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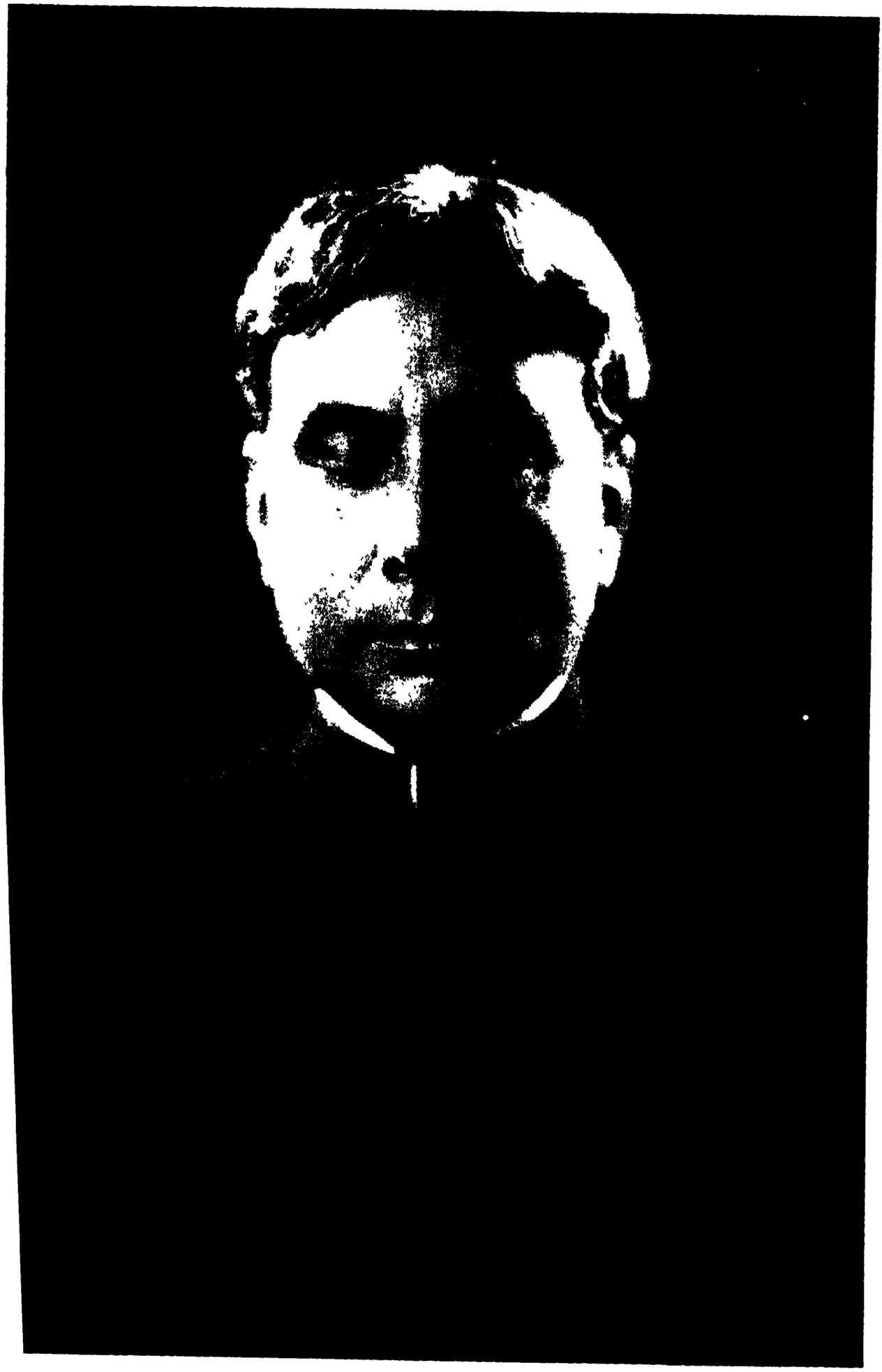
COMPLETE WORKS OF SWAMI ABHEDANANDA

Vol. III



SWAMI ABHEDANANDA

(in America)

COMPLETE WORKS
OF
SWAMI ABHEDANANDA

VOLUME III

RAMAKRISHNA VEDANTA MATH
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ABOUT THIS COMPLETE WORKS

THIRD VOLUME

We now offer to the public the third volume of the "COMPLETE WORKS OF SWAMI ABHEDANANDA", published on the occasion of the Swami Abhedananda Centenary Celebration, 1966-1967. This volume contains his memorial lectures on the Yoga which were delivered by him in different institutions on different occasions in America.

The third book, *Yoga, Its Theory and Practice,* is now being published for the first time. Treatment on the chapters of this book is somewhat new and novel. All the books of this third volume have been carefully edited. Prefaces have been added in each book for giving short glimpses of the entire discussion of the subjects, included in the respective books.

SWAMI PRAJNANANANDA
General Secretary,
Swami Abhedananda Centenary
Celebration (1966-67)

Publication Department
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HOW TO BE A YOGI

PREFACE

How to be a Yogi is a a book on the science and practice of different types of Yoga which are interconnected with religion and philosophy, applied in practice. These lectures were delivered by Swami Abhedananda before the American students of Yoga and philosophy and were published in book form from the Vedanta Ashrama, San Francisco, California, U.S.A.

In this book, Swami Abhedananda has consecutively surveyed the science and the practice of Yoga as a whole. This book contains nine illuminating chapters on different types of Yoga along with their philosophy, psychology, and science. In the introductory chapter, the Swami has defined what is true religion. He says that true religion is not based on mere theory or speculation, but on practice. Religion really prepares the ground of divine spirituality which does not depend upon the reading of the scriptures, not upon the theological and speculative discussions on the *shastras,* and not upon intellect and reason, but upon the realization or the divine immediate awarness of the unchangeable Reality.

Swami Abhedananda has said that he had the good fortune to be acquainted with a divine man, whose name is Ramakrishna Paramahansa. He never went to any school, neither he read any of the scriptures and philosophies, but yet had reached the perfection by realizing the absolute Brahman. From this it is understod that true spirituality and God-realization do not depend on any book-knowledge, nor on the intellectual apprehension, but on the sincere spiritual practice of Yoga which makes a man commune with the Absolute. Swami Abhedananda has further said that self-knowledge is acquired neither by sense perception, nor by reading of the *shastras,* but by studying one's own nature, and by practising the different branches of Yoga.

The second chapter deals with the discussion on *What is Yoga.* In this chapter, the learned Swami has given the eleven definitions of Yoga. In the eleventh definition he says that Yoga means the restraint of all thought-actions through concentration and meditation. Yoga is derived from the Sanskrit root, *yuj,*

which means 'to join' i.e. to join the *jivatman* with the *Paramatman*. The practitioners of Yoga are mainly divided into three classes, and among them the born Yogi are included in the first class, the half-awakened souls are included in the second class, and the unawakend souls are included in the third class.

The third chapter is devoted to the discussion on the Hatha Yoga. The Hatha Yoga is the science which teaches to conquer the hunger, thirst, sleep, diseases, etc. Some Hatha Yogis practise the *trataka,* and fix their eyes in the centre of the eyebrows, for gaining concentration as well as some psychic powers.

The Swami has defined different kinds of *asana* or the sitting-posture to be practised by the Hatha Yogi. He warns the Hatha Yogis not to practise the Yoga which develops the psychic powers, and instructs them to practise that kind of Yoga which is helpful to the Raja Yoga, because the Raja Yoga leads the souls to the realization of the Godconsciousness and to the freedom.

In the fourth chapter, Swami Abhedananda has discussed about the laws and science of the Raja Yoga which is known as the royal road, or the surest path to perfection. The Raja Yoga deals entirely with the mind and its powers, and so it may be called the science of the applied psychology. This best and grandest method of Yoga teaches to strengthen the will of the mind, and to develop the powers of concentration and meditation, which lead to the state of the superconsciousness.

The practice of the Raja Yoga is divided into eight steps like *yama, niyama, asana, pranayama, pratyahara, dharana, dhyana* and *samadhi.* The *asana* is the posture of sitting. Patanjali says that a suitable and an easy *asana* can be chosen for making the spinal cord straight and taking the breath without any obstruction and difficulty. The Yogis say that the vital power or energy is stored up in the nerve-centres of the spinal cord, and it is the cause of the motion of the lungs, which in turn produces respiration, and respiration is the cause of the circulation of the blood and of all other organic activity, and so the spinal cord should be kept straight to help the current flow easily through the cannel of the spinal cord. The *pratyahara* is the preparatory ground for concentration. Con-

centration means to reduce the divergent desires or the manifold modifications of the mind into their causal state and to make them concentrate upon one point. The *samadhi* is the state of the superconciousness. Patanjali has divided this supreme state into different classes, and the *nirvija* or *nirvikalpa samadhi* is the highest one, where all the seeds of desires and the cause of the cycle of births and rebirths are eternally trancended. The process of concentration really transforms the mind into the pure consciousness. In the highest state of *samadhi*, a Sadhaka gains the spiritual illumination, and cuts asunder the knots of nescience or *avidya*.

In the fifth chapter, the Swami has dealt wth the Karma Yoga. The Swami says that the word 'Karma Yoga' connotes the idea of 'dexterity in work'. The spirit of worship must be the keynote of all kinds of work, and the work with this divine spirit is known as the philosophy of work. The Swami further says that, in truth, we do work through the inspiration-cum-dictation of the will of the mind, and so if we purify our mind with the spirit of worship of God and if we give up all kinds of ego-centric idea from our mind, then the mind is concentrated and enjoys tranquil peace and happiness. The Swami says: "He who wishes to prctise the Karma Yoga, should abandon the attachment to the fruits of his labours, and learn to work for work's sake, * * ". The teachings of the *Bhagavad Gita* is that you have the right to do the works, and not to ask or enjov the fruits thereof. So the works with love for God and love for the humanity are known as the Karma Yoga which is the precondition of the Bhakti Yoga.

In the sixth chapter, Swami Abhedananda has described the main principles of the Bhakti Yoga. The Bhakti Yoga is the path to devotion for God and also the path to love for all the creatures of the world. The Swami says: "The word *bhakti* means 'devotion', while Yoga in this case signifies the union of the individual soul with God. Hence the Bhakti Yoga is the method of devotion by which true communion of the soul with the supreme Deity is accomplished". There are mystics all over the world, who devote their lives in the holy service of the beloved God. The Christian mystics, the German mystics, the Spanish mystics and other mystics of other nations are just like the Vaishnava mystics of India and the Sufi

mystics of Persia and Arabia. All of them worship their ever beloved Friend, God through love and devotion, and they want the Divine communion with God in ecstasy which makes them forget their consciousness of the body and the world.

Swami Abhedananda says that a Bhakta "never forgets his relation to his beloved. His mind is concentrated and one-pointed, and, consequently, meditation becomes easy for him. True devotion or continuous remembrance of the divine Ideal leads him to the unceasing meditation, and ultimately lifts the soul to *samadhi,* where it realizes God, and communes with Him, undisturbed by any other thought, feeling, idea, or sensation. Becoming dead to the sense phenomena, it lives on the spiritual plane of the Godconsciousness". In fact, a true Bhakti Yogi does everything in this world of works or duties with the spirit of worship, and so the material sense phenomena cannot entangle him in the world of *maya.*

In the seventh chapter, Swami Abhedananda has explained the art and the science of the Jnana Yoga. The Swami says that the Jnana Yoga is based entirely upon the monistic principle of Advaita, or the non-dualistic system of Vedanta. "Its purpose is to show that the subject and the object are but the two expressions of one absolute Being or Substance, that God and man, the Creator and the created, are only different aspects of one universal Reality". The Jnana Yoga awakens the soul from the deep slumber of ignorance, and make it realize the immortal *Atman.*

In the eighth chapter, the Swami has dealt with the science of breathing. The mysterious and invisible vital energy or force is known as the *prana.* In the *Upanishad,* the *prana* has been called the cause of life, because no being can live without the *prana* or the vital energy. We generally inhale the breath or *prana* and purify the circulation of blood in the system of our body. But it should be remembered that behind the breath or prime air, there remains the living energy which vitalizes the systems of the whole body and mind.

This *prana* should be controlled by the process of the *pranayama,* or the practice of breathing. The Swami says: "This control of the *prana* brings complete subjugation of all the forces which govern the mind and the body". The Yogis

say that the *prana* is the king, and the *prana* should be controlled for calming down the activities of the mind, because the *prana* and the *manas* (mind) are inter-connected together. Again mind is the finest vibration of the *prana,* and matter is the grossest vibration of the *prana.* So the mind and the matter are no other than the *prana* in vibrion. The nerve-centres of the spinal cord (*merudanda*) are the main stations where this vital force is stored. There are many centres in the spinal cord, of which proceed the whole body, including its organs. All sensations and motions of the limbs depend upon these nerve-centres in the spinal column and the brain. There are two currents, which flow in and out of the brain through the spinal column and nerves; they are called the afferent and efferent currents, in Sanskrit, *ida* and *pingala.* They run through the anterior and posterior channels of the spinal cord, and these furnish the two paths, over which the currents of the *prana* travel. The nervous energy itself is scattered throughout the system, and the only means of regulating it is by controlling the principal centres or stations in the spinal column. If, therefore, any one wishes to control the *prana,* he must learn to govern the chief stations through which it works. The *prana* being controlled, the mind is controlled and there reigns the tranquil peace.

The nineth chapter has been devoted to the historical and mystical discussion on *Was Christ a Yogi.* It is a historical fact that Christ came to India and travelled the holy places of India, and learned the practice of Yoga from the Indian Yogis. Swami Abhedananda has shown that Christ's Divine realization was the result of his Indian yogic-cum-vedantic *sadhana.* In his Bengali book, *Kashmir O Tibbate,* the Swami has given the historical account of Christ's visit to India. In that book, he has given an account or a record of Christ's journey and visit to India from a Tibatan manuscript, preserved in the Hemis Monastery in Ladak. The Russian traveller Notovitch has seen that record in that Monastery, and has given the detailed account of Christ's stay for nearly eighteen years. Swami Abhedananda also makes that manuscript of the Hemis Monstery to be translated by a senior Tibetan Monk, and has given the translated record in Bengali in his book, *Kashmir O Tibbate.* It is interesting to note that this chapter on *Was*

Christ a Yogi has been adopted in an important book, *Adept of Galilee,* published in America.

However, Swami Abhedananda has proved in this last chapter that Christ was a true Yogi, and he practised the Yoga which enables him to realize the truths: "I and my Father are one", and "Love thy neighbour as thyself". The Swami says: "The greater position of the life of Jesus is absolutely unknown to us, and as He did not leave behind Him any systematic teaching regarding the method by which one may attain to that state of Godconsciousness which He Himself reached, there is no way of finding out what He did or practised during the eighteen years that elapsed before His appearance in public". Jesus the Christ was really a great Yogi, "because He realized the transitory and emphemeral nature of the phenomenal world, and, discriminating the real from the unreal, renounced all desires for worldly pleasures and bodily comforts". Jesus the Christ was also a great Karma Yogi, "because He never worked for results; He had neither desire for name, nor ambition for fame or for earthly prosperity". Jesus of Nazareth also proved himself to be a great Bhakti Yogi, and a true lover of God. Like the great Raja Yogis of India, Jesus the Christ knew also "the secret of separating the soul from his physical shell, and He showed this at the time of his death while his body was suffering from the extreme pain, by saying, 'Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do' ". The Swami at last says that it is through the teachings of Vedanta that the Hindus have learned how to glorify the character of Jesus the Christ. Jesus was a Yogi, and a realized man, nay, He was one of the saviours of the mankind, and so all nations of the world love him and worship him as a Divine incarnation of God.

SWAMI PRAJNANANANDA

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY

True religion is extremely practical; it is indeed based entirely upon practice and not upon theory or speculation of any kind, for religion begins only where theory ends. Its object is to mould the character, unfold the divine nature of the soul, and make it possible to live on the spiritual plane; its ideal being the realization of absolute Truth and the manifestation of Divinity in the actions of the daily life.

Spirituality does not depend upon the reading of scriptures, or upon learned interpretations of sacred books, or upon fine theological discussions, but upon the realization of unchangeable truth. In India a man is called truly spiritual or religious, not because he has written some books, not because he possesses the gift of oratory and can preach eloquent sermons, but because he expresses divine powers through his words and deeds. A thoroughly illiterate man can attain to the highest state of spiritual perfection without going to any school or university, and without reading any scripture, if he can conquer his animal nature by realizing his true self and its relation to the universal spirit, or in other words, if he can attain to the knowledge of that truth which dwells within him, and which is the same as the infinite source of existence, intelligence, and bliss. He who has mastered all the scriptures, philosophies, and sciences, may be regarded by society as an intellectual giant; yet he cannot be equal to that unlettered man who, having realized the eternal Truth, has become one with it, who sees God everywhere, and who lives on this earth as as embodiment of Divinity.

The writer had the good fortune to be acquainted with such a divine man in India. His name was Ramakrishna. He never went to any school, neither had he read any of the scriptures, philosophies, or scientific treatises of the world, yet he had reached perfection by realizing God through the practice of Yoga. Hundreds of men and women came to see him and were spiritually awakened and uplifted by the divine powers which this illiterate man possessed. Today he is revered and worship-

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ped by thousands all over India as is Jesus the Christ in Christendom. He could expound with extraordinary clearness the subtlest problems of philosophy or science, and answer the most intricate questions of clever theologians in such a masterly way as to dispel all doubts concerning the matter in hand. How could he do this without reading books ? He did by his wonderful insight into the true nature of things, and by the Yoga power that made him directly perceive things which cannot be revealed by the senses. His spiritual eyes were open ; his sight could penetrate through the thick veil of ignorance that hangs before the vision of ordinary mortals, and which prevents them from knowing that which exists beyond the range of sense perception.

These powers begin to manifest in the soul that is awakened to the ultimate reality of the universe. It is then that the sixth sense of direct perception of higher truths develops and frees it from dependence upon the sense powers. This sixth sense or spiritual eye is latent in each individual, but it opens in a few only among millions, and they are known as the Yogis. With the vast majority it is in a rudimentary state, covered by a thick veil. When, however, through the practice of Yoga, it unfolds in a man who becomes conscious of the higher invisible realms and of everything that exists on the soul plane. Whatever he says, harmonizes with the sayings and writings of all the great seers of truth of every age and clime. He does not study books ; he has no need to do so, for he knows all that the human intellect can conceive. He can grasp the purport of a book without reading its text ; he also understands how much the human mind can express through words, and he is familiar with that which is beyond thoughts and which consequently can never be expressed by words.

Before arriving at such spiritual illumination, he goes though diverse stages of mental and spiritual evolution, and, in consequence, knows all that can be experienced by human intellect. He does not, however, care to remain confined with the limit of sense perception, and is not contented with the intellectual apprehension of relative reality, but his sole aim is to enter into the realm of the Absolute, which is the beginning and end of phenomenal objects and of relative knowledge. Thus, striving for the realization of the highest, he does

not fail to collect all relative knowledge pertaining to the world of phenomena that come in his way as he marches on towards his destination, the unfoldment of his true self.

Our true self is all-knowing by its nature. It is the source of infinite knowledge within us. Being bound by the limitations of time, space, and causation, we cannot express all the powers that we possess in reality. The higher we rise above these limiting conditions, the more we can manifest the divine qualities of omniscience and omnipotence. If, on the contrary, we keep our minds fixed upon phenomena and devote the whole of our energy in acquiring knowledge dependent entirely upon sense perceptions, shall we ever reach the end of phenomenal knowledge ? Shall we ever be able to know the real nature of the things of this universe ? No ; because the sense cannot lead us beyond the superficial appearance of sense objects. In order to go deeper in the realm of the invisible, we invent instruments, and, with their help, we are able to penetrate a little further ; but these instruments, again, have their limit. After using one kind of instrument, we become dissatisfied with the results and search for some other which may reveal more and more. And thus we struggle on, discovering at every step, how poor and helpless are the sense powers in the path of the knowledge of the Absolute. At last we are driven to the conclusion that any instrument, no matter how fine, can never help us to realize that which is beyond the reach of sense perception, intellect, and thought.

