of all its human significance or its divine possibility? That is the clear conclusion we must arrive at in the end, if we once admit as the key of the whole movement, the reality of this whole mounting creation a spiritual evolution.

The word evolution carries with it in its intrinsic sense, in the idea at its root the necessity of a previous involution. We must, if a hidden spiritual being is the secret of all the action of Nature, give its full power to that latent value of the idea. We are bound then to suppose that all that evolves already existed involved, passive or otherwise active, but in either case concealed from us in the shell of material Nature. The Spirit which manifests itself here in a body, must be involved from the beginning in the whole of matter and in every knot, formation and particle of matter; life, mind and whatever is above mind must be latent inactive or concealed active powers in all the operations of material energy. The only alternative would be to drive in between the two sides of our being the acute Sankhya scission; but that divides too much spirit and nature. Nature would be an inert and mechanical thing, but she would set to her work activised by some pressure on her of the Spirit. Spirit would be Being conscious and free in its own essence from the natural activity, but would phenomenally modify or appear to modify its consciousness in response to some reaction of Nature. One would reflect the movements of the active Power, the other would enlighten her activities with the consciousness of the self-aware immortal being. In that case the scientific evolutionary view of Nature as a vast mechanical energy, life, mind and natural soul action its scale of developing operations would have a justification. Our consciousness would only be a luminous translation of the self-driven unresting mechanical activity into responsive notes of experience of the consenting spiritual witness. But the disabling difficulty in this notion is the
quite opposite character of our own highest seeing; for in the end and as the energy of the universal force mounts up the gradients of its own possibilities, Nature becomes always more evidently a power of the spirit and all her mechanism only figures of its devising mastery. The power of the Flame cannot be divided from the Flame; where the Flame is, there is the power, and where the power is there is the fiery Principle. We have to come back to the idea of a spirit present in the universe and, if the process of its works of power and its appearance is in the steps of an evolution, there imposes itself the necessity of a previous involution.

This spirit in things is not apparent from the beginning, but self-betrayed in an increasing light of manifestation. We see the compressed powers of Nature start released from their original involution, disclose in a passion of work the secrets of their infinite capacity, press upon themselves and on the supporting inferior principle to subject its lower movement on which they are forced to depend into a higher working proper to their own type and feel their proper greatness in the greatness of their self-revealing effectuations; life takes hold of matter and breathes into it the numberless figures of its abundant creative force, its subtle and variable patterns, its enthusiasm of birth and death and growth and act and response, its will of more and more complex organisation of experience, its quivering search and feeling out after a self-consciousness of its own pleasure and pain and understanding gust of action; mind seizes on life to make it an instrument for the wonders of will and intelligence; soul possesses and lifts mind through the attraction of beauty and good and wisdom and greatness towards the joy of some half-seen ideal highest existence; and in all this miraculous movement and these climbing greatnesses each step sets its foot on a higher rung and opens to a clearer, larger and fuller scope and view of the always secret and
always self-manifesting spirit in things. The eye fixed on the physical evolution has only the sight of a mechanical grandeur and subtlety of creation; the evolution of life opening to mind, the evolution of mind opening to the soul of its own light and action, the evolution of soul out of the limited powers of mind to a resplendent blaze of the infinities of spiritual being are the more significant things, give us greater and subtler reaches of the self-disclosing Secrecy. The physical evolution is only an outward sign, the more and more complex and subtle development of a supporting structure, the growing exterior metre-mould of form which is devised to sustain in matter the rising intonations of the spiritual harmony. The spiritual significance finds us as the notes rise; but not till we get to the summit of the scale can we command the integral meaning of that for which all these first formal measures were made the outward lines, the sketch or the crude notation. Life itself is only a coloured vehicle, physical birth a convenience for the greater and greater births of the Spirit.

The spiritual process of evolution is then in some sense a creation, but a self-creation, not a making of what never was, but a bringing out of what was implicit in the Being. The Sanskrit word for creation signifies a loosing forth, a letting out into the workings of Nature. The Upanishad in a telling figure applies the image of the spider which brings its web out of itself and creates the structure in which it takes its station. That is applied in the ancient Scripture not to the evolution of things out of Matter, but to an original bringing of temporal becoming out of the eternal infinity; Matter itself and this material universe are only such a web or indeed no more than a part of it brought out from the spiritual being of the Infinite. But the same truth, the same law holds good of all that we see of the emergence of things from involution in the material energy. We might almost speak here of a double evolution. A Force inherent in the Infinite brings out of it
eternally the structure of its action in a universe of which the last descending scale is based upon an involution of all the powers of the spirit into an inconscient absorption in her self-oblivious passion of form and structural working. Thence comes an ascent and progressive liberation of power after power till the spirit self-disclosed and set free by knowledge and mastery of its works repossesses the eternal fullness of its being which envelopes then and carries in its grasp the manifold and unified splendours of its nature. At any rate the spiritual process of which our human birth is a step and our life is a portion, appears as the bringing out of a greatness, āsya mahimānām, which is secret, inherent and self-imprisoned, absorbed in the form and working of things. Our world-action figures an evolution, an outrolling of a manifold Power gathered and coiled up in the crude intricacy of Matter. The upward progress of the successive births of things is a rise into waking and larger and larger light of a consciousness shut into the first hermetic cell of sleep of the eternal Energy.

There is a parallel in the Yogic experience of the Kundalini, eternal Force coiled up in the body in the bottom root vessel or chamber, mulādāhāra, pedestal, earth-centre of the physical nervous system. There she slumbers coiled up there like a Python and filled full of all that she holds gathered in her being, but when she is struck by the freely coursing breath, by the current of Life which enters in to search for her, she awakes and rises flaming up the ladder of the spinal chord and forces open centre after centre of the involved dynamic secrets of consciousness till at the summit she finds, joins and becomes one with the spirit. Thus she passes from an involution in inconscience through a series of opening glories of her powers into the greatest eternal superconscience of the spirit. This mysterious evolving Nature in the world around us follows even such a course. Inconscient being is not so much a matrix as a chamber of materialised energy in which are
gathered up all the powers of the spirit; they are there, but work in the conditions of the material energy, involved, we say, and therefore not apparent as themselves because they have passed into a form of working subnormal to their own right scale where the characteristics by which we recognise and think we know them are supressed into a minor and an undetected force of working. As Nature rises in the scale, she liberates them into their recognisable scales of energy, discloses the operations by which they can feel themselves and their greatness. At the highest summit she rises into the self-knowledge of the spirit which informed her action, but because of its involution or concealment in the forms of its workings could not be known in the greatness of its reality. Spirit and Nature discovering the secret of her energies become one at the top of the spiritual evolution by a soul in Nature which awakens to the significance of its own being in the liberation of the highest truth: it comes to know that its births were the births, the assumptions of form of an eternal Spirit, to know itself as that and not a creature of Nature and rises to the possession of the revealed, full and highest power of its own real and spiritual nature. That liberation, because liberation is self-possession, comes to us as the crown of a spiritual evolution.

We must consider all the packed significance of this involution. The spirit involved in material energy is there with all its powers; life, mind and a greater supramental power are involved in Matter. But what do we mean when we say that they are involved, and do we mean that all these things are quite different energies cut off from each other by an essential separateness, but rolled up together in an interaction, or do we mean that there is only one Being with its one energy, varying shades of the light of its power differentiated in the spectrum of Nature? When we say that Life is involved in Matter or in material Force, for of that Force Matter seems after all to be
only a various self-spun formation, do we not mean that
all this universal working, even in what seems to us its
inconscient inanimate action, is a life-power of the spirit
busy with formation, and we do not recognise it because
it is there in a lower scale in which the characteristics by
which we recognise life are not evident or are only slight-
ly evolved in the dullness of the material covering? Mat-
erial energy would be then Life packed into the density
of Matter and feeling out in it for its own intenser recog-
nisable power which it finds within itself in the material
concealment and liberates into action. Life itself would
be an energy of a secret mind, a mind imprisoned in its
own forms and quivering out in the nervous seekings of
life for its intenser recognisable power of consciousness
which it discovers within the vital and material suppres-
sion and liberates into sensibility. No doubt, practically,
these powers work upon each other as different energies,
but in essence they would be one energy and their inter-
action the power of the spirit working by its higher on its
lower forces, depending on them at first, but yet turning in
the scale of its ascent to overtop and master them. Mind
too might only be an inferior scale and formulation derived
from a much greater and supramental consciousness, and
that consciousness too with its greater light and will a
characteristic originating power of spiritual being, the
power which secret in all things, in mind, in life, in matter,
in the plant and the metal and the atom assures constant-
ly by its inevitable action the idea and harmony of the
universe. And what is the spirit itself but infinite existence,
eternal, immortal being, but always a conscious self-aware
being,—and that is the difference between the materialist’s
mechanical monism and the spiritual theory of the uni-
verse,—which here expresses itself in a world finite to our
conceptions whose every movement yet bears witness to
the Infinite? And this world is because the spirit has the
delight of its own infinite existence and the delight of its
own infinite self-variation; birth is because all consciousness carries with it power of its own being and all power of being is self-creative and must have the joy of its self-creation. For creation means nothing else than a self-expression; and the birth of the soul in the body is nothing but a mode of its own self-expression. Therefore all things here are expression, form, energy, action of the Spirit; matter itself is but form of spirit, life but power of being of the spirit, mind but working of consciousness of the spirit. All Nature is a display and a play of God, power and action and self-creation of the one spiritual Being. Nature presents to spirit at once the force, the instrument, the medium, the obstacle, the result of his powers, and all these things are the necessary elements for a gradual and developing creation.