So, even if we could spend the whole of our time and energy in studying phenomena, we shall never arrive at any satisfactory result or be able to see things as they are in reality. The knowledge of today, gained by the help of certain instruments, will be the ignorance of tomorrow, if we get better instruments. The knowledge of last year is already the ignorance of the present year ; the knowledge of this century will be ignorance in the light of the discoveries of a new century. The span of one human life is, therefore, too short even to attempt to acquire a correct knowledge of all things existing on the phenomenal plane. The life-time of hundreds of thousands of generations, nay, of all humanity, seems too short, when we consider the infinite variety to be found in the universe, and the countless number of objects that will have to be known

before we can reach the end of knowledge. If a man could live a million years, keeping his senses in perfect order during that long period, and could spend every moment in studying nature and in diligently endeavouring to learn every minute detail of phenomenal objects, would his search after knowledge be fulfilled at this expiration of that time? Certainly not; he would want still more time, a finer power of perception, a keener intellect, a subtler understanding; and then, he might say, as did Sir Issac Newton, after a life of tireless research, 'I have collected only pebbles on the shore of the ocean of knowledge.' If a genius like Newton could not even reach the edge of the water of that ocean, how can we expect to cross the vast expanse from shore to shore in a few brief years? Thousands of generations have passed away, thousands will pass, yet must the knowledge regarding the phenomena of the universe remain imperfect. Veil after veil may be removed, but veil after veil will remain behind. This was understood by the Yogis and seers of truth in India, who said: 'Innumerable are the branches of knowledge, but short is our time and there are the obstacles in the way; therefore, wise men should first struggle to know that which is the highest.'

Here the question arises: Which is the highest knowledge? This question is as old as history; it has puzzled the minds of the philosophers, scientists, and scholars of all ages and all countries. Some have found an answer to it, others have not. The same question was voiced in ancient times by Socrates, when he went to the Delphic oracle and asked: 'Of all knowledge which is the highest?' And came the answer: 'Know thyself.'

We read in one of the *Upanishads* that a great thinker, after studying all the philosophies and sciences known at that time, came to a seer of truth and said: 'Sir, I am tired of this lower knowledge that can be gained from books or through the study of the world of phenomena; it no longer satisfies me, for science cannot reveal the ultimate truth; I wish to know that which is the highest. Is there anything by knowing which I can know the reality of the universe?'

The sage replied: 'Yes, there is; and that knowledge is the highest, by knowing which you can know the true nature of everything in the universe.' And he continued: 'Know

thyself. If thou canst learn the true nature of thine own self, thou wilt know the reality of the universe. In thy true self thou wilt find the eternal truth, the infinite source of all phenomena. By knowing this, thou wilt know God and His whole creation.' As by knowing the chemical properties of one drop of water, we know the properties of all water wherever it appears, so, by knowing who and what we are in reality, we shall realize the final truth. Man is the epitome of the universe. That which exists in the macrocosm is to be found in the microcosm. Therefore, the knowledge of one's true self is the highest of all knowledge. Our real self is divine and one with God. This may seem to us at present a mere theory, but the nearer we approach the ultimate truth, the more clearly shall we understand that it is not a theory but a fact, that now we are dreaming in the sleep of ignorance and fancying ourselves this or that particular person. But as all experience gained in dreams afterwards appears of little consequence; so, waking up from this sleep, we shall find that the knowledge of phenomenal nature, upon which we place so much value at present, is of little importance. We shall then realize that all research in various branches of science depends upon self-knowledge, and that self-knowledge is the foundation upon which the structure of phenomenal knowledge is built.

Knowledge of the Self or *Atman* is, therefore, the highest of all. It is the ideal of the science of Yoga, and should be the aim of our life. We should hold it as our first duty to acquire this self-knowledge before we try to know anything concerning the objects of sense perception. How can we gain it? Not from books, not through the study of external phenomena, but by studying our own nature, and by practising the different branches of Yoga.

CHAPTER II

WHAT IS YOGA

In all the sacred writings of the world as well as in the lives of the inspired teachers, prophets, saints, and seers of truth, we find frequent descriptions of miraculous events and powers, which, admitting a certain measure of exaggeration, must still have had some foundation in fact. We, indeed, know that from time immemorial, in every age and in every country, there have arisen among the persons of different nations who could read the thoughts of others, who could foresee and prophesy that which afterwards came to pass; but most of these people did not understand the causes of their own peculiar gifts, and tried to explain them by attributing them to the influence of external beings, whom they called by various names: gods, angels, and good or evil spirits.

Some among them even fancied that they were especially chosen to be the instruments of these higher powers and sought to be worshipped as the elect of God or of their particular deity, just as the leaders of certain sects in this country today desire to be adored by their followers. In some instances, those who possessed these unusual powers were looked upon as divine exceptions, as Jesus by the Christians, Mohammad by the Mohammedans, and Buddha by the Buddhists. Others again were condemned as sorcerers or witches, and the fear aroused by such persecutions led to the secret practice of diverse methods, which resulted in still further extraordinary manifestations.

These methods were never written down, but were passed orally from the master to the disciple, who in turn carefully guarded them as sacred mysteries. This is the reason why among ancient nations there grew up so many secret societies, the object of which was to develop certain powers through various kinds of discipline and practices. The Egyptians, the Essenes, Gnostics, Manicheans, neo-Platonists, and the Christian mystics of the middle ages, all had their secret organizations, and some of them still exist, as, for example, the Masonic

Lodge. None of the members of these societies ever gave out their secret instructions, nor did they write any books offering a logical or scientific explanation of their practices. Therefore, while there were some among them who advanced far in the attainment of higher powers, the unusual manifestations resulting therefrom were never understood by Western nations, neither were they generalized into a system or science.

In ancient India, on the contrary, as there was no fear of persecution, the case was altogether different. Every Hindu was obliged, as a part of his religious duty, to develop through daily practice certain powers and to strive to attain to the realization of higher truths. In the streets, at the market-place, in the courts, and on the battle-field were many who had not only reached such realization, but also carefully classified their experiences and discovered those laws, which govern our higher nature and upon which was gradually built up the profound science of Yoga.

Thus, we see that this science, like all others, was based on experience, while the method used in it was the same as that employed by modern science in making all its discoveries of natural law—the method of observation and experiment. This method is regarded in the West as a distinctly modern innovation, but, as a matter of fact, was adopted in India in very ancient times by the *Rishis* or seers of truth. Through the process of close observation and constant experiment they discovered the finer forces of nature as also the laws that govern our physical, mental, and spiritual being. The truths thus gained, through their own experience and investigations, they wrote down in books, preached in public, and expounded to their pupils. Before, however, they affirmed anything about the nature of the soul or God, they had realized it. Before they asked a disciple to practise anything they had practised it themselves and obtained definite results from that practice.

In this way, as the outcome of ages of research in the realms of nature carried on by a succession of earnest seekers after light, there grew up in India various systems of science, philosophy, psychology, metaphysics, and religion, both speculative and practical, which were grouped under the one common name 'Aryan Religion'. The term 'religion' was used to in-

clude all, because, at no epoch in India has religion been separated from these different branches or from the general conduct of everyday existence ; and the methods by which these scientific truths were applied in the daily life of an individual to further his spiritual development, were called by the general term 'Yoga'.

'Yoga' is a Sanskrit word commonly used to signify the practical side of religion ; and the first concern of the training for which it stands, is to enforce proper obedience to the laws of our moral and physical nature upon which depend the attainment of perfect health and of moral and spiritual perfection. In Western countries the word has been grossly misunderstood and misused by many writers who have employed it in the sense of jugglery, hypnotism, trickery, and fraud. Whenever people hear the word Yogi, which signifies one who practises Yoga, they think of some kind of a juggler, or charlatan, or identify him with a *fakir* or one who practises black magic. The Theosophists have been more or less responsible for this abuse of the term ; but those who have studied the sacred books of India, as for instance, the *Bhagavad Gita* or *'Song Celestial,'* as Sir Edwin Arnold calls it in his translation, will remember that each chapter of that celestial song is devoted to some kind of Yoga, or method of realizing the ultimate truth and of attaining the highest wisdom ; and that a Yogi is one who, through various practices, reaches the highest ideal of religion. This highest ideal, according to the *Bhagavad Gita,* is the union of the individual soul with the universal Spirit.

Hindu writers, however, have used the word 'Yoga' in various other senses. I will mention a few of them in order to give some conception of the vastness of the field covered by this term. First, 'Yoga' means the union of two external objects. Second, the mixing of one thing with another. Third, the interrelation of the causes which produce a common effect. Fourth, the orderly equipment of a soldier or of any person in any profession. Fifth, the application, discrimination, and reasoning that are necessary for the discovery of a certain truth. Sixth, that power of sound which makes it convey a specific idea. Seventh, the preservation of what one possesses. Eighth, the transformation of one thing into another. Ninth, the union of one soul with another or with the universal spirit. Tenth,

the flowing of a thought-current towards an object. Eleventh, the restraint of all thought-action through concentration and meditation. Thus, we see how many different branches of art, science, psychology, philosophy, and religion are included in the various definitions of this one word. It seems, indeed, in its scope and range, to take in every department of nature. If, however, we consider the literal meaning of the word, we shall more easily understand why it is so all-inclusive. It is derived from the Sanskrit root *'yuj'*, which means to join. The English word 'yoke' also comes from the same root. Originally the literal signification of the two words was almost the same. The root-verb *'yuj'* signifies to join oneself to something, or to harness oneself for some task. Thus, in its primary meaning, it conveys the same idea of preparing for hard work as the common English expressions 'to go into harness.' or 'to buckle to.' The effort required is mental or physical, according to the object in view. If the object be the acquirement of perfect health or longevity, then the effort of both mind and body to accomplish this through certain practices is called 'Yoga'. So is it again, if the object be the development of psychic powers. The same word is used likewise to indicate the mental training necessary for the attainment of self-control, of the union of the individual soul with God, of divine communion or of spiritual perfection. Volumes upon volumes have been written in India describing the different branches and methods of this applied science of Yoga, and the various ideals that can be attained through its practice; also what qualifications fit a beginner for undertaking any of these methods, what stages he must pass through in order to reach the goal, what obstacles stand in the way, and how they can be overcome.

Patience and perseverance are absolutely necessary for any one who desires to enter upon the path of Yoga; those who are not patient cannot hope to arrive at true realization. Those, again, who take it up out of curiosity or through an impulse of temporary enthusiasm, must not expect to get results, and must not blame the teacher for their failure to do so, since the fault is entirely their own. The same teachings, when carried out with understanding and in the right spirit, will bring wonderful results. They will only come, however, to the student who follows strictly the instructions of a living master,

who will direct him in the practice of both physical and mental exercises.

Aspirants to the study of Yoga can be divided into three classes: First, those who are born Yogis. There are some who, having practised Yoga in a previous incarnation, come here as awakened souls, and as such manifest remarkable powers from their very childhood. Their natural tendency is to lead a pure life, for right living and right thinking are their sole concern, and they possess wonderful powers of self-control and concentration. Sense pleasures and those things which fascinate the ordinary mind have no charm for them. Even when they are surrounded by all the comforts of life and have every material resource at their command, they yet feel like strangers in a strange land. Few there are who can understand properly the mental conditions of these characters. Physicians may be brought to them, but medical treatment may only make them worse; the writer knows of cases where harm has been done in this way. By the law of attraction, however, they are bound to be drawn sooner or later into the companionship of some Yogi. Here they find exactly what their inner nature has been craving for, and at once they feel happy and at home. The instructions of the Yogi appeal to their minds; they begin the practice of Yoga under his direction, and proving easy and natural to them, they soon obtain excellent results. Thus, from youth they take up the thread of the practice at the very point, where they dropped it in their past existence; and, through a firm determination to overcome all obstacles in their way, they progress rapidly, and gradually attain to the highest ideal of spiritual life. Nothing in the world can prevent their onward march, so intense and strong is their longing for realization.

The second class includes those who are born as half-awakened souls. In need of further experience they go through various paths without finding the right one. They take each step tentatively, and in this constant experimenting, they waste a great deal of energy and a large portion of their lives. If such partially awakened souls, following out a tendency created in their previous existence, have the good fortune to come in contact with a Yogi and take up the practice of Yoga, they may, through perseverence and earnestness, achieve much in this life,

although they will necessarily advance more slowly in the path of spirituality than those who belong to the first class.

In the third class are to be found all those unawakened souls who begin their search after truth and the practice of Yoga for the first time in this life. Even from childhood, they are irresistibly drawn towards sense objects and sense pleasures ; and, if they take up the practice of Yoga, they find great difficulty in following its teachings and meet numerous obstacles along the way. Their environment is not favourable for the practice, and even when they try, they cannot easily conquer it. Their health is not good, their mind is scattered, and they suffer from various kinds of diseases and mental disturbance. They also lack determination, find it wellnigh impossible to control the senses, and have to fight hard to adjust their mode of living to the new requirements. With so much to contend against, they naturally obtain but small results even after long practice. If, however, such persons can persevere and strengthen their wills, through a slow and regular practice of the Hatha Yoga, struggling manfully to overcome manifold obstacles in their way, by the practice of breathing exercises and by following the directions of a competent teacher who understands them, they may, in this life, be able to control, in a large measure, their physical health and acquire a certain amount of Yoga power. The Hatha Yoga is especially useful for this class of aspirants. Through the practice of breathing exercises they will gradually gain control over their bodies, and will, in course of time, be prepared for the study of the Raja Yoga, which will arouse the powers latent in their souls.

CHAPTER III

THE HATHA YOGA

The Hatha Yoga is that branch of the science of Yoga which teaches how to conquer hunger, thirst, and sleep ; how to overcome the effects of heat and cold ; how to gain perfect health and cure disease without using drugs ; how to arrest the untimely decay of the body resulting from the waste of vital energy ; how to preserve youth even at the age of one hundred, without having a single hair turn grey, and how, thus, to prolong life in this body for an indefinite period. Anyone, who practises it, will in course of time acquire marvellous powers ; the powers, indeed, that must dumbfound a psychologist or an anatomist.

A few years ago a Hatha Yogi was brought to England. Although in middle life, he looked like a boy of eighteen. Not only was his physical condition perfect, but through practice he had mastered eighty-four postures of the body. He could bend his limbs in so astonishing a way that it seemed as if his joints were unattached, and that his bones were made of some elastic substance. Many English physicians and surgeons came to see him and were amazed at the extraordinary positions of his limbs. They brought a skeleton and tried to fix its bones in the same positions, but could not do so without breaking them. Afterwards they reached to the conclusion that, if the bones were once fixed in those positions the limbs would be unfitted for any kind of work. Yet the example of the Yogi openly, contradicted their statements. His limbs were strong and of good use to him in every possible way. He could walk, lift heavy weights, and move about with absolute ease. The writer himself saw him in India, and also other Hatha Yogis who could accomplish equally wonderful feats. The primary object of these various postures, described in the Hatha Yoga, is to gain control over the involuntary muscles of the body, which is impossible to the ordinary man. We all possess this power latent within us, but the Hatha Yogis were the first to discover a scientific method by which it could be developed.

All Hatha Yogis eat very little, but they can also go entirely without food for days and even for months, and succeed in controlling sleep. The author knew of one who had not slept for twelve years, and who was, nevertheless, in perfect health. He has also seen a Hatha Yogi who usually ate, for instance, a piece of unleavened bread in twenty-four hours, and who refused to wear warm clothing in the coldest winter weather, and yet voluntarily worked hard as a street labourer without showing the least sign of fatigue. It may seem impossible to the majority of the people who have made themselves mere slaves to sleep and food as to imagine that, if they do not sleep eight or nine hours out of the twentyfour and eat pounds of flesh, they cannot live. The Hatha Yogis are the living contradictions of such opinions. Perhaps the reader is familiar with the account of that Yogi, who was buried alive for forty days in a hermetically sealed box, with a guard of English officers to watch the spot night and day. During these forty days the Yogi could neither eat, sleep, nor breathe, yet, at their expiration, he was brought back to consciousness without any ill effects and he lived for many years[1].

Then again, these same Yogis who do not eat, sleep, or drink for a long period, can, if they wish, eat as much as ten persons at one time without suffering any unpleasant consequences. Of course, they do not eat any kind of meat. They digest their food consciously as it were. They claim that by a third eye they can, so to speak, see what is going on in their internal organs. Why should this seem incredible to us when the discovery of the Rontgen rays has proved everything to be transparent ?

Some of the Hatha Yogis have extraordinary eyesight. They can not only perceive objects at a great distance, but can also see clearly in complete darkness, even being able to pick up a pin from the floor without the least glimmer or ordinary light to guide them. This will not appear so strange when we remember that there is invisible light in the atmosphere of a perfectly dark room. If we can learn to use this atmospheric light, imperceptible to the common eye, and can develop our eyesight, there is no reason why we should not see things in the

[1] For a fuller account see Thomas Jay Hudson: *Law of Psychic Phenomena*, p. 313.

dark. The Yogis understand this and know the method by which the power of eyesight can be developed. As regards distinguishing objects at a great distance, this is not so difficult to believe, since we know that there are persons living, not Yogis, who can see the moons of Jupiter without the help of any instrument.

This branch of optical science in the Hatha Yoga is called in Sanskrit 'Trataka Yoga'. It teaches, among other things, how, through gazing on one object and, at the same time, performing certain special breathing exercises, many optical maladies can be cured as well as the power of sight be strengthened. The authentic records of the Hatha Yogis vouch for the fact that it produces many beneficial effects when properly practised under the direction of a competent master of the Hatha Yoga.

A Yogi, who is an expert in this science of optics, can fascinate or madden another by his optical powers. The process of hypnotism or mesmerism varifies this claim. A Yogi can likewise read the thoughts of another by looking at his eyes, for, according to the Yogi, the eye is the index of the mind. Here it may be asked, how do the Yogi acquire these powers ? They do not get them from outside. These powers are dormant in every individual, and through practice the Yogis bring them out. They say: 'Whatever exists in the universe (the macrocosm) exists also in the human body (the microcosm).' That is, the finer forces exist potentially in our own organism, and, if we study our nature carefully, we shall be able to know all the forces and the laws which govern the universe.

The Hatha Yoga, again, teaches the cure of diseases through breathing exercises and the regulation of diet and of the general habits of daily life. But it does not claim that the physical health is the same as spirituality. On the contrary, it tells us that, if a healthy body were a sign of spirituality, then wild animals and savages who enjoy perfect health would be exceedingly spiritual ; yet they are not as we know. The principal idea of these Yogis is that physical maladies are obstacles in the path of spiritual progress, while a healthy body furnishes one of the most favourable conditions for the realization of the highest spiritual truths in this life. Those who do not possess good health should, therefore, begin to practise the Hatha Yoga.

In the practice of the Hatha Yoga strict dietetic rules must be observed. Anything that is sharp, sour, pungent, or hot, like mustard, liquors, fish, flesh of animals, curd, butter, milk, oil cakes, carrots, onions, and garlic should not be eaten. Food, again, which, having been once cooked, but grown cold and been rewarmed, should be avoided, as also excess of salt or acidity, or that which is hard to digest. Rice, barley, wheat, milk, sugar, honey, and butter are good for a Hatha Yogi's diet. The manner in which Americans live in hotels and boarding-houses, where the food is often unclean, is far from favourable to this practice. Food cooked for hundreds of people in a restaurant cannot be equally good for all and may easily cause disease. Those who wish to enjoy perfect health must be careful about what they eat; they must also observe all the laws of hygiene regarding cleanliness of the body, fresh air, and pure water. They should not live in over-heated houses; neither should they indulge in artificial stimulants, especially beer, wine, and coffee. The habit of excessive coffee-drinking is a serious menace to the American people. Many people are already suffering from nervous prostration as a result of indulgence in this direction, and there are a very few cases in which the nervous system will not be affected by it to some extent.

He who wishes to practise the Hatha Yoga, should first of all find a Hatha Yogi teacher who has perfect control over his body, and having found him the beginner should lead a life in strict accord with his instructions. He should live in a secluded spot and where the changes of weather are neither sudden nor extreme. He should be a rigid vegetarian and abstain from all things that stimulate the system. He should never fill the stomach with a large quantity of food. He should observe the moral laws and practise absolute continence. He should learn to control his senses, keep his body clean, and purify his mind by arousing feelings of kindness and love towards all living creatures.

The beginner in this branch of Yoga should gradually conquer the different postures of the body and limbs. These postures are called in Sanskrit *asana*. There are altogether eighty-four of them described in the science of the Hatha Yoga. Each of these, when practised with special breathing exercises, develops certain powers latent in the nerve-centres and the

different organs of the system. Another object in practising *asana* is to remove the *tamas* element, which causes heaviness of the body, and to free the system from the effects of cold, catarrh, phlegm, rheumatism, and many other diseases. Some of the exercises increase the action of the stomach and liver, while others regulate the activities of the other organs. Tremor of the body and restlessness of the limbs, which are such frequent obstacles in the way of gaining control over the mind, may easily be removed by the practice of *asana*.

The reader may get an idea of the *asanas* from the following descriptions:

I. Sit cross-legged on the floor, placing the left foot on the right thigh and the right foot on the left thigh, and keeping the body, neck, and head in a straight line.

II. After sitting in this posture, hold the right great toe with the right hand and the left great toe with the left hand (the hands coming from behind the back and crossing each other).

III. Sit straight on a level place, firmly inserting both insteps between the thighs and the calves of the legs.

IV. Assuming posture No. I, insert the hands between the thighs and the calves, and, planting the palms firmly on the ground, lift the body above the seat.

V. Sitting on the floor, stretch the legs straight in front, hold the great toes with the hands without bending the knees.

VI. Having accomplished this posture, touch the knees with the forehead. This *asana* rouses gastric fire, makes the loins lean, and removes many diseases.

VII. Holding the toes as in posture V, keep one arm extended and with the other draw the other toe towards your ear as you would do with the string of a bow.

VIII. Plant hands firmly on the ground, support the weight of the body upon the elbows, pressing them against the sides of the loins. Then raise the feet above the ground, keeping them stiff and straight on a level with the head.

This *asana*, according to the Hatha Yoga, cures diseases of the stomach, spleen, and liver, and all disorders caused by an excess of wind, bile, or phlegm. It also increases the power of digestion.

IX. *Lie upon the back on the floor at full length like a corpse, keeping the head on a level with the body. This* asana *removes fatigue and brings rest and calmness of mind.*

The student of the Hatha Yoga, having perfected himself in controlling some of these postures, should next take up the breathing exercises. He should carefully study the science of breathing in all its aspects. Posture No. I is one of the easiest and best *asanas* for one who wishes to control the breath. It favours a tranquil circulation and slow respiration.

A beginner should first practise abdominal breathing through both nostrils keeping a measured time for inspiration and expiration. Gradually, he should be directed by his master to hold the breath in and out. Practising this internal and external suspension of breath for a few weeks, he should next take up alternate breathing. He may inspire through the left nostril for four seconds and expire through the right for four seconds, then reverse the order, breathing in through the right and out through the left. The alternate breathing exercises will purify the nerves and will make the student well-fitted for higher breathing exercises. The student should then breathe in through one nostril for four seconds, hold the breath counting sixteen seconds, and breathe out through the other nostril counting eight seconds. This exercise, if practised regularly for three months, will generate new nerve-currents and develop the healing power that is latent in the system.

The Yogi who wishes to cure organic trouble or disease of any kind, should combine the higher breathing exercises with the different postures of the body which bear direct relation to the disturbed organ. He should arouse the healing power stored up at the base of the spine and direct it to the diseased part.

The Hatha Yoga describes various methods for cleansing the internal organs. Some of them are extremely beneficial to those who suffer from chronic headache, or cold in the head, catarrh, dyspepsia, or insomnia.

The drinking of cold water through the nose removes headache or chronic cold in the head. A Hatha Yogi cleanses the passage between the nose and the mouth by passing soft cords

of delicate thread through the nostrils and bringing them out at the mouth. He can pass the cord through one nostril and bring it out through the other. This purifies the head, makes the sight keen, and removes disease in the parts above the shoulders.

A Hatha Yogi cleanses the alimentary canal by swallowing a long piece of fine muslin three inches wide. He purges the impurities of the intestines by drawing water through the opening at the lower extremity of the alimentary canal. This he does with the help of breathing exercises without using any instrument. Then, shaking the water by the alternate exercise of the rectimuscles of the abdomen, he throws out the water through the same passage. An expert Yogi can wash the whole of the alimentary canal by drinking a large quantity of water and letting it pass through the opening at the lower extremity. Thus, he becomes free from stomach or intestinal disorder. These exercises are especially recommended for those who are flabby, phlegmatic, or corpulent.

He cures insomnia by assuming posture No. IX, at the same time, taking a few deep breaths and holding them after each inspiration.

A Hatha Yogi can swallow his tongue. It is said that he who can swallow his upturned tongue is freed from old age and death, conquers sleep, hunger and thirst, and rises above time. The powers of a perfect Hatha Yogi are indeed wonderful. He can do and undo anything at his will. He is the master of all physical laws.

Thus, we see that perfect health and longevity are the immediate results of the Hatha Yoga practices. To the real seeker after absolute Truth, however, they have small value except that they become a means of attaining superconscious realization. According to him, if a man lives five hundred years and yet, in that time, does not reach the state of Godconsciousness, he is little better than an oak tree which may outlast many generations and grow to a great size, but is, in the end, only an oak tree. That man, on the contrary, who dies at the age of thirty, having realized his oneness with Divinity, has achieved infinitely more than one who possesses perfect health, longevity, psychic powers, or the gift of healing; for, he has become a

living God in this world and can point the way of salvation to all mankind. Therefore, the exercises of the Hatha Yoga should be practised only so far as is helpful to the earnest truth-seeker to attain the Raja Yoga, which alone will lead the soul to Godconsciousness and perfect freedom.

CHAPTER IV

THE RAJA YOGA

The Hatha Yoga, as we have already seen, is wholly devoted to the control of the functions of the body and to the mastery of the physical forces, its ideal being a sound constitution, well-fitted to overcome those physical and environmental conditions which stand as obstacles in the path of spiritual progress. The Raja Yoga, on the contrary, deals entirely with the mind and psychic power and may be called the science of applied psychology. Its aim is to remove all mental obstructions and to gain a perfectly controlled healthy mind. The main purpose of its training is to develop and strengthen the will as well as the power of concentration, and to lead the seeker after Truth through the path of concentration and meditation to the ultimate goal of all religions.

This path is called the Raja Yoga or the royal method (*Raja* means 'king'), because the power of concentration and will-power are not only greater than any physical force, but are essential to the acquisition of all other powers. The man, who possesses a vigorous mind controlled by a well-developed will with strong power of concentration, can easily become the master of physical nature, and, in a short time, attain the realization of Truth, and it is the special province of the Raja Yoga to teach how this can be accomplished. Its study has been encouraged by all those who have come in contact with the Raja Yogis of India, either in ancient or modern times. It was extolled by Pythagoras, Plato, and the neo-Platonists like Plotinus and Proclus, by the Gnostics and the Christian mystics of the middle ages; and even today, it is in some measure practised by some of the Roman Catholic monks and nuns of the higher orders. Spinoza, Kant, Schopenhauer, Ralph Waldo Emerson, spoke in praise of it declaring its object to be unravelling of the mystery of the nature of the human soul, and the unfoldment of the latent powers existing in each individual. It has been proved by the living example of the Yogis that, through its practice, that power can be acquired by which all

other forces in the universe may be controlled, and the Raja Yoga claims that whoever has gained mastery over his mind, can govern all the phenomena of nature.

It teaches that mind is the sovereign power of the universe, and that, when its forces are properly concentrated upon any particular object, the true nature of that object will be revealed. Instead of using an instrument, if we properly utilize the mental powers which we already possess, and focus them absolutely upon one point, we can easily know all the particulars regarding the thing upon which they are directed. This object may be physical, mental, or spiritual. The concentrated mind of a Yogi may be compared to an electric search-light. By throwing the converged rays of his mind towards a distant object, whether gross or subtle, all the details of that object are illumined and made known to him. The vision of ordinary persons is not so penetrating, because their mental forces are dissipated like the scattered rays of an ordinary light. In the same way, if the mind can be concentrated upon internal objects or upon truths that exist in the realm of the universe, perfect knowledge of those things can be acquired.

Thus, it becomes evident that the power of concentration is greater than sense-power, or than that which can be gained by the help of instruments. If we can develop it by controlling our mental faculties by making the mind introspective and by checking all distractions which draw the mind outside, and can direct our concentrated mental energy towards our higher Self, the true nature of the individual ego will then be revealed, and we shall realize that our immutable Self is the soul of all, and that it is the same as the ultimate reality of the universe. We shall, then, perceive that the divine Being, whom, in ignorance, we worship as separate from ourselves, is not far from us and not dwelling outside of us, but is our own omnipotent Self residing within us. We shall also recognize that the same Spirit is one and all-pervading, and that it is the absolute Truth, underlying the name and form of every phenomenal object. This knowledge will emancipate the soul from the bondage of ignorance.

The Raja Yoga maintains that the outer world exists only in relation to the inner nature of each individual. What mind is to itself, the phenomenal world of sense perception is to the

mind. The external is only the reflection of the internal; that which we gain, that which we receive, is only the likeness or reflection of that which we have already given. Mental phenomena are merely the effects of invisible forces which cannot be discovered by the senses or by any instrument which the human mind can invent. We may try for ever to know these finer forces through the medium of our sense perceptions, but we shall never arrive at any satisfactory result. A Raja Yogi understands this, and, therefore, attaches little value to instruments. He does not depend upon his sense powers, but endeavours to gain all knowledge through the power of concentration. The science of the Rāja Yoga gives the various steps which lead to the attainment of this ideal. It explains clearly and scientifically the processes and methods by which concentration can be developed. It does not, however, ask the student to accept anything on heresy, or to believe anything on the mere authority of scriptures or of writers. But, it states certain facts, requests the student to experiment, experience the results, and draw his new conclusions.

There is nothing mysterious in the system of the Raja Yoga. On the contrary, it points out the laws which govern so-called mysteries and explains under what conditions the phenomena of mysteries are produced. It shows that, as long as the real cause of an event is unknown, it appears mysterious to us. Standing upon the solid ground of logic and reason, the science of the Raja Yoga unravels the riddles of the universe, and directs the individual soul towards the attainment of the final end of all religions. Its principles are highly moral and uplifting. It helps the student to understand the true purpose of life and describes the way by which it may be fulfilled here and now. The Raja Yoga tells us that we should not think so much of what will happen after death, but that we should make the best use of the present and unfold the latent powers which we already possess, while it reminds us again and again of the fact that the advancement made in this life will be the foundation of future progress. If we gain or develop certain powers before we die, those powers will not be lost, but will remain with us wherever we go after death; the external possessions, as we know, cannot accompany us in the grave. The only things, that we can carry out of life, are our character, our experience and

the knowledge gained therefrom. They are our real possessions; and the Raja Yoga will help us to develop their functions, since its chief object is to mould the character and lead the student to the knowledge of the divine nature of the soul. The methods which it teaches can be practised without joining any secret organization, but merely by following the directions of a true Raja Yogi, who is pure and simple, whose mind is free from doubts, and who is unattached to the objects of the phenomenal plane.

The practice of the Raja Yoga is divided into eight steps. The first four are the same as those of the Hatha Yoga. The first and second, *yama* and *niyama,* include all the ethical laws that govern our moral nature. The strict observance of these laws is necessary to the practice of the other steps of the Raja Yoga. All the fundamental principles of ethics, expounded by Buddha and all the truths proclaimed in the Sermon on the Mount, are contained in these first two steps. A beginner in the practice of the Raja Yoga should live a strictly moral and pure life; otherwise, he will not advance in this path, nor will he reach the highest Truth or realize the Divinity that dwells within him. A neophyte must remember that purity, chastity, and morality are the very corner-stones of the structure of the science of Yoga. In the requirements of the first step, we find non-killing, non-stealing, truthfulness, continence, forgiveness, firmness of character, kindness to all living creatures, simplicity, moderation in diet, and cleanliness. As non-killing must be in thought, word, and deed, so with truthfulness and non-stealing. The character must be firm, for the student must persist in the face of all obstacles until spiritual perfection is reached. He must not take up the study as a passing fad, only to satisfy his momentary curiosity, but must continue with patience and perseverance until the highest ideal is realized.

The second step includes austerities, forbearance, contentment, faith in the supreme Being, charity, study, and self-surrender to the divine Will. All the physical exercises, necessary for keeping the body in perfect condition, are to be found in the third step.[1] Health is essential to the attainment of the

[1] It is called *asana* in Sanskrit. It has been described more fully in the chapter on the Hatha Yoga.

highest knowledge. Those who are suffering from disease cannot make their mind steady, cannot fix their attention upon truths existing on the spiritual plane, because naturally their minds will be centred on the diseased parts of the body. A beginner, who possesses a healthy body and a well-balanced mind, should choose any *asana* or posture of the body in which he can sit firmly for a long time without feeling pain in the limbs. In the practice of the Raja Yoga, however, one need not be so particular regarding the posture of the body. The student should simply observe that the spinal column is kept perfectly straight while practising breathing lessons in a sitting posture.

The *pranayama,* or the breathing exercises, constitute the fourth step. The practice of certain breathing exercises will remove many obstacles like dullness, laziness, and bodily weakness, and will be helpful in gaining control over the senses, sense-organs, and nerve-centres, as also in quieting the restlessness of the mind. Anyone, who will practise such breathing exercises regularly, will acquire wonderful power over both his mind and body. He, who suffers from worry, anxiety, nervousness, or insomnia, can obtain excellent results even in a few days by the practice of proper breathing exercises. Those who have studied the science of breathing will know what these results are ; but the main object of the *pranayama* in the Raja Yoga is to develop the power of concentration.

Making the mind introspective is the fifth step. It is called *pratyahara.* If we can withdraw the mind from external objects, fix it on some inner object, and bring it under the control of the will, we shall accomplish all that is required in this step. The practice of *pratyahara* is preparatory to concentration. Before the student is able to concentrate on any particular object he must learn to gather up his scattered mental powers. This process of collecting the powers of the mind and of restraining it from going out to external objects is what the Yogis designate as *pratyahara.*

Concentration follows next. After going through the five preliminary steps, if one takes up concentration, the results achieved will be extraordinary. Those, however, who have not practised the introductory steps, will find this one extremely difficult, for the ground must be prepared before good results

can be gained. Meditation is the seventh stage,[1] and through it one passes into *samadhi* or the state of superconsciousness, which is the eighth and the last step. In this state the sixth sense of finer perception is developed, the spiritual eye is opened, and one comes face to face with the divine Being dwelling within. In it the student realizes that his true Self is one with all the revelation and all the inspiration that can possibly come to the human soul. It may be thought by many that revelation proceeds from some external source, either through the favour of some angel or bright spirit or the extra-cosmic personal God; but a Yogi knows that revelation or inspiration is the disclosure of the higher Self within, and that the realization of spiritual truths comes to that soul which has reached the eighth step of the Raja Yoga. Ceaseless effort, persistence, and perseverance in practice are necessary to attain to the state of superconsciousness. That which is realized in it cannot be revealed by intellect or by any other mental faculty; therefore it is said that Truth cannot be attained by reading books or scriptures, or by intellect or sense perception, but by reaching the state of superconsciousness. Those who are longing to know the Truth, who are searching for the ultimate Reality of the universe and are not satisfied with the knowledge gained through the senses or through the aid of instruments, should struggle hard to go into *samadhi,* because through it alone will they discover their ideal and reach the abode of happiness. Before, however, they can arrive at this state, they will have to follow faithfully the different steps already enumerated and with patience and perseverance overcome all the obstacles which beset the way.

There are many obstructions to *samadhi,* such as grief, disease, mental laziness, doubt, cessation of the struggle to attend *samadhi,* heaviness of body and mind, thirst for wordly things, false knowledge, non-attaining concentration, falling away from the state once attained, irregular breathing, etc. They can be easily avoided by regular practice under the guidance of a Yogi teacher. If a student try to practise by himself any of the exercises as given in Raja Yoga,[1] he may have some unpleasant experiences which may disturb his mind

[1] For further explanations concerning concentration and meditation, see Swami Abhedananda: *Spiritual Unfoldment,* pp. 31-59.

[1] *The Yogadarsana* of Patanjali.

or nervous system, but, if he has an experienced Raja Yogi to direct him, then he will have no difficulty in conquering all the obstacles and dangers, and in reaching the right destination. Some of the powers generated by these practices are too dangerous to be handled by an inexperienced student; they may not only injure him, but may even drive him to insanity. There have, indeed, been many such cases among those who have tried to practise without the help of a well-qualified *Guru* or spiritual teacher.

Having removed all obstructions in this path, the student should be confident of that he is approaching the final goal of Raja Yoga. When the superconscious realization is acquired, all doubts will cease for ever, all questions concerning the nature of the soul will be answered, the search after Truth will stop, the mind will become tranquil, and the soul will be emancipated from the bondage of ignorance and self-delusion. The Yogi will never again fall a victim to the attractions of the world or be distracted by objects of sense. The whole universe will appear to him as the play-ground of the divine Being; and he will constantly feel that his body and mind are like instruments moving under the direction of the almighty Will, which is manifesting through all forms. Thus, having gained spiritual strength and illumination, he will become the conqueror of himself and the master of nature even in this life. 'He alone has reached happiness on this earth, he alone has conquered the world, who has gained perfect control over his mind and body, whose soul rests in tranquility, and whose eyes behold Divinity in everything and everything in that eternal Being, which is the infinite abode of existence, knowledge, and bliss Absolute.'

CHAPTER V

THE KARMA YOGA

One of the significations of the word 'Yoga' is 'dexterity in work'. To render this meaning still more specific, the Sanskrit term *'karma'*, derived from the root verb *'kri'*, to act, is added. Taken in its literal sense, therefore, *'karma'* signifies action, and refers to all actions whether of mind, or of body. Whenever there is activity of any kind, it is *karma*. In this sense devotion, love, worship, meditation, concentration, discrimination, are all *karma*; as are also, for the same reason, eating, drinking, walking, talking, or performing any organic function.

Again, every action, as we are aware, is followed by reaction. No action can be separated from its result, as no cause can be absolutely disconnected from its effect. Consequently, the secondary meaning of *karma* embraces all reactions or results of actions. The chain of cause and sequence, known as the 'law of causation', is also called *karma*; and every action of body and mind, is governed by the 'law of *karma*' or of action and reaction. Being subject to this natural law, we have been working in this world from the beginningless past, and reaping the results of our efforts, whether pleasant or unpleasant, good or evil.

When, furthermore, we consider that the effect of each action leaves its impression on the mind substance, which impression becomes the seed of a fresh action of a similar nature, we understand the third meaning of the term. In this sense the word *karma* includes the accumulated results of past actions, or rather, the seed forms of future activities. Hence the character of an individual, which is the aggregate result of the works of his previous life, may be called *karma*. In the same way, the future life will be the sum total of the result of the mental and physical actions of the present life.

The Karma Yoga is, therefore, that branch of the science of Yoga which discusses the three ideas conveyed by the word *karma*, explains the philosophy of work, describes the method by which the individual soul can extricate itself from the wheel

of action and reaction, and having escaped from the irresistible law of causation by which every one is bound, can attain to perfect freedom, fulfil the highest purpose of life, and, thus, through right action alone, reach the ultimate goal of all religion. It is the path best fitted for those who believe in no creed, who are not devotional, and who do not care to worship or pray to a personal God.