But if the Spirit has involved its eternal greatness in the material universe and is there evolving its powers by the virtue of a secret self-knowledge, is disclosing them in a grandiose succession under the self-imposed difficulties of a material form of being, is disengaging them from a first veiling absorbed inscrutability of Nature, there is no difficulty in thinking or seeing that this soul shaped into humanity is a being of that Being, that this also has risen out of material involution by increasing self-expression in a series of births of which each grade is a new ridge of the ascent opening to higher powers of the spirit and that it is still arising and will not be for ever limited by the present walls of its birth but may, if we will, be born into a divine humanity. Our humanity is the conscious meeting place of the finite and the infinite and to grow more and more towards that Infinite even in this physical birth is our privilege. This Infinite, this Spirit who is housed within us but not bound or shut in by mind or body, is our own self and to find and be our self was, as the ancient sages knew, always the object of our human striving, for it is the object of the whole immense working of Na-
ture. But it is by degrees of the self-finding that Nature enlarges to her spiritual reality. Man himself is a doubly involved being; most of himself in mind and below is involved in a subliminal conscience or a subconscious; most of himself above mind is involved in a spiritual superconscience. When he becomes conscient in the superconscience, the heights and the depths of his being will be illumined by another light of knowledge than the flickering lamp of the reason can now cast into a few corners; for then the master of the field will enlighten this whole wonderful field of his being, as the sun illumines the whole system it has created out of its own glories. Then only he can know the reality even of his own mind and life and body. Mind will be changed into a greater consciousness, his life will be a direct power and action of the Divinity, his very body no longer this first gross lump of breathing clay, but a very image and body of spiritual being. That transfiguration on the summit of the mountain, divine birth, dinya janma, is that to which all these births are a long series of laborious steps. An involution of spirit in matter is the beginning, but a spiritual assumption of divine birth is the fullness of the evolution.
The year 1919 comes to us with the appearance of one of the most pregnant and historic dates of the modern world. It has ended the greatest war in history, begotten a new thing in the history of mankind, a League of Nations which claims to be the foundation-stone for the future united life of the human race, and cleared the stage for fresh and momentous other constructions or destructions, which will bring us into another structure of society and of the framework of human life than has yet been known in the recorded memory of the earth's peoples. This is record enough for a single year and it looks as if there were already sufficient to give this date an undisputed preeminence in the twentieth century. But it is possible that things are not quite what they look to the contemporary eye and that posterity may see them in a very different focus. 1815 must have seemed the date of dates to the men of the day whose minds were filled with the view of the long struggle between the ancient regimes and revolutionary France and then between Europe and Napoleon. But when we look back at present, we see that it was only a stage, the end of the acutest phase of struggle, the commencement of a breathing-time, the date of a makeshift which could not endure. We look back from it to 1789 which began the destruction of an old order and the birth of a new ideal and beyond it to later dates which mark the progress of that ideal towards its broadening realisation. So too posterity may look back beyond this year 1919 to the beginning of the catastrophe which marks the first collapse of the former European order and forward beyond it to dates yet in the womb of the future which will mark the progress towards realisation of whatever order and ideal is destined to replace it. This year too may be only the end of an acute phase of a first struggle, the commencement of a breathing-time,
the year of a makeshift, the temporary halt of a flood in motion. That is so because it has not realised the deeper mind of humanity nor answered to the far-reaching intention of the Time-Spirit.