The Karma Yoga teaches that the cause of suffering, misery, disease, and misfortune, which overshadow our earthly life, lies in our own actions. We reap the fruit of that which we ourselves have sown. These causes are within us. We should blame neither our parents nor any evil spirit for our sufferings, but should look within ourselves to discover the source thereof. This branch of Yoga likewise describes the secret of work, by knowing which we can remove all causes of bondage and suffering, and enjoy freedom, peace, and happiness, both here and after death. It tells us that every action inspired by the motive of desire for results attaches the soul to these results, and, consequently, becomes a source of bondage. The secret of work consists in working for work's sake and not for fruits. If this principle be applied to the actions of our daily lives, then every work done by us will help us to advance towards the perfect emancipation of the soul. Whoever performs his duties, understanding the secret of work, becomes truly unselfish, and eventually gains knowledge of his real Self, which is immortal and divine.

According to the Karma Yoga, the true Self, when it becomes identified with the limitations of the mind and the physical form, appears as 'ego', 'doer' or 'actor', and performing work from various motives, remains attached to its results. We, thus, feel as one with our body and endeavour to enrich the narrow, limited self or 'I' by getting something from that which is 'not-I'. This imperfect knowledge of the Self, or rather ignorance of the true Self, is the cause of selfishness. From selfishness in turn proceeds all that desire for results which forces us to live and act like slaves. Karma Yoga shows us the way by which we can become conscious of our true Self, and, by widening the range of the limited ego can make it universal. When we have accomplished this, we shall live in the world working not from selfish motives, but for humanity, yet with

as much interest in heart as we had when we worked for ourselves. Nor shall we then seek the comfort and pleasure of this little personality which is now the chief centre of our interest and efforts, but shall strive for the good of all.

Anyone, who wishes to become a true Karma Yogi, should clearly understand the philosophy of work,[1] and should remember that every action of body and mind must produce some effect which will eventually come back upon the doer; and that, if there be the smallest desire for result, it will be the seed of future action of a like nature. He should also realize that every action produces similar reaction. If the action be in harmony with the moral and physical laws which govern our lives, then the reaction which comes back upon the actor, will bring only that which is good—peace, rest, fortune, health, and happiness. If, on the contrary, these laws are violated, then the result will be evil, producing restlessness, discomfort, loss of fortune, disease, and unhappiness. A traveller in the path of the Karma Yoga should not even think evil of another, because in the attempt to injure others we first injure ourselves. Every thought puts the mind-substance in a certain state of vibration, and opens the door to the influence of such minds as are in the same state of vibration. Therefore, when we cherish evil thoughts, we run the double risk of affecting other minds and of being influenced by all evil-minded persons holding similar thoughts, nay, we expose our minds to all the evil thoughts that have been thought in the past and stored up in the mental atmosphere of the world. A corresponding result comes from the holding of good thoughts. This is the reason why evil-doers grow worse and worse everyday, and the doers of good deeds become better and better.

A Karma Yogi should realize that there is one Being or one Spirit in the universe. Seeing this same Being or Spirit in all living creatures, he should recognize the rights of all, and should not injure anyone either mentally or physically. Such a Yogi is truly unselfish; he is a blessing to the world and to humanity.

He who wishes to practise the Karma Yoga should abandon attachment to the fruit of his labours, and learn to work for

[1] Vide Swami Abhedananda: *Doctrine of Karma.*

work's sake, keeping in mind the idea that by his work he is paying off the debt which he owes to parents, society, country, and all mankind. Like a wet-nurse he should take care of his children, realizing that they do not belong to him, but that they are placed in his charge in order that he and they may gain experience and unfold their latent powers and feelings.

A true Karma Yogi, furthermore, is he who recognizes that his real Self is not a doer of action, but that all mental and physical activity is merely the result of the forces of nature. Therefore, he never claims that any work, whether good or bad, has been done by his true Self. He lets his mind, intellect, and sense-organs work incessantly, while in his soul he holds steadfastly the idea that he is the witness-like knower of all activity, mental or physical. In this way, he frees himself from the law of *karma* and escapes from all the results of work which bind ordinary workers. Neither does he count success nor failure in his daily life. He does his best in each effort put forth by him, and after performing his duty to the utmost of his ability, if he meets with failure he does not grieve, but, saying within himself that he did all that he could under circumstances, he maintains his calmness and enjoys peace of mind even in the face of defeat.

The aim of a Karma Yogi is to live in the world and act like a master but not like a slave. Ordinary mortals implicitly obey the masters of desire and passion, following them without question or discrimination. But he who chooses the path of the Karma Yoga seeks absolute control over desire and passion and directs the force manifesting through these channels towards the highest ideal of life—freedom of the soul.

In fulfilling all the duties of life, the Karma Yogi takes refuge in love, making it the sole motive power behind every action of body and mind, and whenever he performs any duty, it is always done through love. He understands that sense of duty is bondage, while work done through a feeling of love frees the soul and brings peace, rest, and in the end, everlasting happiness.

All the great spiritual leaders of mankind, like Christ and Buddha were the Karma Yogis. They worked for humanity through love, and showed by their example how perfect freedom

could be attained by right work. Buddha did not preach the worship of a personal God, but he established the truth that those who do not believe in a personal God and who are not devotional, can reach the highest goal of all religions by the path of the Karma Yoga.

CHAPTER VI

THE BHAKTI YOGA

The Bhakti Yoga teaches that the final end of all religions can be reached through love and worship of the personal God, who is the Creator and Governor of the phenomenal universe. It leads to the same destination as all the other branches of Yoga, but is especially suited for such as are emotional in their nature and have the feeling of love and devotion highly developed. It is for those devotees who, conscious of their own weakness arising from the lack of self-control and the knowledge, seek help from outside, and who, taking refuge in the Supreme, pray to Him for forgiveness and pardon of sins committed through ignorance of the moral and spiritual laws that govern our lives. All dualistic systems of religion, like Christianity, Judaism, and Mohammedanism, which advocate the worship of a personal God, knowingly or unknowingly preach Bhakti Yoga and direct their adherents along this path.

The word *bhakti* means devotion, while Yoga in this case signifies union of the individual soul with God. Hence the Bhakti Yoga is the method of devotion by which true communion of the soul with the supreme Deity is accomplished. It shows what kind of devotion and love for God will bring the soul into the most intimate relation with the divine Being, and how even the ordinary feelings of a human heart, when directed Godward, can become the means of attaining spiritual oneness with the Soul of the universe. The Raja Yoga tells us that desire, passion, love, hatred, pride and anger must be completely conquered before perfection can be reached. A student of the Raja Yoga must not only keep constant watch over his mind, but he must also faithfully practise the eight steps already described, if he would achieve his highest ideal, while in the Bhakti Yoga we learn that all desires and passions, whether good or bad, can be directed towards God. Then, instead of binding the soul to worldliness and earthly attachment, they become a means of attaining Godconsciousness and absolute freedom from selfishness and wickedness.

A follower of the Bhakti Yoga should feel God as closely related to his soul as he possibly can, and regard Him not only as the Lord of the universe, but also as father, mother, brother, sister, friend, or child. Even the relation existing between husband and wife may be cultivated and developed in the heart of a lover of God, intoxicated by the soul-stirring wine of divine love. When the whole heart and soul of a *bhakta* or lover of God flow like the unbroken current of a mighty river, surmounting all barriers and dashing headlong towards the ocean of Divinity, he finds no other attraction in the world, holds no other thought, cherishes no other desire, speaks no other word, and sees no other thing than that his most Beloved, the omnipresent Deity. He resigns himself entirely to Him and surrenders his will to the will of the almighty One. He works, but without thinking of results. Every action of his body and mind is performed simply to please his beloved One. His motive power is love alone and by this he breaks asunder the chain of selfishness, transcends the law of *karma,* and becomes free. Thus a true Bhakti Yogi, being constantly in tune with the Infinite, loses the sense of *I, me,* and *mine,* and makes room for *thou, thee,* and *thine.*

A *bhakta* never forgets his relation to his beloved. His mind is concentrated and one-pointed; consequently, meditation becomes easy for him. True devotion or continuous remembrance of the divine ideal leads to unceasing meditation and ultimately lifts the soul into *samadhi,* where it realizes God and communes with Him undisturbed by any other thought, feeling, idea, or sensation. Becoming dead to sense phenomena, it lives on the spiritual plane of Godconsciousness. Wherever such a Yogi casts his eyes, he sees the presence of the all-pervading Divinity and enjoys unbounded peace and happiness at every moment of his life. It is for this reason that the Bhakti Yoga is considered to be the easiest of all methods. What a Raja Yogi attains only after years of practice, a *bhakta* accomplishes that in a short time through extreme devotion and love. That which a Karma Yogi finds so difficult to achieve, a Bhakti Yogi attains easily by offering the fruits of all his works to the almighty source of all activity and the ultimate end of all motives.

The Bhakti Yoga has two grades,—the first is called *gauni,*

or preparatory and includes all the preliminary practices; the second is *para,* or the state of supreme love and devotion to God. A beginner in the Bhakti Yoga should first of all prepare the ground of his heart by freeing it from attachment to earthly objects and sense-pleasures; then, by arousing in it extreme longing to see God, to realize Divinity, to go to the source of all knowledge, and to reach perfection and Godconsciousness in this life. He must be absolutely earnest and sincere. He should seek the company of a true lover of God, whose life is pure and spotless, who has renounced all worldly connections, and who has realized the true relation which the individual soul bears to the universal Spirit. If, by good fortune, he meets such a real *bhakta,* he should receive from him the seed of *bhakti,* plant it in the ground of his heart, and by faithfully following the instructions of the master, take special care to keep it alive and make it grow till it becomes a large tree bearing the fruit of divine love. He should have respect, reverence, and love for his master, who will open his spiritual eye and transmit his own spiritual powers to his soul. When these powers begin to work, the soul will be awakened from the deep sleep of ignorance and self-delusion.

The *guru* or spiritual eye-opener, knowing the natural tendency of the disciple, will advise him to look upon God as his Master, or as his Father or Mother, and will thus establish a definite relation between his soul and God. Henceforth, the disciple should learn to worship or pray to the Supreme through this particular line of relation. At this stage symbols, rituals, ceremonies may appeal to his mind, or he may repeat some name of the Lord that signifies the special aspects of the Divinity corresponding to the relation which he bears to Him. Constant repetition of such a name will help the mind of the neophyte to become concentrated upon the divine Being. During this period he should avoid such company, such places, and such amusements those may make him forget his chosen ideal. He should live a chaste and pure life, always discriminating right from wrong and struggling to control his passions and desires by directing them Godward. He should be angry with himself for not realizing his ideal; he should hate his sinful nature, because it keeps him away from the path of *bhakti* and prevents him from remembering his Beloved. Thus, he will gradually

succeed in correcting his faults and in gaining control over his animal nature.

A traveller on the path of *bhakti* should observe cleanliness of body and mind, should be truthful and lead a simple life without injuring any living creature mentally or physically. He should not kill any animal for his food, neither should he covet that which does not belong to him. He should, furthermore, obey the laws of health which tend to make him physically strong, as well as those moral laws the violation of which weakens the mind.

So long as the devotee thinks of God with a form and believes that He is outside of his soul and of the universe, he can make a mental picture of Him and worship the divine Ideal through that form; or he may keep before him some symbolic figure like the cross which will remind him of his Ideal at the time of devotion. But a *bhakta* should never mistake the imaginary form or the symbolic figure for the real Ideal. Wherever there is such a mistake there is to be found spiritual degeneration and the expression of ignorance in the form of sectarianism, bigotry and fanaticism.

Gradually as the *bhakta* approaches God, he will rise above such dualistic conceptions and realize that his Beloved is not only transcendent, but also immanent in nature, that nature is His body, and that He dwells everywhere, He is the Soul of our souls and the Life of our life, and also one stupendous Whole, while we are but His parts. The *bhakta,* then, reaches that state which is called qualified non-dualism. He sees that from the minutest insect up to man all living creatures are related to the *Isvara*[1] as a part is related to the whole. Therefore, he cannot kill or injure any living being. Understanding that everything pertaining to any part belongs in reality to the whole, he says: 'Whatever is mine is Thine', and it is from this moment that absolute self-resignation and self-surrender to the will of the *Isvara* begin to reign supreme in the soul of the Yogi. Then he is able to say from the bottom of his heart: 'Let Thy will be done', and never again can he forget that his soul is a part of the *Isvara.* His devotion, henceforth, consists in remembering this new relation, and his worship takes a new

[1] The most appropriate Sanskrit word for God who is the all-pervading and eternal Ruler of the universe.

form. Whatever he does with mind or body becomes an act of worship of the supreme Whole, for he realizes that he possesses no power that does not belong to God. Eating, drinking, walking, talking, and every other work of his daily life become acts of devotion, and the entire existence of such a *bhakta* is a continuous series of acts of worship. Then the heart is purified and selfishness is dead.

The devotee thus rises to the second grade of Bhakti Yoga and begins to taste that divine love which is the fruit of the tree of *bhakti*. Here all distinction between the lover and the beloved disappears ; the lover, the loved, and the love, all merge into one ocean of Divinity. The soul of the *bhakta* is transformed, and manifesting omniscience, Godconsciousness, perfect freedom, and all other divine qualities, and it attains to the highest ideal of the Bhakti Yoga.

CHAPTER VII

THE JNANA YOGA

The last is the Jnana Yoga, the path of wisdom. The word *jnana,* being derived from the Sanskrit root *jna,* to know, means knowledge, and the ideal which it holds up before its followers is the realization of that absolute Truth, which is the one common source of all subjective and objective phenomena in the universe. It teaches that there is one life, one being, one reality, and that all notions of distinction and differentiation, all beliefs in the permanent duality or multiplicity of existence are unreal and illusory.

The Jnana Yoga is based entirely upon the monistic principles of the Advaita or non-dualistic system of the Vedanta. Its purpose is to show that subject and object are but the two expressions of one aboslute Being or Substance, that God and man, the Creator and the created, are only different aspects of one universal Reality. Its aim is to resolve the diverse phenomena into one ultimate Being, from which proceed all powers and all forces manifested in external and internal nature, and which is the abode of infinite intelligence and eternal happiness.

According to the Jnana Yoga, matter, mind, intellect, sense-powers, names, and forms are but the apparent manifestations of that one Substance which is called in Sanskrit Brahman. They may appear to us as real, but they have, in truth, only relative reality. The phenomena of the universe are like the waves in the ocean of Brahman. As waves rise in the sea, and after playing for a while, once more merge into it, so the waves of subject and object rise, live, and disslove in the ocean of that absolute substance, Brahman. The Brahman is described in Vedanta as 'That of which all animate and inanimate objects are born, by which they live, and into which they return after dissolution. It should be known and realized by all.'[1] It is

1. यतो वा इमानि भूतानि जायन्ते. येन जातानि जीवन्ति, यतप्रयन्त्यभिसंविशन्ति तद्विजिज्ञासस्व तद्ब्रह्म ॥—तैत्ति०उ० ३।१।१

the essence of Divinity. It is like the eternal canvas upon which the Creator or the cosmic Ego and the created or individual egoes are painted by *maya,* the inscrutable creative power of the infinite Being.

The chief obect of the Jnana Yoga is to unify God and the individual soul and to show the absolute oneness that exists between them on the highest spiritual plane. The individual ego, being the reflection or image of Divinity or Brahman, is divine in its true nature, and this true Self is known in Sanskrit as the *Atman.* The knowledge of this oneness of the *Atman* or subjective reality with Brahman, the universal Truth, is described in Jnana Yoga as the only means of attaining to complete liberation from the bondage of selfishness and from attachment to body and senses, which are the causes of all worldiness, unhappiness, and misery. The light of the knowledge of the *Atman* and of its with Brahman alone will dispel the darkness of ignorance which prevents us from reaching the abode of absolute existence, intelligence, and bliss, and which now deludes us into identifying the individual self with the body, senses, mind, and their modifications. This ignorance is designated in Sanskrit *avidya* or nescience, and is the source of all false knowledge, egotism, attachment to the lower self and to the world. Being deceived by the illusive power of nescience or *avidya,* we mistake body for soul and soul for body, matter for spirit and spirit for matter. In ignorance of our true Self, we work solely to gratify selfish motives and to reap some result from our actions. But the Jnana Yoga would waken us from this sleep of ignorance, by showing us that the *Atman* is immortal, unchangeable all-knowing, and free by its own nature from eternity to eternity; that through the influence of nescience or *avidya,* the individual ego thinks of itself as changeable and subject to birth and death, and forgetting that the fountain-head of freedom, knowledge, and everlasting happiness is abiding within, it seeks knowledge and happiness from outside and becomes the slave of desires and passions. It further reminds us that whatever we think or perform mentally or physically, is like a dream in the sleep of self-delusion caused by the power of nescience or *avidya ;* that these dreams of the sleep of ignorance can be removed neither by work, nor by devotion, nor by meditation, but by the light and power of

vidya, the knowledge of the *Atman* or Self and of its relation to Brahman.

This knowledge cannot be obtained as the result of any virtuous act or prayer, but comes to the soul when the intellect and heart have been purified by unselfish and righteous works, and when the individual ego begins to discriminate between the real and unchangeable *Atman,* and apparent and changeable matter or force. The Jnana Yoga teaches that right discrimination and proper analysis are indispensable to the acquisition of knowledge of the true Self and the Reality which underlies phenomenal objects. It also declares that knowledge of the Self will bring to the soul the realization of absolute Truth more quickly than the practice of the Raja Yoga, or the Karma, or the Bhakti Yoga.

The path of wisdom, therefore, is best fitted for those earnest and sincere seekers after truth who have no leaning towards active life, who are not devotional in their nature, but who are pre-eminently intellectual, and who, having realized the transitory and ephemeral character of phenomenal objects, are no longer contented with sense-pleasures. It is for those who wish to be free from all fetters and attachments, and who care nothing for earthly prosperity, success, social honour, fame, or fulfilment of personal ambitions, but whose sole desire is to know who they are in reality, what their true nature is, and what relation exists between their soul, God, and the universe.

A traveller along this path should be philosophical in tendency, should have a sharp intellect and a keen power of analysing the the true nature of things. He should also have a firm conviction that the ultimate Truth or Reality of the universe is unchangeable. Using the sword of right discrimination between the Self and the non-self, he should sever all ties, and should never allow himself to be over-powered by any external or internal influence. His mind should be undisturbed by passions or desires, his senses be well-controlled, and his body be strong, healthy, and capable of bearing all hardships as well as of overcoming all environmental conditions. He should have dispassion and be ever ready to renounce anything that does not help in his realization of Truth. He must have absolute confidence in the teachings of the Jnana Yogins, or those who have become seers of Truth by following the path of wisdom,

and he must likewise have faith in the final truths expounded by the monistic system of the Vedanta.

The mind of a beginner in the Jnana Yoga must possess the power of perfect concentration and meditation, and his soul must be filled with the longing for absolute freedom from all relative conditions and from the laws which govern phenomena. He must realize that even the enjoyment of heavenly pleasures is a kind of bondage, since it keeps the soul entangled in the meshes of phenomenal relativity. Being well-armed with all these noble qualities as his weapons, a Jnana Yogi should fight against phenomenal appearances, and with the ideal of the unity of the true Self and the absolute Brahman ever before his mind's eye, he should march onward towards its realization breaking down all names and forms with the hammer of right analysis and cleaving all ties of attachment with the sword of proper discrimination. Should he not stop till the goal is reached. He who goes through the path of wisdom, burns the vast forest of the trees of phenomenal names and forms by starting in it the fire of right knowledge. All these names and forms are produced by *maya,* the inscrutable power of Brahman ; and according to Jnana Yoga this power of *maya* is inseparable from Brahman, as the power of heating is inseparable from fire. A Jnana Yogi, in his search after Brahman, should reject all names and forms by saying, *'neti neti'*—'not this, not this', until he realizes the one nameless, formless, and absolute Being of the universe, where the subject and the object, the knower, knowledge, and its objects, losing their relativity, merge into the infinite ocean of blissful existence and supreme intelligence.

A sincere seeker after Truth should hear over and over again that the *Atman* or true Self is one with Brahman or the eternal Truth ; and should repeat such phrases as *aham brahmasmi,* 'I am Braman,' *'saccidananda-rupo'ham',*—'I am one with the absolute source of knowledge, existence, and bliss'. He should constantly think of the meaning of *'tattvamasi'*—'that thou art', and should devote his time in mediating upon this oneness until the light of Brahman illumines his soul, dispelling the darkness of *avidya* and transforming his ego into the essence of the Divinity.

Instead of worshipping a personal God like a *bhakta,* a Jnana Yogi should clearly understand the significance of all

His attributes as given in the different scriptures, such as the Creator, or the Governor of the universe. He is spirit, infinite, omniscient, all-powerful, unchangeable, true, and one, and rejecting the worship of the personal God as an act proceeding from *avidya* or ignorance of the divine nature of the Self or *Atman,* he should seek that which is above all attributes and beyond all descriptions that transcends the realm of thought and cannot be revealed by human intellect or understanding, realize that all conceptions of a personal God are more or less anthropomorphic, and that the Creator himself must be phenomenal, since He can exist only in relation to the created object. A Jnana Yogi, consequently, does not pray to the personal God or to any other spirit or being. To him prayers and devotions are useless and unnecessary. He does not seek any supernatural help or Divine mercy, for he is conscious of the omnipotent and omniscient nature of the *Atman,* and knows that his true Self is beyond good and evil, above virtue and vice, unlimited by all laws, and that it reigns over nature in its own glory. He feels that it is the same in essence as the Creator or personal God. Instead of identifying himself with body, mind, senses, or intellect;[1] he always remembers that he is the *Atman,* which is birthless, deathless, sinless, fearless, immutable, eternally peaceful, and ever undisturbed by pleasant or unpleasant experiences, sensations, or mental and physical changes. A true Jnana Yogi constantly tries to keep himself above all phenomenal conditions, and incessantly repeats, *aham brahmasmi*—'I am Brahman', *so'ham, so'ham*—'I am He, I am He.' He says within himself: अहं ब्रह्मास्मि, सोऽहम्, सोऽहम् ब्रह्मविद् ब्रह्मैव भवति। 'I am neither mind, nor intellect, nor ego, nor senses; I am neither earth, nor water, nor air, nor fire, nor ether, but my true nature is absolute existence, knowledge, and bliss. I am He, I am He.'[2]

'I am neither the organic activity nor am I the elements of the body, neither the sense of knowledge nor that of action,

[1] मनोबुद्ध्यहङ्कारचित्तानि नाहं
न श्रोत्रं न जिह्वा न च घ्राणनेत्रम्।
न च व्योम भूमिर्न तेजो न वायु-
श्चिदानन्दरूपः शिवोऽहं शिवोऽहम्॥

but I am absolute existence, knowledge, and bliss. I am He, I am He.'[3]

'I have neither hatred nor love, neither greed nor delusion, neither egotism nor pride, nor vanity, neither creed nor faith, nor aim, nor desire for freedom. I am the absolute existence, knowledge, and bliss. I am He, I am He.'[4]

'I have neither virtue nor vice nor sin, neither pleasure nor pain, neither scriptures nor rituals, nor ceremonies. I am neither food nor am I the eater. I am absolute existence, knowledge, and bliss. I am He, I am He.'[5]

'I have neither death nor fear of death, nor birth nor caste distinction, neither father nor mother, neither friend nor foe, neither master nor disciple. I am the absolute existence, knowledge, and bliss. I am He, I am He.'[6]

'I have neither doubt nor question. I am formless and all-pervading. I am the eternal Lord of nature and the master of the senses. I am neither bound nor free. I am one with

[3] नाहं प्राणसंज्ञो न च पञ्चवायु-
र्नवा सप्तधातुर्न वा पञ्चकोषः ।
न वाक् पाणिपादौ न चोपस्थपायू-
श्चिदानन्दरूपः शिवोऽहं शिवोऽहम् ॥

[4] न मे द्वेषरोगौ न मे लोभमोहौ
मदो नैव मे नैव मात्सर्यभावः ।
न धर्मो न चार्थो न कामो न मोक्ष-
श्चिदानन्दरूपः शिवोऽहं शिवोऽहम् ॥

[5] न पुण्यं न पापं न सौख्यं न दुःखं
न मन्त्रो न तीर्थं न वेदा न यज्ञाः ।
अहं भोजनं नैव भोज्यं न भोक्ता
चिदानन्दरूपः शिवोऽहं शिवोऽहम् ॥

[6] न मृत्युर्न शङ्का न मे जातिभेदः
पिता नैव मे नैव माता न जन्म ।
न बन्धुर्न मित्रं गुरुर्नैव शिष्य-
श्चिदानन्दरूपः शिवोऽहं शिवोऽहम् ॥

Brahman. I am the omnipresent Divinity, I am the immutable Lord of all. I am the absolute existence, knowledge, and bliss. I am He, I am He.'[1]

Thus, constantly practising discrimination and rising above all relativity and phenomenal appearances, a Jnana Yogi realizes the absolute, unchangeable, eternal Truth in this life and ultimately becomes one with it, because the Jnana Yoga declares that he who knows Brahman becomes Brahman: *brahmavid brahmaiva bhavati;* for the same reason that the knower of God can be no other than God himself. A Jnana Yogi never forgets that his true Self is Brahman. Having attained to this supreme Godconsciousness he lives in the world like an eternal witness of all mental and physical changes. Ever happy and undisturbed, he travels from place to place, pointing out to mankind the way to absolute freedom and perfection. A perfect Jnana Yogi, indeed, lives as the embodiment of the absolute Divinity on this earth.

अहं निर्विकल्पो निराकाररूपो
विभुत्वाच्च सर्वत्र सर्वेन्द्रियाणाम् ।
न वा बन्धनं नैव मुक्तिर्नमीति-
श्चिदानन्दरूपः शिवोऽहं शिवोऽहम् ।

CHAPTER VIII

THE SCIENCE OF BREATHING

The science of Yoga, with its various branches justly claims, as we have already seen, to unravel the mysteries of life and death. Some of the advanced thinkers in Western countries are beginning to understand the importance of this noble science and to explain the problems of existence by it; but modern physiologists, anatomists, biologists, and medical practitioners are still uncertain as to the proper solution of these problems; the more they investigate, the more doubts arise in their minds. Within the last fifty years various researches in different departments of science, such as physics, chemistry, physiology, and biology, have apparently ended in the conclusion that, life is nothing but the result of physical and chemical actions in the organic structure, that there is no such thing as vital force, distinct and separate from the physical and chemical forces which have been discovered in the scientist's laboratory.

Some of the students of science are even anxiously waiting in vain expectation that some day they will hear of the discovery of a substance, artificially produced in the laboratory, which will live, move, grow, multiply and die like a particle of living matter. The majority of modern thinkers, in fact, hold that vitality is merely the result of the mechanical activity of the organs; that life comes directly from dead matter, and obeys physical, chemical, and mechanical laws; that a living animal is nothing but a machine; and that all his actions whether of body or mind are purely mechanical. They say that a living protoplasm is only a combination of certain chemical elements, subject to ordinary chemical laws; that living and non-living are one; and that the living comes directly from the non-living. According to these scientists a human being is no more than a mechanical resultant of certain chemical changes governed by the laws of physical nature. If, however, we ask them what force it is that determines these physical and mechanical modifications, what is the power that causes all these chemical changes in such numberless varieties, they answer that they do not know.

Are we really like machines, subject to mechanical laws and nothing more? Is our growth entirely due to the process of accretion and aggregation of matter in the non-living world? Are we merely some accidental precipitation, deposition, or crystallization of atoms and molecules which are governed by no power higher than the chemico-physical forces? The students of physiology now learn in their text-books this physico-chemical theory of the origin of life. They laugh at those who use such expressions as 'vital energy', 'vital force', 'vitality', or 'life-force', in the sense of some power separate and distinct from the physico-chemical forces of nature. In fact, when they study physiology, they throw aside all ideas of vitality or life force; they believe in a nature devoid of vitality or life, and try to explain the formation of brain cells, nerves, tissues, and the construction of the various organs of a living animal without recognizing the existence of a vital agency. A reaction, however, has taken place recently in Europe, and a class of scientific thinkers has appeared, Dr. Lionel S. Beale being the most prominent, who, having found no satisfactory explanation of life through these theories, have, after closer observation and experiment, come to the conclusion that there is a vital force entirely distinct from mechanical or physio-chemical forces, and which manifests itself through living particles of matter. It is true that the human body is a machine, but not like any machine made by man. It is a self-moving, regulating, and self-adjusting vital machine, governed by will-power and intelligence. It was produced by a germ of life which possessed vitality, and which had the capability of becoming conscious of willing, thinking, and producing psychic activity, in which are included all emotions and thoughts, belonging to a human being. By a germ of life is meant that germ of matter or substance which contains the potentiality of life and mind. Although the manifestation of this vital force depends upon organic structure, still it is not the same as any of the familiar forces known to us; it is not like heat, electricity, magnetism, or molecular attraction. On the contrary, it is a force which governs and directs all these grosser physical forces. It is the director of the telegraphic current which notifies the energy of the muscle and when and how to exert itself. It co-ordinates all automatic movements, controls the system as a whole as well as

in detail, and is itself the principle of purely animal life. The special organ through which it functions chiefly, and which has been constructed to differentiate it from other energies, to give it a form and a purpose, and to afford it a vehicle of expression, is the spinal nerve of the vertebrate and the equivalent organ in other animals.

This mysterious and invisible vital energy or vital force is called in Sanskrit '*prana*'. That branch of the science of Yoga which treats of this mysterious force, describing its origin and nature, and teaching how it can be controlled and utilized to produce wonderful results, is known as the 'science of *prana*'. Ordinarily, it is translated into English by the word 'breath', and called the 'Science of Breath'; but *prana* is not a simple breath. In the *Upanishads,* it is defined as the cause of all motion and life in both the organic and inorganic worlds. Wherever there is the slightest expression of motion, life, or mind, from the smallest atom, or animalcule, or amoeba, or bioplasm, up to the largest solar system and the highest man, it is the manifestation of the all-pervading force called the *prana.* It is one, yet appears as manifold through its diverse expressions. It is the mother of all forces, psychical, chemical, and physical. The Vedanta philosophy describes it as the ultimate generalization of the multiple forces of nature. It is indestructible; the death of the form through which it manifests cannot destroy it, but it must not be confounded with molecular attraction, for it is much finer; it cannot be seen, touched, weighed, measured, or captured by any means.

According to Vedanta, before the beginning of creation the unconditioned casual state of the universe contained the potential *prana;* Vedanta does not make the absurd statement that life has come from non-life. It does not admit that vital energy is the result of mechanical forces, but, on the contrary, tells us that it is a force which operates simultaneously with physico-chemical forces. They are all, in fact, expressions of the one living energy of the *prana.* Although some of the modern scientific monists acknowledge that all matter and force spring from a common source, or from one eternal energy, still, at the same time, they deny the existence of life or vitality in that energy and declare that it is not living. They try to prove that life is the product of some kind of motion of dead matter,

while Vedanta teaches that all the phenomena of the universe have evolved out of the one eternal substance which possesses *prana* or cosmic vital force, cosmic mind, cosmic intelligence, and consciousness. These may be interdependent, but as they all exist in a human being, so the infinite variety of forces exist in that one eternal living Being whose body is the universe.

The science of Yoga claims that this *prana* is the final cause of all the manifested forces of nature. Why does an atom move and vibrate ? A scientist does not know, but a Yogi says, it is because of the *prana*. That force which produces vibration in an atom or a molecule is one of the expressions of the energy of the *prana* or the cosmic life-principle. The same *prana* appears as that power by which a germ of life works on the physical plane, arouses motion in the molecules of its cells, and builds up a suitable structure, repairs injuries, and reproduces its kind. It causes activity in a protoplasm, in a bioplasm or in an amœba, as well as in the highest man. It is closely related to the mind, which includes all the psychic activities and intelligence, displayed by that germ in the different grades of its evolution. The vital power and mind are, indeed, two aspects of the one *prana*. A germ of life possesses mentality as well as vitality, and the phenomena of these two aspects are most intimately connected with one another. In the science of Yoga the relation between mind and the *prana* is described as that of a horse and a rider, the *prana* being the horse when the individual mind rides. The body moves like an automobile carriage, when it is propelled from within by the force of the *prana* and guided by the driver of the intelligent mind. The activity of the mechanism of the body stops, if the *prana* or vital force ceases to vibrate. Again, when the vibration of the *prana* is arrested, the mind no longer operates on the physical plane. It is for this reason that vital force or the *prana* is called the medium through which the mind expresses its powers on the physical plane.

The animal organism is nothing but a mechanism for the manifestation of the powers of the soul. When the soul wishes to express certain powers on the material plane, it creates through the *prana* some suitable organism to fulfil its desire. If the mental activities of any living creature change, the organic

structure of the nerves and cells will also change. The various experiments have been made by different scientists which clearly show that mental effort underlies all physiological conditions and organic functions. An abnormal activity of the mind will invariably give rise to certain pathological conditions, because it will affect the vital action, and when the vital power, which gives life to every cell of the body, is influenced, the cells will begin to vibrate in a different manner; and the result will be abnormal activity in the cells of the organs, which in turn will produce various diseases. Conversely, when the vital activity is normal, the psychic function is also natural. The mind is just as much affected by a diseased body as the physical system is disturbed by a diseased mind. He who can regulate his mentalities knows how to preserve his vitality and keep a healthy body, while he who has control over his vital functions understands the secret of keeping a healthy mind. The man who is thus able to dominate both body and mind is the master of himself, the king in his own conscious domain. But he, who is not the master of himself, lives like a slave to passion, to sense-objects, to wealth, property, ambition, and all earthly desires. Those, who do not know how to regulate their vital forces, are always unhappy, for they constantly suffer either mentally or physically.

Every irregular activity of the mind will produce chemical and physiological changes in the nerve-centres in the organs, and eventually in the whole body. This can be shown by analysing the chemical properties of the secretions of different organs, and especially by analysing the breath. If we analyse the breath of a person who is strongly moved by anger or any other violent passion, we shall find that his whole system is poisoned for the time being. By letting his breath pass through a certain solution in a glass-tube, we shall readily see that distinct changes are produced in the solution. These variations, furthermore, are only the outward signs of the internal modifications that have taken place in the entire nervous system. It is, in fact, these organic changes that modify the breath, but in a normal, healthy state of mind and body, the chemical solution will remain perfectly unchanged. The breathing is then regular, deep, and strong. Every impulse of passion, that takes possession of the mind, causes a corresponding variation in the

respiratory functions; anger, hatred, or jealousy, for instance, are marked by short, quick breath, while thoughts of peace, of true happiness, and of divine love produce long deep breath.

There are various ways of learning the relation that exists between vital activity and mentality. A Yogi says that all abnormal and diseased conditions of the body are caused directly by imperfect or weak expression of the vital energy, and indirectly by improper mental activity. The curing of a disease, therefore, means the removing of the obstacles which prevent the *prana* from working in an absolutely normal way. This can be done either by physical processes or by regulating the mental functions. A Yogi heals disease in himself by increasing the vital action; by rousing the latent powers of the *prana,* which is the source of all life force. He knows how to fill his whole body, nay, every cell, with increased vitality. By regulating the polarity of the cells through the higher vibrations of the *prana,* he generates a strong current of the vibratory *prana,* directs its course through the disordered cells of his organs, and changes the structure of these cells by creating a rapid circulation of the blood, charged with the healing power of the *prana,* and sending it to the parts affected. In this way, the cells are restored to their normal condition and the disease is cured. The Yogi does this consciously and in the most scientific manner with the help of breathing exercises accompanied by concentration. According to the science of Yoga, all nervous currents and all molecular motion in the brain cells and nerve-centres are caused by this *prana.* If the molecules of the cells be filled with a new and strong current of *prana* or vital force, their vibration will be enormously increased, and this will enable them to throw off the impure matter that retarded their natural activity, and recover their normal healthy condition.

The same *prana* is also the propelling power in circulation. A Yogi says that the vital energy is stored in the nerve-centres of the spinal cord. It is the cause of the motion of the lungs, which in turn produces respiration, and respiration is the cause of the circulation of the blood and all other organic activity. Modern physiology tells us that every portion of our body, every tissue and cell breathes; that the lung is nothing more than an instrument in the respiratory process, the chemical

operation, which is the essential part of this function, occuring elsewhere in the cells and tissues themselves. The lung is only the door through which oxygen enters the system. The physiologists of the eighteenth century held quite different views; even the father of modern chemistry, Lavoisier himself (1743-1794), supposed that the main act of respiration took place in the lungs. What really happens is that oxygen, introduced into the lungs, filters through the thin walls of the pulmonary capillaries, where it finds in the red corpuscles of the blood a substance called hemoglobin, with which it unites to form a compound known as oxyhemoglobin. And a very unstable compound it is, for throughout the tissues, in the capillary vessels of the whole body, orygen is allowed to escape freely and to affect its work upon the cells. The blood, therefore, is merely a vehicle. The 'organic combustions' do not occur in the lungs, their seat being in the cells and tissues throughout the whole system.

The physiological chemistry tells us that all things—mineral, vegetable, and animal—are mainly composed of four principal elements, oxygen, hydrogen, carbon, and nitrogen. Of these oxygen is of the greatest importance, since it is the most widely diffused, constituting by weight one-fifth of the atmosphere, eight-ninths of the ocean and all water, nearly one-half of solid rock and of every solid substance, and more than one-half of all vegetables and animals. If a man weighs one hundred and fifty pounds, one hundred and ten of his weight is oxygen. It is the chief cause of all activity in mechanical, chemical, muscular, and mental forces. The amount of energy or activity of an animal is determined by the amount of oxygen he respires, and the degree of force manifested in the human organism is in proportion to the rate at which oxygen is introduced into the system. It is the first requisite of vital action. Without it all other materials of life will be of little avail; and the respiratory organs are the medium through which it enters the system. The blood which has been once used in our bodies would be of no further service, if it were not purified by the lungs. Ordinarily, air, when inhaled, contains 21 per cent oxygen, and when exhaled, 12 per cent, having lost 9 per cent. In a healthy adult man, the average pulsation is 75 in a minute and about two ounces of blood are driven by each pulsation from the heart to

the lungs, or nine pounds and six ounces in a minute. The quantity of blood in the human body is considered to be about one-fifth of the weight of the entire body, or twenty-eight pounds in a man weighing one hundred and forty pounds. The full quantity of blood in the system will, therefore, flow through the lungs in the short period of three minutes; in other words, the vast amount of thirteen thousand five hundred pounds in every twentyfour hours.

It is well-known now that as a rule only one-sixth of the full capacity of the lungs is used; if the remaining five-sixths were properly brought into play who can say what marvellous results might not follow? Nature has not given capacity to any organ without a purpose, and we are sure that, if every one were to use the full capacity of his lungs, weak or diseased lungs would be a thing of the past. If we understand the science of breathing, we can develop our lung power to its utmost capacity; then by well-regulated breathing exercises we can purify every particle of matter in the cells of the organs, and with the help of the current of *prana* can ultimately drive out all the physical weakness. Faith-healers, mental healers, and Christian scientists cure disease without giving drugs. The Yogis of India do the same, but in a more scientific manner. Faith-healers and Christian scientists ask us to believe in a certain thing and to declare that we are not suffering. A Yogi says that we can get better and surer results, if through breathing exercises we can control the *prana,* increase the vital current, and fill the whole system with the health power of the *prana.* By polarizing the activity of the cells, and removing the obstacles that prevent the proper manifestation of the vital current in those cells, we shall get rid of the disease. If mental healers and faith-healers knew the secret of controlling the *prana,* they would have undoubtedly been more successful in their attempts. Some among them are now beginning to take up breathing exercises, and perhaps in time they will learn the truths contained in the wonderful science of breathing.