In the enthusiasm of the struggle a hope arose that it would sweep away all the piled-up obstacles to human progress and usher in with a miraculous immediateness a new age. A vague ideal also syllabed eloquently of peace, of brotherhood, of freedom, of unity, which for the moment partly enlightened and kindled the soul of the race and gave its intellect a broader vista. Men spoke of the powers of good and evil separated on opposite sides and locked in a decisive conflict. These ideas were the exaggerations of sentiment and idealistic reason and in their excessive and blinding light many things took covert which were of a very different nature. The hope could not but be an illusion, a halo scene of the dream mind when it sees a future possibility in its own light apart from existing conditions. Human mind and action are too much of a tangled coil to admit of such miraculous suddennesses; the physical shock of war and revolution can break down stifling obstructions, but they cannot of themselves create either the kingdom of good or the kingdom of God; for that a mental and spiritual change is needed to which our slowly moving human nature takes time to shape its customary being. The ideal, a thing of the intellect and the sentiment only, cannot so easily bring about its own effectuation; force of circumstance, the will to survive of existing actualities, the insistent past of our own nature are not so easily blown away by the eager shouting of a few high and great words or even by the breath of the thought behind them, however loudly blare the trumpets of the ideal. Nor was the war itself precisely a definite issue between pure good and pure evil,—such distinctions belong to the world of the idealistic reason of which our actual intricate existence in
whose net opposites are very bafflingly fused together, is as yet at least no faithful reproduction,—but a very confused clash and catastrophe of the intertangled powers of the past, present and future. The result actually realised is only such as might have been expected from the balance of the forces at work. It is not the last result nor the end of the whole matter, but it represents the first sum of things that was ready for working out in the immediateness of the moment's potency. More was involved which will now press for its reign, but belongs to the future.

The cataclysm of the last five years had a Janus face, one side turned towards the past, one turned towards the future. In its dealings with the past it was a conflict between two forces, one represented by Germany and the central Powers, the other by America and the western nations of Europe. Outwardly, imperial Germany represented a very nakedly brutal imperialism and militarism satisfied of its own rightful claim and perfection and opposed to the broader middle-class democracy—but democracy tainted with a half-hearted, uneasy, unwilling militarism and a liberalised, comfortably half-idealistic imperialism—of western Europe. But this was only the outside of the matter, in itself it would not have been a sufficient occasion for so great a catastrophe. Imperial Germany and all it represented had to go because it was the worst side of European civilisation enthroned in all the glory of a perfect mechanical and scientific efficiency. Its figure was a composite godhead of Moloch and Mammon seated between the guardian figures of Intelligence and Science. It had its ideal, a singular combination of the remnants of the old spirit of monarchy and feudalism now stripped of all its past justification, of a very modern burdensome organised aggressive commercialism and industrialism and of a mechanised State socialism administered by an empire and a bureaucracy, all guided by an expert intelligence and power of science. This triple-headed caricature of a future ideal for the world with its claim to take possession of the race and mechanise its life for it had to be broken, and with it passed away almost all the old phantoms of aristocracy and survivals of aristocratic monarchy which still lived on in an increasingly democratic Europe. So much the war has swept away; but its more
important and positive result is not the destruction of the past, but a shaking even of the present bases and a clearing of the field for the forces of the future.

The future does not belong to that hybrid thing, a middle-class democracy infected with the old theory of international relations, however modified by concessions to a new broader spirit of idealism. The peace which closes the war is evidently in part a prolongation of the past and a thing of the moment, its only importance for the future is its association with the plan for a league of nations. But, this league also is a makeshift, a temporary device awaiting the possibility of a more perfect formation. Its insecurity lies in the degree to which it is a concession to the past and founded on a present which is indeed still dominant, but very evidently doomed to a rapid passing. The future destined to replace this present is evident enough in some of its main outward tendencies, in society away from plutocracy and middle-class democracy to some completeness of socialism and attempt at a broad and equal commonality of social living, in the relations of the peoples away from aggressive nationalism and balances of power to some closer international comity. But these are only symptoms, feelings out, mechanical tendencies, not likely by themselves, whatever changes they bring, to satisfy for long the soul of humanity. Behind them lies a greater question of the spirit and ideal which are to govern the relations of man with man and people with people in the age that is opening, the most critical because the most far-reaching in its hopes of all the historic ages of humanity.

Meanwhile much is gone that had to go, though relics and dregs of it remain for destruction, and the agony of a sanguinary struggle is ended, and for that there may well be rejoicing. But if something is ended, all has yet to be begun. The human spirit has still to find itself, its idea and its greater orientation.
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