Generally, people who know nothing of this science, think that it teaches merely the mechanical process of breathing in and out; but its province is much more extended, for it likewise shows how to control the *prana,* how to increase the vitality of the system by generating new nerve-currents of a

higher order, how to polarize the vibration of the cells, and how to awaken those powers which lie dormant on the subconscious plane as well as in the nerve-centres of the spine. It also tells us that, when the powers begin to manifest, we rise above the influences and changes to which ordinary mortals are subject. India is the only country, where from ancient times this science of breathing has been carefully studied in all its aspects by the Yogis. Through centuries of investigation they discovered different methods of regulating the breath, following which marvellous results, both mental and physical, could be obtained. Out of these various discoveries grew up the science of breathing, which, besides the control of the breath, also explains what relation the process of respiration bears to *prana,* and how, by harmonizing the vibrations of nerve cells with the higher laws of life force, one gains mastery over the *prana.* This control of the *prana* brings complete subjugation of all the forces which govern the mind and body.

The aim of a Yogi is to establish absolute harmony between his vital actions and his mental functions, to transcend all laws, to rise above the influence of all environmental conditions, and to be the supreme ruler of the mind and of the entire system. According to the Yogi, this perfect self-mastery and consequent freedom do not come to one, who has not learned the secret of regulating the vital energy, and who has not acquired the power to direct it wherever it is needed. Before anyone can control this invisible vital force, he must know its principal seat in the body; he must learn, where this unseen king of physical activities is enthroned, who are his attendants, and how he governs his kingdom.

A Yogi says that the king, the *prana,* resides with his attendants in the nerve-centres of the spinal column. These centres are the main stations where this vital force is stored. There are many centres in the spinal cord out of which proceed the whole body, including its organs. All sensations and motions of the limbs depend upon these nerve-centres in the spinal column and the brain. There are two currents which flow in and out of the brain through the spinal column and nerves; they are called afferent and efferent currents, in Sanskrit, *ida* and *pingala.* They run through the anterior and posterior channels of the spinal cord, and these furnish the two

paths over which the currents of the *prana* travel. The nervous energy itself being scattered throughout the system, the only means of regulating it, is by controlling the principal centres or stations in the spinal column. If, therefore, any one wishes to control the *prana,* he must first learn to govern the chief stations through which it works. After studying the relation of these different centres, the Yogis found that there were six of primary importance. Those who wish to know their names can refer to the volume on *'Raja Yoga'* by Swami Vivekananda.[1]

According to the science of breath, the king of these six leading nerve-centres in the spinal cord is enthroned in the centre opposite the thorax; it is the respiratory centre and in Sanskrit bears the name *anahata.* It moves the lungs, causes respiration, and gives activity to all other centres which are dependent on it. If the royal centre is disturbed or vibrates abnormally, those, which are object to it, and through them, the whole system will act in a corresponding manner; and the result will be disease, organic trouble, or continued ill-health. So long, however, as the royal centre is in a normal condition, the movement of the lungs which causes inspiration and expiration, will be regular. Therefore, the Yogi, who desires to subjugate the nerve-centres, first strives to gain control over the respiratory centre. The science of breathing teaches that, by regulating the breath, the motion of the lungs and the functions of the whole nervous system can be regulated. It also says that, by controlling the nerve-centres in the spinal column, mastery over the currents flowing throughout the system, and ultimately over the mind itself, with its various dormant powers, can easily be gained. If the mental powers that are now latent on the subconscious plane can be aroused, all the experiences of past incarnations, and the impressions gathered during previous lives will come up on the conscious plane, and we shall remember them all.

The Yogis say that the great majority of people breathe irregularly and that there are differences in the breathing of men and women. The causes of this irregular breathing are many—food, drink, fear, sickness, sorrow, nervous excitement, passion, anxiety. These do not affect the breath directly, but

[1] Vide also the *Satchakranirupana,* the *Hatha-yoga-pradipika, Shiva-samhita,* and the *Yoga-upanishads.*

they do influence breath indirectly by producing abnormal activity of the *prana,* first in the nerve-centres, then in the movement of the lungs, which expresses outwardly as irregular breathing. Hence, irregularity of the breath is the external sign of abnormal action of the respiratory centre in the spine.

A Yogi whose respiratory centre functions regularly and is under perfect control is free from weakness, ill-health, and all disease. As, by controlling the activity of the *prana* in the nerve-centres, the movement of the lungs and the respiration are regulated, so, conversely, by regulating the breath, the lungs and nerve-centres will be controlled, for they work simultaneously. Those who are suffering from ill-health should devote especial attention to the study of the science of breathing, as it is absolutely necessary to the building up of a healthy mind and a healthy body.

The chief aim of a Yogi is to observe his own nature closely and to learn clearly what forces are operating in his system, and what relation they bear to one another; for, by gaining a complete knowledge of his own nature, he will gain correct knowledge of the whole universe, since the laws that govern the human body are universal. All these laws are nothing but the modes in which the *prana* operates in nature. Therefore, a Yogi seeks first to understand the individual *prana* and the vital laws which govern his own system.

In India this fact was recognized and the science of breathing was carefully studied by the sages, who had no other ambition or purpose in life than to acquire knowledge for its own sake. They explained this science, practised breathing exercises (noting the results), and instructed their pupils not to make a profession of it, or to earn money, or to gain fame in society. On the contrary, they refused to teach those who came to learn for professional ends, and it is because of this disinterestedness on their part that the knowledge of the Yogis is so pure and unadulterated by ambition or selfish motives. They also realized the dangers which might arise from ignorant practice of these exercises. Those who are studying under inexperienced teachers, should be on their guard, for there is great risk in letting the nerve currents flow in a wrong direction. It may produce abnormal results and may even end in mental disorder. Right breathing, on the contrary, brings

the greatest benefits to mankind when properly practised, but, if it is abused, it must do a corresponding amount of harm, just as any medicine will, when improperly applied. As, by studying *Materia Medica* a man cannot cure himself without the aid of a trained physician, so the mere study of Yoga cannot bring about truly good results unless it is carried on under the guidance of an experienced Yogi. It should be remembered, furthermore, that in a written book everything is not given, that each constitution is different from every other, and that which is helpful to one may not be so to another.

Anyone who practises faithfully, according to the instructions of an experienced living teacher, will surely gain highly beneficial results both in mind and body. He will learn how to manufacture vital force and to increase the vitality of his whole organism. He will be able to remove all impurities from his system and to overcome all abnormal and diseased conditions, that is, where decomposition and disorganization have not advanced too far. He will likewise no longer be a victim to cold, chills, grippe, fever, rheumatism, stiffness of the joints or muscles, paralysis, and other ills, for he knows, how he can remove them by increasing the vibrations of the *prana* and thus giving new life to the cells of the organs.

Every individual, whether old or young, man or woman, is bound to get some result, if the breathing exercises be practised faithfully for six months. By breathing exercise, however, does not meant here merely deep breathing, such as taught by teachers of music, Delsarte, or physical culture. Deep breathing is very good for drawing a full supply of oxygen into the system and undoubtedly has its value, especially for women who wear tight dresses. Many of the diseases from which they suffer are directly traceable to a lack of the adequate quantity of oxygen necessary for organic combustion and for the maintenance of the activity of the organs. The organs of many people in this country are undeveloped, or abnormally developed, because of the unnatural clothes worn; and for all such people deep breathing will be exceedingly beneficial. But too much of it is injurious, as it inflates and strains the lungs, and, if continued, the increased development of the tissues will after a time decay and produce various troubles. Those who are taking lessons in deep breathing from inexperienced teachers should stop to con-

sider this. By breathing exercises we mean that process by which control over the motion of the lungs and of the nerve-centres as also, in the end, over the *prana* or vital energy can be acquired.

A Yogi declares that the practice of breathing will bring whatever result is desired, whether physical, psychical, or spiritual. He who has gained perfect control over his breath can suspend it for hours, and through this, generate a power in the system which will levitate the body, even counteracting the tremendous force of gravitation. A Yogi conquers death by the control of the *prana*. There are many Yogis in India who can tell the exact moment when they will leave their bodies. They say: 'I am going to depart on such a day at such an hour', and, at the appointed time, consciously give up their bodies in the presence of many. There are some again who can prolong life indefinitely, and can subsist for long periods without taking any kind of solid or liquid food.

When so much can be accomplished through the control of the vital energy of the *prana*, it is not strange that these masters say to the world:

'Oh, ye mortals, study the science of breathing; learn the secret of controlling the *prana* or the vital energy; strive diligently to regulate the breath; for the control of *prana* will bring all happiness, earthly and spiritual, and through it will come perfect health, mastery of the body, and that supreme Bliss which is eternal and ever-lasting.'

CHAPTER IX

WAS CHRIST A YOGI

In considering whether or not Christ was a Yogi, we should first understand how spiritual and how divine one must be before he can be called a Yogi. A true Yogi must be pure, chaste, spotless, self-sacrificing, and the absolute master of himself. Humility, unostentatiousness, forgiveness, uprightness, and firmness of purpose must adorn his character. A true Yogi's mind should not be attached to sense-objects or sense-pleasures. He should be free from egotism, pride, vanity, and earthly ambition. Seeing the ephemeral nature of the phenomenal world, and reflecting upon the misery, suffering, sorrow, and disease with which our earthly existence is beset, he should renounce his attachment to external things, which produce but fleeting sensations of pleasure, and should overcome all that clinging to worldly life which is so strong in ordinary mortals.

A true Yogi does not feel happy when he is in the company of worldly-minded people who live on the sense plane like animals. He is not bound by family ties. He does not claim that this is his wife and these are his children ; but, on the contrary, having realized that each individual soul, being a child of the immortal Bliss, belongs to the divine family, he severs all family relations and worldly connections and, thus, becomes absolutely free. A true Yogi must always preserve his equanimity in the face of the unpleasant as well as of the pleasant experiences of life ; and, rising above good and evil, he should remain undisturbed by the success or failure, the victory or defeat, which may come to him as the result of the actions of his body and mind.

A true Yogi, again, must have unswerving devotion to the supreme Spirit, the almighty and omniscient Soul of our souls ; and realizing that his body and mind are the playground of the omnipotent cosmic will, he should resign his individual will to the universal, and should be ever ready to work for others, to live for others, and to die for others. All his works, so long as he is in the society of people, should be a free offering to the

world for the good of humanity; but, at other times, he should resort to secluded places and live alone, constantly applying his mind to the highest spiritual wisdom that can be obtained in the state of super-consciousness, through meditation on the oneness of the individual soul with God, the universal Spirit.

A true Yogi must see the same Divinity, dwelling in all living creatures. He should also love all human beings equally. He should have neither friend nor foe, in the ordinary sense of those terms. A true Yogi is illumined by the light of Divine wisdom; therefore, nothing remains unknown to him. Time and space cannot limit the knowledge and wisdom of a true Yogi. Past and future events will appear to him like things happening before his eyes. For him, the light of divine wisdom has dispelled the darkness of ignorance, which prevents one from realizing the true nature of the soul, and which makes one selfish, wicked, and sinful. All psychic and spiritual powers serve him as his real master. Whatever he says is sure to come to pass. He never utters a word in vain. If he says to a distressed or suffering person, 'Be thou whole', instantly that person will become whole.

The powers of a true Yogi are unlimited, there is nothing in the world that he cannot do. Indeed, he alone has free access to the storehouse of infinite powers, but he never draws therefrom any force merely to satisfy idle curiosity, or to gratify selfish motives, or to gain wealth and fame, or to get any return whatsoever. He does not seek wordly prosperity, and always remains unconcerned about the result of his works. Praise or censure does not disturb the peace of his mind. Angels or bright spirits and the spirits of ancestors rejoice in his company and adore him. A true Yogi is worshipped by all. Having neither home nor posessions of his own, he wanders from place to place, realizing that the canopy of heaven is the roof of his world-wide home. He is easily pleased by everybody, irrespective of his caste, creed, or nationality, and, with a loving heart, he blesses those who rebuke or curse him. If his body be tortured or cut into pieces, he takes no revenge, but, on the contrary, prays for the welfare of his persecutor. Such is the character of a true Yogi.

From ancient times, there have been many such true Yogis in India and other countries. The descriptions of their lives

and deeds are, furthermore, as wonderful and as authentic as the life and acts of that illustrious Son of Man, who preached in Galilee, nearly two thousand years ago. The powers and works of this meek, gentle, and self-sacrificing divine man, who is worshipped throughout Christendom as the ideal Incarnation of God and the Saviour of mankind, have proved that he was a perfect type of one who is called in India a true Yogi. Jesus the Christ has been recognized by his disciples and followers not only as an exceptionally unique character, but as the only Begotten Son of God. And it is quite natural for those who know nothing about the lives and deeds of similar ideal characters of great Yogis and Incarnations of God, who have flourished, at different times, both before and in the Christian era, to believe that no one ever reached such spiritual heights or attained to such realization of oneness with the Heavenly Father as did Jesus of Nazareth.

The greater portion of the life of Jesus is absolutely unknown to us; and as He did not leave behind Him any systematic teaching regarding the method by which one may attain to that state of Godconsciousness which He Himself reached, there is no way of finding out what He did or practised during the eighteen years that elapsed before His appearance in public. It is, therefore, extremely difficult to form a clear conception of what path He adopted. But we can imagine that, being born with unusualy developed spiritual inclinations, He must have devoted his life and time to such practices as led Him to the realization of absolute Truth and to the attainment of divine consciousness, which ultimately gave Him a place among the greatest spiritual leaders of the world as well as among the disinterested Saviours of mankind.

India is the only country, where not only a complete system of practices is to be found, but also a perfect method, by following which well-qualified aspirants can attain to Christhood or to that spiritual unfoldment and divine enlightenment which made Jesus of Nazareth stand before the world as the ideal type of spiritual perfection. By studying the lives, the acts, and the most systematic and scientific teachings of the great Yogis of India, and, by faithfully following their examples and precepts, that an earnest disciple can, through the Yoga practices as to the various branches of the Vedanta philosophy, hope some day to

become as perfect as the Son of Man. This assurance must be a comfort and a consolation to the soul that is struggling for the attainment of spiritual perfection in this life. One peculiarity, however, of the teachings of the great Yogis of India is that the acquirement of spiritual perfection is the goal for all, and that each individual soul is bound, sooner or later, to be perfect even as Christ was perfect. They claim that spiritual truths and spiritual laws are as universal as the truths and laws of the material world, and that the realization of these truths cannot be confined to any particular time, place, or personality. Consequently, by studying the science of Yoga, anyone can easily understand the higher laws and principles, an application of which will explain the mysteries connected with the lives and deeds of saints, sages, or Incarnations of God, like Krishna, Buddha, or Christ.

A genuine seeker after Truth does not limit his study to one particular example, but looks for similar events in the lives of all the great ones, and does not draw any conclusion until he has discovered the universal law which governs them all. For instance, Jesus the Christ said, 'I and my Father are one.' Did He alone say it, or did many others who lived before and after Him and who knew nothing of His sayings, did utter similar expressions? Krishna declared, 'I am the Lord of the universe'. Buddha said, 'I am the absolute Truth'. A Mohammedan Sufi says, 'I am He'; while every true Yogi declares, 'I am Brahman'. So long as we do not understand the principle that underlies such sayings, they seem mysterious to us and we cannot grasp their real meaning; but, when we have realized the true nature of the individual soul and its relation to the universal Spirit, or God, or Father in Heaven, or the absolute Truth, we have learned the principle, and there is no further mystery about it. We are, then, sure that whosoever reaches this state of spiritual oneness or Godconsciousness will express the same thought in a similar manner. Therefore, if we wish to understand the character and miraculous deeds of Jesus of Nazareth, the surest way open to us is the study of the science of Yoga and the practice of its methods.

This science of Yoga, as has already been stated, explains all mysteries, reveals the causes of miracles, and describes the laws which govern them. It helps us to unravel the secrets of

nature and to discover the origin of such phenomena, as are called miraculous. All miracles like 'walking on the sea', 'feeding a multitude with a small quantity of food', 'raising the dead', which we read of in the life of Jesus, are described by the Yogis as manifestations of the powers that are acquired through long practice of the Yoga. These powers are not supernatural; on the contrary, they are, in nature, governed by natural laws, though higher, and are therefore universal. When these laws are understood, that which is ordinarily called miraculous by ignorant people, appears to be the natural result of finer forces working on a higher plane. There is no such thing as the absolutely supernatural. If a person's conception of nature be very limited, that which exists beyond that limit will seem to him supernatural, while to another, whose idea of nature is broader, the same thing will appear perfectly natural; therefore, that miracle or that particular act which is classed as a miracle by a Christian, can be explained by a Yogi as the result of higher or finer forces of nature. Why? Because his conception of nature is much wider than that of an ordinary man. We must not forget that nature is infinite, and that there are circles within circles, grades beyond grades, planes after planes, arranged in infinite succession; and the desire of a Yogi is to learn all the laws which govern these various planes, and to study every manifestation of force, whether fine or gross. His mind is not satisfied with the knowledge of one particular plane of existence; his aim is to comprehend the whole of nature.

Those who have read the gospel of Buddha, by Paul Carus, will remember that, five hundred years before the birth to Jesus the Christ, Sariputta, Buddha s illustrious disciple, walked on the surface of the water across a mighty river, named Shravasti. A similar account of crossing a wide river by walking on the water, we find in the life of Padmapada, the disciple of Sankaracharya, the best exponent of the Vedanta philosophy, who lived about A.D. 600. Krishna, the Hindu Christ, whose other name is Lord of the Yogis, raised the dead nearly fourteen hundred years before the advent of Christ. The transfiguration of Krishna is likewise most beautifully described in the tenth and eleventh chapters of the *Song Celestial,* and, like Christ, he also fed a vast multitude of people with a small quantity of food.

There are other instances of similar powers shown by great Yogis who came later; and these accounts are, in every way, as historical and as authentic as those of Jesus the Christ. Thus, we see that all the miracles performed by Jesus are to be found as well in the lives of Hindu Yogis who lived both before and after Him.

So long as an event is isolated, it appears supernatural and miraculous, but, if we see the same thing happening elsewhere under similar conditions, it assumes the aspect of a natural occurrence, governed by natural law, and then comes a proper solution of the mystery as well as the rational explanation of that which was called a miracle. It is in this that the science of Yoga renders special service to the world, for more than any science it helps to reveal the secrets of nature and to explain the causes of all miraculous deeds. A true Yogi goes to the source of all powers and all forces, studies the laws behind them, and learns the method of controlling them. He knows that the various forces of nature are but expressions of one universal, living, intelligent energy, which is called in Sanskrit *prana*. He sees that all the forces of physical nature, like heat, gravitation, electricity, as also all mental forces, such as mind, intellect, thought, are nothing but the manifestations of that one living self-existent force, the *prana*. This intelligent energy projects from its bosom innumerable suns, moons, stars, and planets into physical space. It has hurled this earth from the molten furnace of the sun, it has cooled it, bathed it in air and water, and clothed it with vegetable and animal life; it wings the atmosphere with clouds and spans the planes with rivers, it takes a fine minute substance and transforms it into something huge and gross; it moves the body, gives life and motion to every atom and molecule, and, at the same time, manifests itself as thought and intellect.

Why should it be impossible for one who has realized his oneness with this fountain-head of all power, who has learned the method of controlling all phenomena by comprehending the laws which govern them, and who has become the master of the world as was Jesus the Christ, to perform simple phenomena like walking on the sea, turning water into wine, or raising the dead? According to a true Yogi, these acts of Jesus the Christ were only a few expressions of the Yoga powers,

which have been exercised over again by the Yogis in India. Thus, we understand that Christ was one of these great Yogis born in a Semitic family.

Jesus was a great Yogi, because He realized the transitory and ephemeral nature of the phenomenal world, and, discriminating the real from the unreal, renounced all desire for worldly pleasures and bodily comforts. Like a great Yogi He lived a life of seclusion, cutting off all connections with earthly friends and relatives, and having neither home nor possessions of His own.

Jesus the Christ was a great Karma Yogi, because He never worked for results.; He had neither desire for name nor ambition for fame or for earthly prosperity. His works were a free offering to the world. He laboured for others, devoted His whole life to help others, and in the end died for others. Being unattached to the fruits of his actions, he worked incessantly for the good of His fellow-men, directing them to the path of righteousness and spiritual realization through unselfish works. He understood the law of action and reaction, which is the fundamental principle of the Karma Yoga, and it was for this reason•He declared: 'Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.'

Jesus of Nazareth proved Himself to be a great Bhakti Yogi, a true lover of God, by his unswerving devotion and His whole-hearted love for the Heavenly Father. His unceasing prayers, incessant supplications, constant meditation, and unflinching self-resignation to the will of the Almighty made Him shine like a glorious morning-star in the horizon of love and devotion of a true Bhakti Yogi. Christ showed ,wonderful self-control and mastery over His mind throughout the trials and sufferings which were upon Him. His sorrow, agony, and self-surrender at the time of His death as well as before His crucifixion, are conclusive proofs that He was a human being with those divine qualities which adorn the soul of a true Bhakti Yogi. It is true that His soul laboured for a while under the heavy burden of His trials and sufferings,; it is also true that He felt that His pain was becoming well-nigh unbearable, when He cried aloud three times, praying to the Lord: 'O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me.' But He found neither peace nor consolation until He could absolutely resign His will

to that of the Father and could say from the bottom of His heart, 'Thy will be done'. The complete self-surrender and absolute self-resignation are the principal virtues of Bhakti Yoga, and as Christ possessed these to perfection up to the last moment of His life, He was a true Bhakti Yogi.

Like the great Raja Yogis in India, Jesus knew the secret of separating His soul from His physical shell, and He showed this at the time of his death, while His body was suffering from extreme pain, by saying, 'Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.' It is quite an unusual event to see one imploring forgiveness for his persecutors, while dying on the cross, but from a Yogi's point of view it is both possible and natural. Ramakrishna, the greatest Yogi of the nineteenth century, whose life and sayings have been written by Max Müller, was once asked, 'How could Jesus pray for His persecutors, when He was in agony on the cross?' Ramakrishna answered by an ilustration: 'When the shell of an ordinary green cocoanut is pierced through, the nail enters the kernel of the nut too. But in the case of the dry nut the kernel becomes separate from the shell, and so when the shell is pierced, the kernel is not touched. Jesus was like the dry nut, i.e. His inner soul was separate from His physical shell, and consequently, the sufferings of the body did not affect him.'[1] Therefore, He could pray for the forgiveness of His persecutors even when His body was suffering; and all true Yogis are able to do the same. There have been many instances of Yogis whose bodies have been cut into pieces, but their souls never for a moment lost that peace and equanimity which enabled Jesus to forgive and bless His persecutors. By this, Christ proved that, like other Yogis, His soul was completely emancipated from the bondage of the body and of the feelings. Therefore Christ was a Yogi.

Through the path of devotion and love, Jesus attained to the realization of the oneness of the individual soul with the Father or the universal Spirit, which is the ideal of a Jnana Yogi as well as the ultimate goal of all religions. A Jnana Yogi says: 'I am He'; 'I am Brahman'; 'I am the absolute Truth'; 'I am one with the supreme Deity'. By good works, devotion,

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[1] Prof. F. Max Müller: *The Life and Sayings of Ramakrishna*, p. 111.

love, concentration, contemplation, long fasting, and prayer, Jesus the Christ realized that His soul was one with God; therefore, He may be said to have attained the ideal of Jnana Yoga.

Like Krishna, Buddha, and all other great Yogis of India, Jesus healed the sick, opened the eyes of the blind, made the lame walk, and read the secret thoughts of His disciples. He knew exactly what Judas and Peter were going to do, but there was nothing supernatural in any of His actions; there was nothing that cannot be done over and over again by a true Yogi, and there was nothing in His life that cannot be explained rationally by the science of Yoga and the philosophy of Vedanta. Without the help of this science and this philosophy, Jesus the Christ cannot be fully understood and appreciated. By studying His character, on the other hand, in the light of the Vedanta philosophy, we shall be able not only to understand Him better, but to have a larger appreciation of His true glory.

Material science now scoffs at His miracles, but they are corroborated by the science of Yoga, and confirmed by the deeds of the great Yogis of India. No devout Christian need for a moment fear that physical science and can ever undermine the work of Jesus, so long as the science of Yoga is there to sustain all that He did. Let him study the character of Jesus through the philosophy of Vedanta, and I am sure that he will understand Him better and be a truer Christian, a more genuine disciple of the Son of Man than ever before. Let him follow the teachings of Yoga and he will some day become perfect like Christ.

It is through the teachings of the Vedanta that the Hindus have learned how to glorify the character of Jesus; so also it is through Vedanta that a Christian will learn to adore the great Yogis like Krishna, Buddha, Ramakrishna, and others. It is through the Vedanta that a Christian will be able to see how Divinity dwells in all animate and inanimate objects, and thus, comprehending the true relation of the individual soul to the supreme Spirit, will be able to say with the great Yogi Jesus the Christ: 'I and my Father are one', and reach salvation in this life.

YOGA PSYCHOLOGY

PREFACE

The word 'Yoga' means the communion of the petty self with the higher universal Self, and 'psychology' is the science of the *psyche* or soul. Therefore, Yoga psychology signifies the science of unification of the lower self with the higher one, the union of the *jivatman* with the *Paramatman,* so to speak. The function of the psychology of Yoga is to prepare the mind, so as to catch a glimse of the resplendent *Atman,* or to appreciate the real status and undying glory of the Absolute. The Yoga psychology of Patanjali discloses the secret of bringing under control the distracted modifications (*vrittis*) of the mind, and thus, helps the aspirant to concentrate and meditate upon the transcendental *Atman,* which is the fountain-head of knowledge, intelligence, and bliss.

Patanjali's Yoga aphorisms are called the Indian practical psychology, as they not only enunciate the laws and principles of controlling the mind, but also teach how to translate them into action. And so it is a perfect psychology as well as science. The *Atman* is the prime object of man's spiritual endeavour, and the Yoga system teaches how to reduce the mind substance into its simplest form, by the method of suppression (*nirodha*), which means to reduce the mind into consciousness (*chaitanya*). In fact, Patanjali and the commentator Vyasa have used the word *'nirodha'* (suppression) in the sense of transformation i.e. transformation of the mind into consciousness. Swami Vivekananda, Swami Abhedananda, Sri Aurobindo and others are of opinion that we cannot kill the mind, but we can transform it. We can transform the mind into its own nature, which is the pure consciousness. Swami Abhedananda has clearly stated it in his *Doctrine of Karma* (Cf. Appendix II). But the question is as to how to suppress (in the word of the *Yogasutra*) the mad rush of the mind or the mental modifications. Patanjali has said that the mind can be restrained by practice and renunciation (*abhyasa* and *vairagya*). The practice (*abhyasa*) means the repeated and sustained efforts (*yama*) for securing the state of steadiness and calmness, and when steadiness is once attained, the mind goes back to its pure causal state, and is transformed

into pure consciousness. Ramakrishna Paramahamsa has said that the Brahman is beyond the limits of mind and intellect, but is reached by the pure mind (*"kintu shuddha maner gochara"*). Now, the mind is known by its positive and negative states of modifications (*vrittis*) which are known as *samkalpa* and *vikalpa*. When these *vrittis, samkalpa* and *vikalpa* are stilled or silenced, the mind shines in its own glory i.e. shines as the pure consciousness, says Vedanta.

It is a fact that we in our individual life create everything through the mind. We desire to create, and that desire takes the form of an impression (*samskara*) which instigates the mind to act or to create, and by this process of creation, we mitigate all our cravings. Similarly, the cosmic mind, which is the sum total of all the individual minds and is known as *Isvara, Avyakta,* etc. creates the world-appearance. Now, according to the strict logic of the Advaita Vedanta, *Isvara* or *Avyakta* does not create the universe, as will-to-create (*sisriksha*) remains latent or unmanifested in *Isvara,* and it is the *Hiranyagarbha-Isvara* or the *Hiranyagarbha-Brahman* that creates the world-appearance. This *Hiranyagarbha-Brahman* is known in the *Puranas* as Brahma, the Creator. The cosmic mind is generally known as the *Prakriti,* and in her womb the seed of creation or projection remains as unmanifested, and when she is intensified or rather motivated by the will-to-create, she begins to create the manifold universe. This *Prakriti* or *Visva-Prakriti* is the *Hiranyagarbha-Brahman* of Vedanta. The Advaita Vedanta has conceived two qualities-cum-adjects of determinateness and indeterminateness (*sagunatva* and *nirgunatva*), and it says that the Brahman, which assumes the state of the fourth principle and transcends the *maya,* is known as the indeterminate (*nirguna*) Brahman, and the determinate (*saguna*) Brahman is the assuming third principle, *Isvara* or *Avyakta* as well as the assuming second principle, *Hiranyagarbha.* Strictly speaking, the dual phase of the Brahman goes against the famous dictum of the non-dualistic Vedanta: *'neha nanasti kinchana, * * ekamevadvitiyam'* (नेह नानास्ति किञ्चन, * * एकमेवाद्वितीयम्) i.e. there exists only the transcendental Essence which is one without the second. So the Absolute must be the one immutable (*kutastha*) self-shining (*svayamjyoti*) Brahman. Vedanta says that it is

maya that makes the undivided unique Brahman immanent and transcendent,—determinate and indeterminate, as the moon appears in the current of the river as dual (*dvi-chandravat*). In truth, the Brahman is one and transcending, but is appears as the ground and the cause of the changing world-appearance, coming in contact with the inscrutable *maya* or nescience.

But the theory as advanced by the non-dualistic school of Vedanta, and the theory of the *Yogadarshana* of Patanjali as well as that of the *Sankhya* of Kapila are quite different. And so Sankara brands the Sankhyians and Yogins as dualists in his commentary on the *Brahmasutra*, II.1.3. He has said: *'dvaitino hi te sankhya-yogascha natmaikattva-darshinah'*: (द्वैतिनो हि ते सांख्या योगाश्च नात्मैकत्वदर्शिनः) i.e. as the upholders of the *Sankhya* and *Yogadarshana* are not the believers in the non-dualistic *Atman* or Brahman, they are known as dualists. The contention of the Advaita Vedantists is that, though *samapatti* or *samadhi* may be attained by the absolute suppression and restraint of the modifications (*vrittis*) of the mind substance, yet nescience is not altogether destroyed by the process of suppression, but it exists in seed or causal form. So the upholders of the non-dualistic Vedanta, including Sankara, have clearly explained that *mukti* or knowledge of the Brahman is attained through deep meditation upon the *mahavakyas* of the *Upanishad*: *'tattva-jnanam tu vedanta-vakyebhya eva bhavati'*,—*'navedavin-manute tam vrihantam'*, *'tam tvaupanishadam purusham pricchami'* (तत्त्वज्ञानं तु वेदान्तवाक्येभ्य एव भवति'—'नावेदविन्मनुते तं बृहन्तम्', 'तं त्वौपनिषदं पुरुषं पृच्छामि'), and for this reason, Sankara has refuted the theories of the Naiyayikas and Mimansakas, as well as those of the upholders of the *Sankhya* and *Yogadarshana* applying the merit of the *Upanisadic* dictum: *'etena sankhya-smriti-pratyakhyanena yoga-smritirapi pratyakhyata drashtavyetyati-dishati'* (एतेन सांख्यस्मृतिप्रत्याख्यानेन योगस्मृतिरपि प्रत्याख्याता द्रष्टव्येत्यतिदिशति)।

However, through the sincere practice of the Yoga, an aspirant after spiritual knowledge can control the vibrations of his or her mind substance, and can, therefore, concentrate on his or her chosen ideal and bring about perfect equilibrium between the matter and the spirit, between the phenomena and the noumena, that enables him or her to transform the mental

stuff into the resplendent higher consciousness. This Yoga is one of the disciplined methods of attaining spiritual illumination. The vedantic method is a different one. So, when one follows the prescribed path of the Raja Yoga, he or she must not compare it with that of the Advaita Vedanta, as there are some fundamental differences between the two paths or methods. The practice of Yoga is useful and beneficial to the man or the woman, who likes it and thinks it suitable for him or her. Ramakrishna Paramahamsa has said that as one kind of food does not suit all the children of a family, so a particular discipline or method cannot suit all kinds of aspirant. So, while dealing with the practice of Yoga, it should be judged purely from the yogic standpoint, and not from that of *bhakti* or *jnana*.

'Yoga', says Swami Abhedananda, in his *How to be a Yogi*, 'is a Sanskrit word commonly used to signify the practical side of religion; and the first concern of the training for which it stands, is to enforce proper obedience to the laws of our moral and physical nature upon which depend the attainments of perfect health and moral and spiritual perfection'. There the Swami has enunciated eleven kinds of definition in favour of the word Yoga, and has divided it for the sincere students of Yoga into three main classes: first, those who are born Yogis; second, those who are born as half-awakened souls; and third, all those unawakened souls, who begin their search after truth and the practice of Yoga for the first time in their life. But the aim and object of all kinds of aspirant are to attain a complete balance of the mind, and to use the purified mind as the means for the attainment of supra-mental consciousness.

The present volume is a compilation of the sixteen serial lectures on the *Practical Psychology* or the *Yoga Psychology*, delivered by Swami Abhedananda before a talented audience in America, in 1924. Fifteen of the lectures were systematically delivered in fifteen consecutive weeks, and as such this book is divided into fifteen chapters covering the main theme. Another lecture on *Ego and Egoism*, delivered separately on some other occasion, has been appended to this volume, it being a topic of allied nature. It forms the last or the sixteenth chapter of the book.

The lectures have been edited with care, keeping intact

the diction and the manner of presentation by Swami Abhedananda. Some of the footnotes with the glossaries of Vyasa and Vachaspati Mishra have been added to make the subject matter explicit.

SWAMI PRAJNANANANDA

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CHAPTER I

STEPS TO ATTAIN YOGA

There are four kinds of Yoga, and they are: Raja-Yoga, Jnana-Yoga, Bhakti-Yoga and Karma-Yoga. All these are the means to attain superconscious knowledge or Godconsciousness. Raja-Yoga is said to be the best means, or it is the royal road to Godconsciousness. It is divided into eight steps and those are called in Sanskrit: *yama, niyama, asana, pranayama, pratyahara, dharana, dhyana,* and *samadhi.*[1] All these different steps are described in the *Patanjala-darsana,* as the means to attain transcendental knowledge or Godconsciousness.

The first step, *yama* includes non-killing, truthfulness, non-stealing, continence, and non-receiving of gifts: *'ahimsa-satyas-teya-brahmacharyaparigraha yamah.'*[2] Then comes *niyama* comprising of cleanliness, contentment, mortification, study and self-surrender to God: *'saucha-santosha-tapah-svadhyayeshvara-pranidhanani niyamah'.*[3] Then comes *asana* or sitting posture. Patanjali says: *'sthirasukhamasanam'.*[4] There are various kinds of sitting postures (*asanas*), and they are the means to get control over the breath (vital air or *prana-vayu*). Patanjali says: *'tasmin sati svasa-prasvasayorgativicchedah pranayamah'.*[5] *Pratyahara* is making the mind introspective: *'sva-vishaya-sam-prayoge chittasya svarupanukara ivendriyanam pratyaharah.*[6] Then comes *dharana* which means concentration. It is the process of concentrating the divergent modifications of the mind on to a point: *'desavandhaschittasya dharana'.*[7] Next

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1 यमनियमासनप्राणायामप्रत्याहारधारणाध्यानसमाधयोऽष्टावङ्गानि ॥ २।२९ ।

2 अहिंसासत्यास्तेयब्रह्मचर्यापरिग्रहा यमाः ॥ २।३० ।

3 शौच-सन्तोष-तपः-स्वाध्यायेश्वरप्रणिधाणानि नियमाः ॥ २।३२ ।

4 स्थिरसुखमासनम् ॥ २।४६ ।

5 तस्मिन् सति श्वासप्रश्वासयोर्गतिविच्छेदः प्राणायामः । २।४९ ।

6 स्वविषयासम्प्रयोगे चित्तस्य स्वरूपानुकार इवेन्द्रियाणां प्रत्याहारः । २।५४ ।

7 देशबन्धश्चित्तस्य धारणा । ३।१ । Vachaspati Misra says: 'नाभिचक्रे',

comes *dhyana* or meditation: *'tatra pratyayaikatanata dhyanam'*.[8] Then comes *samadhi* or superconscious state of the mind which is known as Godconsciousness. Patanjali says: *'tadevartha-matra-nirbhasam svarupa-sunyamiva samadhih'*.[9]

When you study these steps of the Yoga, try to practise them to the best of your ability. You will find that the first two steps, *yama* and *niyama,* include all the moral teachings that are given in all the scriptures of the world. All that is regarded as the commandment of God, is included in these two steps.

Let me first discuss *yama* or restraint, such as non-killing. Non-killing does not mean merely abstinence from killing animals or human beings, but also refraining from injuring others, whether human beings or lower animals, either by word, thought, or deed. As you go on with the study of the *Patanjalasutra,* you will find that very particular and strong emphasis is laid on this item. We must not injure anyone in thought, word, and deed. What will happen, if one is well-established in non-killing, in thought, word and deed ? Then he conquers all enemies. He radiates peace and love around him. He takes away all the feelings of self-defence from his presence. Anyone who comes in his presence, even a lower animal, or a bird, would not get frightened. Generally the birds and all the lower animals get frightened, because they feel the vibration of our minds tinged with the idea of killing. If we have the desire to shoot them, they feel the vibration of that desire and get frightened and try to run away for self-defence. When one goes into a deep forest, where no human being had been before, the animals come close to see the person. They would not be frightened. That is a psychological effect. But as soon as one is injured, they would not come near, they would be running away.

हृदयपुण्डरीके, मुर्द्धिज्योतिषि, नासिकाग्रे, जिह्वाग्रे, इत्येवमादिषु देशेषु, बाह्ये वा विषये चित्तस्य वृत्तिमात्रेण बन्ध इति धारणा'।

[8] तत्र प्रत्ययैकतानता ध्यानम्। ३।२।

[9] तदेवार्थमात्रनिर्भासं स्वरुपशून्यमिव समाधिः। ३।३। The commentation says:

'ध्यानमेव ध्येयाकारनिर्भासं प्रत्ययात्मकेन स्वरूपेण शून्यमिव यदा भवति ध्येयस्वभावावेशात् तदा समाधिरित्युच्यते'।

When I was in India, I was at the foot of the great mountain range, the Himalayas, on the banks of the Ganges. There were all kinds of fish in the Ganges, and its water was so pure and so clear at places that you could see to the bottom at a great depth, and you could see those large fishes moving about. Just as you would look through the glass-bottom boats in the Catalina Islands, you could see from the surface. I was living there in a hut as a *Sannyasin,* one who had renounced everything. We used to get one meal in twenty-four hours, and that consisted of a few pieces of unleavened bread. We got it in a napkin, and sat on a stone jutting out from water near the shore, and another stone nearby was to serve as the table. I used to hold pieces of bread above the water, and the fish would come and jump and snatch them out of my fingers. Do you know why? Because, nobody there was allowed to kill any fish, and the fish were never molested. Fishing was not allowed there, and the fish became so fearless that they would come close and take food out of the hands of the travellers or of anyone. They had no fear of the people. Those who go to the North Pole, find that the wild polar bears and seals do not know what fright is until one of them is shot, and then, as soon as they hear the steps of human beings, they run away. That is the psychological effect. So, anyone who has conquered the feeling of injuring others, has conquered fear from either animals or other human beings in his presence. That is the reason why, in the presence of Christ and the Yogis, the sheep and the tigers are painted as living peacefully together. Probably you never understand how it is possible. In Raja Yoga that is explained. That is the psychological effect of the conquering the propensity of injuring others in thought, word, or deed. We must not disturb, or in any way do harm to anybody by words, or by thoughts, or by deeds. If anyone send you evil thoughts, instead of returning evil for evil, send him good thoughts in return, and then you will conquer the enemy. A great many people are afraid that somebody might send them some malicious thoughts, or some sort of malicious (animal) magnetism as some people say, may be directed towards them by some other persons who would try to injure them. All these can easily be controlled and conquered by holding ourselves positively strong and sending out good thoughts towards them

all. They cannot affect our minds. In that way we can protect ourselves. So, that is a good thing to learn and to practise, because we then avoid a great many dangers, which otherwise would do us harm.

Truthfulness is a virtue, but it is very hard to practise under the present condition of our social development, where commercialism is the goal of civilization, where it is the foundation of civilization. Truthfulness is put aside as the basis of failure in business. If you are truthful, you cannot sell anything, and cannot go into any business. But here we are not talking about those absorbed in commercialism. We are stating the ideals of a Yogi. These ideals are very high. We must strive our best to reach those ideals, and drag them down to our plane of consciousness or existence. We should try to be truthful whenever we are not forced into the opposite feeling, and under all other circumstances, where it would not do us a great deal of injury.

Non-stealing is a great virtue. We must not claim anything that does not belong to us. In the first place, we will remember that the feeling of possession arises from a strong attachment to our petty animal self. First of all, that attachment is to the physical body, and then to anything that is related to the physical body. We want to own and possess things. That feeling is at the foundation of stealing, robbery, and everything of the sort. When we cannot get the things by fair means, and honest methods, we try to possess them anyhow and overlook the rights of others. And when we overlook and transgress the rights of others, we psychologize in our own minds. We think, that fellow has no right to take so much, I might have the same thing. That is the reasoning of burglars and some of the desperadoes. But that is all due to the extreme attachment to the lower self. We must remember that all ethics, all ethical teachings, moral ideas, moral laws, and spiritual laws are for curbing the attachment to the lower self. It is just the opposite path. Our animal nature has a lowering tendency towards the fulfilment of animal desires those are based upon a strong attachement to the lower self. All crimes come into being from that foundation. Everything that is wrong proceeds from that. So, what will one have to do who wishes to be spiritual, moral, or ethical ? He will have to just curb his

desires. All commandments in the scriptures have that one ideal. They say: do not be selfish, be unselfish. That is the fundamental principle. So, when a person lives in the world in an ordinary way, without observing the moral and spiritual laws, he is attached to the lower self. If he recognizes that attachment as a bondage, he would try to curb and weaken it, and the more he weakens that attachment, the higher he rises on the spiritual plane. Think of the great statement which Christ made. Christ said: 'whatever is mine, O Lord, is thine; whatever is thine is mine'. Think of that divine statement. That is a different feeling altogether. That is surrendering everything to God, without holding any claim of possession to anything on this earth. How many people can do that? Only a few, and they are the highest. We hold Christ as the great moral as well as a great spiritual teacher, because he practised that ideal and set an example. So did the other great teachers Buddha, Krishna, and Ramakrishna. They all set that example, and, therefore, they are recognized as the great leaders of mankind. They are called the saviours of humanity. There is no other reason why they should be called saviours. So, when you study these things carefully and understand the principle, the whole scriptures will be an open book to you. Everything that is described here, has a right foundation, which we do not understand unless we study the practical psychology or the Raja Yoga.

Continence is the next virtue. We must not waste our energy, which is dissipated in most cases by men and women who do not understand the laws of life.

Non-receiving of any gifts is also a virtue. Here the gifts, of course, do not include those that are given by friends or relatives through love, but only such gifts as to obligate and bind us, because there is the motive of getting better things in return. That is a bondage. If anybody gives you anything with a string to it and expects something more from you, you should better not accept it, because it is a bondage. Your mind is then under obligation. But, if anything comes to you as a free offering, that is not regarded as a gift and in ordinary sense it is an offering of love.

The next virtue is cleanliness. It does not mean only external cleanliness, but refers also to internal cleanliness. A

great many people do not seem to consider internal cleanliness necessary. You will notice that many suffer from all kinds of trouble—bad odour in the mouth and so on, because of the clogging of their internal organs. Those organs should be cleansed properly. You have heard of this practical treatment which is now very common. It is called 'irrigation'. That was first started by the Hatha Yogis in India centuries before Christ. Now it is regarded as the best method for internal cleanliness, and it is advocated to show by all the medical practitioners. That is only an example how internal cleanliness should be observed. So, cleanliness is both external and internal and also mental. We must purge out all such thoughts and ideas from our mind, which are extremely animal and selfish, which do harm to others and which make us disregard the rights of other people.

Contentment is another virtue. It is the opposite of ambition. If we are constantly ambitious in trying to get something better and higher all the time, and hanker after more and more possession, more glory, and so on, then we will not have any peace. The real contentment comes to one who understands the transitoriness of all phenomenal objects. All worldly objects are contingent and perishable. They last only for a short time. They do not practically enrich our soul, but are objects of attraction only for the time being. A person, who has contentment, can give his whole heart and soul to God in peace, while those who are slaves of ambition, are not able to think of their absolute Being in peace and in its true glory.

Mortification refers to such things as fasting and curbing physical demands, the demands of the body. If we allow the body to become unruly and let the demands of the body grow stronger and stronger, and try to gratify those demands, then we become slaves to the physical body. We must remember that our mind is the master of the body, and we can prove that to ourselves by taking such steps as would be absolutely convincing. When I had been travelling in India, long before I came to the West, I used to walk barefooted and go about with one piece of blanket as my bedding and bed, and slept anywhere when night fell, and wandered from place to place, simply to gain mastery of the mind and body. Food was just one meal in twenty-four hours, as I have already stated, compris-

ing a few pieces of unleavened bread and sometimes some vegetables. But, by doing that, what did I gain ? I learnt that the mind is the master, and the body is the slave of the mind. Everyone of you ought to practise something like that, which would not be injurious to your health, to convince your mind that you are the master when the body is the slave, and not that you are the slave of the body. When you think that way and prove to yourself that your body will do everything under the command of your will, you will gain mastery over the body. Of course, do not go to extremes, but take the middle course, because every organ has its limitation. The body has its limitation, and your will-power has its limitation too, because you are on the relative plane. You cannot be infinite in power under the present conditions. But you have unlimited opportunities through which you can prove to yourself that your mind is the master of the body. Mortification of the right kind is helpful. We have seen fanatic people in India, who lie on beds of spikes driven through a plank with all the sharp points on the top. There one sits comfortably and lies down. Such a one has conquered the feeling of touch. But that kind of the mortification is extreme, it is not desirable. It is sure that he has at least proved the truth that the body is our slave and we can make it do anything we want, of course, under the limitations of the relative world.

Then comes study. Study such books that would help you to remember the transitoriness of all phenomena and the reality of the absolute Truth which does not change. Sincere study will remind the changeable nature of the universe. Such study is beneficial to our spiritual progress. All other studies are more or less recreation, as they do not help us in restoring our spiritual consciousness.

Self-surrender to God is the last of the second step. We should learn to surrender our individual will to the will of the Infinite. The infinite will is working in the universe, and our individual will is like a small ray of that universal will-power. The sun's rays are going all over in the infinite space, and one or two come to our little room which we call our little body. If we separate our individual will from the infinite will, we become weak. But, when we commune with the infinite will, our will becomes more powerful, and then we can achieve

better results from our efforts than what we can do otherwise. Therefore, all the scriptures and all the great teachers in the world have advocated to surrender of our little self, which is only a reflection of the supreme Self, which is omnipotent and omniscient.

Next comes *asana* or different postures of the body. These are not given so much importance in the Raja Yoga, but they have been discussed elaborately in the Hatha Yoga. I have discussed the method of the Hatha Yoga in my book, '*How to Be a Yogi*'. There you will find eighty-four postures of sitting as means to the practice of Yoga. Some of them are beneficial and helpful in overcoming certain defects in the physical body. Some of them would appear to us like the postures of an acrobat, but those are extremes. So they are not necessary. The idea of different postures of the body is to gain control over the body. Some people cannot sit still. But, when one will try to concentrate and to meditate, he must keep the body still. If he goes on rocking and tries to meditate, he cannot do it very well, because a portion of his mind has some activity in connection with that rocking state of the physical body. The mind really governs the physical body. All activities first originate in the mind. Then they become subconscious and automatic, but, in reality, they are part of the activity of the mind. Therefore, it is regarded as one of the obstacles. To conquer that, a straight position is necessary in which you can sit for some time without feeling pain or ache in any part of your body. That is the desirable position, keeping the spine free and upright, without leaning against anything. Then, all the nerve centres in the spine and the nerve currents that are flowing up and down, from the seat to the brain and from the brain to the seat, will have a free motion without any interruption. That is the reason why they advocate that particular posture of the body is the best at the time of concentration and meditation.

Then comes the method of *pranayama*. It is the science of breathing. Breathing has a great deal to do with our mental changes and physical conditions, and all those conditions should be studied. We should learn how to control and regulate our breath, how to take more oxygen into the system and to eliminate all the impurities in the form of carbonic

acid gas, when we exhale during our breath. All these we learn gradually and then practise.

Pranayama does not mean only control of physical breath, but also control of psychic *prana*. Now, what do we mean by *prana*? *Prana* is the motive force, the life-force, and also the cosmic life-principle. It is working in the universe, everywhere and all the time. It is the cause of all other expressions of physical, mental, and intellectual forces within us. The Hatha-Yogi tries to gain mastery over them and this mastery brings most wonderful results in him. The derivative form of *pranayama* is *prana* and *ayama*. The word *prana* signifies 'the life-force' and *ayama* means 'to control'. To get control over the breath is the aim of *pranayama*. But there are different methods by which this control can be gained. The physical method is the science of breathing. The mental or psychological method is concentration. When the mind is absolutely under control, the breath stops. When our mind is perfectly concentrated, we do not really breathe. Then the breath becomes internal, without showing any sign of external breathing. All those methods are related to the mental conditions and to the expression of the nervous energy.

Then comes *pratyahara*, or making the mind introspective. That is a very important subject. It is a psychological method of directing the mind towards one object. Ordinarily the mind is scattered and runs towards all the objects of senses in different directions. One cannot gain concentration until these scattered energies of the mind substance are brought into focus. That can be done gradually and not all of a sudden. If we try to concentrate our mind upon one object, our mind will generally run away. If there be any noise, we forget our object of concentration. When a great noise is going on, we are not able to keep our mind on the subject, as it is distracted by the noise. When we are in a perfectly concentrated state of mind, we would not hear any external noise. There may be a clock in your room or in the hall of your apartment, and the clock may be ticking very loudly, but, if you are absorbed in any interesting subject, you do not hear the ticking of the clock. The physiological conditions are all present, the vibrations of air are entering into your ears, the molecular changes are produced in the nerves, the auditory nerves carry

those changes to the brain-cells, and there the molecular changes take place, but your mind is focussed on a chapter of the book, and that is the reason you do not hear the sound. The physiological conditions are all fulfilled, but physiology does not explain everything. The mental side is left out. Your attention must come in touch with the particular organ in order to sense that sound. You have withdrawn your mind unconsciously. If you can do it unconsciously, why can you not do it consciously? You can withdraw your mind from all kinds of noise. Street cars may be running all around, but you do not hear any sound. What happens when you sleep in a room near the corner where the street cars are passing? You do not hear the noise. The physiological conditions of perception of sound are fulfilled, but your mind shuts it off. If that is possible, why is it not possible for you to shut off consciously any sound and get your full mind on something that you want to study? That is easy. So you cannot say that you cannot practise concentration, it is not for you. The power is there, only you do not make any effort. That shows you do not sincerely want it. You do not have to gain that from outside, it is in yourself. It requires a little practice, and when you do that or direct, you will be a great master and will hold your mind on one subject, no matter if everything around you goes wrong or in another direction. Great concentration is displayed by those who play chess. They do not think of anything else; their mind is so absorbed in the movement of the pawns and the pieces. Once it happened in India that a man was playing chess, deeply absorbed, and his own son was bitten by a snake. The mother of the boy came with great excitement and asked the father what she could do, for the boy was bitten by snake and he was screaming. The man did not hear at first as he was deeply absorbed in the play. Suddenly he woke up and said: 'What! The boy is bitten by a snake! Whose snake was it?' That was the answer, and he went on playing the game. That may be an extreme case, but, if you are deeply interested in a thing, you do not know what may transpire. The power of concentration may be utilized for better effect, and that effect is the realization of the absolute Truth. If you can fix your mind upon the highest Truth, even if the whole world is taken away from under your feet, you would not know it, and you

would not be a loser either, because you would gain the whole truth and would rise above all the limitations of this finite world.

Therefore, concentration is necessary, and the first step towards concentration is to gather the mental energies that are scattered in all directions. And you are to do it gradually. First. you fix your mind on one subjeit. If your mind is scattered, it would run away. You bring the mind back to the subject. It will run away again. Bring it back again. It will go in another direction. Let it go, and bring it back again. That you will have to practise many times before you gain the power of concentration. Gathering the mental energy which is scattered, and focusing it in one direction, are the steps to concentration.

When you can hold your mind on one subject, irrespective of all the difficulties and disturbances around, and can think about it deeply, then your mind is concentrated. And if that concentration lasts for a certain length of time and your mind flows towards that object in an unbroken current, just as when you pour oil from one vessel into another, the stream of oil does not break, it is called meditation. Meditation leads to the superconscious state. The superconscious state is that where we transcend the realm of the finite world, where time and space vanish and we go beyond thought. There is the realm where all questions are answered. There we go to the foundation of existence. And there is the goal of the Raja Yogi. The Raja Yogi does not stop until the highest goal is reached. There may be a great many side tracks, and a great many psychic powers may come, but åll those are described in the Raja Yoga as obstacles to the path of the highest realization of superconsciousness. Otherwise, they are not obstacles. They are rather attractions. If a person, who is not very anxious or desirous of attaining to the highest goal, tries to practise, he will go up to a certain point and gain some of the powers. These powers would be fascinating, but that would be the end, and there would be nothing more. You will find in the third chapter of the aphorisms of Patanjali all the different powers are described. Sixty-eight *siddhis* are classified, and there are minor powers which also come. Those might be a great attrac-

tion to some. All these will come if you gain mastery over your mind.

We shall find that in the study of the Raja Yoga everything that is pertaining to the mind, or mind substance, is described and discussed there. The more we study it, the more we understand the wonderful powers that are latent in each one of us. The powers are latent in the depth of the mind and some of those powers are very wonderful. Take, for instance, the healing power. The healing power is a wonderful power. It is latent and is in our minds, because all minds are part of the cosmic mind, and the healing power is a part of the life-force. The life-force is always healing and recuperating. It wants to manifest and overcome all the obstacles. All diseases are dis-ease, i.e. an uneasy state of the mind first, and then of the body. Aches and pains in any part of the body might be called the screaming of the cells of those parts of the body, and that screaming of the cells can be heard by the mind and can be removed by physical methods or mental suggestions. That is the fundamental principle of all the practices of healing. Sometimes, physical methods can produce wonderful effects. At other times, suggestions might work wonderfully. But every soul possesses the healing power. That is the grand truth advocated in the Raja Yoga, that everybody is a healer. One is perhaps more advanced. In some, that healing power may be more expressed and more manifest than in others. There are Yogis who can heal simply instantaneously, without giving any suggestions just as Christ did. When Jesus said: 'Be thou whole' to a leper, the powers of his words were so strong, backed as they were by the concentrated life-frce of his individual mind, that they removed the obstacles instantaneously. Such things have happened, and there are many such instances. You have noticed, perhaps, during your lifetime, and you might have heard of some cases, where they have been able to cure instanteously. Of course, those who claim too much, find in the end that their claim is based upon almost nothing. They lose that power. Unless one can go to the fountain-head of all these powers and learn the practices by which one can draw these forces from the infinite source, one will not be able to retain that power for a long time. There have been many such cases. That Slater, for instance. He was a great healer at one time.

but he lost that power, and what became of him nobody knows. Perhaps, he wandered in the desert and died of starvation. There have been other cases where the great healers have lost their powers. You might call that healing power a faith. There are also faith-healers. Faith brings the power of the mind out. Faith is always constructive, while doubt is destructive. Faith strengthens. It is an affirmation. You say with full energy that it will be so, and it happens so. But, if you vacillate and doubt, you would not be able to reach the highest results.

The study of the Raja Yoga will reveal to us all the powers that are latent in our mind stuff and all the different methods that are given. Whether we practise them or not is not the point. The more we practise them, the better results we shall get. But the first thing is to form an ideal and try to reach that ideal slowly and gradually, without making a big jump. If we practise everyday a little and remember the ideal, we shall eventually master our mind. If the water be allowed to fall drop by drop on a piece of stone, in the course of time, there would be a big hole in that stone, just a drop of water, falling constantly, would cut out that stone. If we practise a little everyday, it would be like a drop of water thrown upon all the obstacles that are preventing us from reaching the highest goal. We shall be able to make a big hole there, and through that hole we shall find an opening and be able to see the infinite Truth in its light and glory and beauty, and then gradually we shall be able to go through that hole and enter into the realm of the transcendental Beauty, of the infinite existence, consciousness, and bliss. That is he ideal of the Raja Yoga.

CHAPTER II

OBSTACLES TO THE PRACTICE OF YOGA

We have already discussed the different steps in the Raja Yoga. which are eight in number. In trying to practise some of those steps, you will find that there may be some obstacles which you may have to overcome, and those obstacles are described in the Raja Yoga in aphorisms 30 and 31 of the first chapter. Here the aphorism 30 reads:

व्याधिस्त्यान-संशय-प्रमादालस्याविरतिभ्रान्तिदर्शनालब्धभूमिकत्वानवस्थितत्वानि चित्तविक्षेपास्तेऽन्तरायाः ।

'Disease, mental laziness, doubt, cessation of calmness, false perception, non-attaining of concentration, and falling away from this state when obtained, are the obstructing distractions'.

The disease of the body is described as one of the obstacles. When the body is suffering, we can neither fix our mind upon the abstract things, nor upon the highest, the absolute Being. Disease means *di-ease*, i.e., an uneasy state of the body, and the mental disease means an uneasy state of the mind. So, the body and the mind both must have easy and smooth vibrations. If there be any disturbance, physical or mental, we cannot easily concentrate our minds upon the highest. Therefore, it is regarded as an obstruction. First of all, we shall have to remove that disease and make ourselves free from all troubles. There are different methods, of course, for curing diseases, and there are also preventive methods. Prevention is better than curing the troubles. An ounce of prevention is better than tons of healing. We must remember that. So, if we can keep our body in good health and do not violate the hygienic and other laws which govern our physical life on this plane, then our body will be serviceable. The body is an instrument which we have manufactured, consciously or unconsciously, to gain certain results, and among those results the highest is the attainment of Godconsciousness. This instrument is the only one we have. This physical body is also the best instrument after all. Our nervous system, brain cells—all these must be in a healthy

condition. Right food, proper diet, moderation in eating and drinking, and recreation are considered very desirable.

You will find that these are discussed in one of the passages of the *Bhagavad Gita,* for instance, where Krishna is describing the different spiritual methods, by which the highest ideal of the Raja Yoga can be attained. He mentions that those who eat too much, drink too much, or sleep too much, and also those who have too much pleasure-seeking and amusement-seeking tendencies must curb those tendencies in order to gain the highest result. They must practise moderation. The middle course is the best course. Sometimes you spend in eating good food and taking good drinks in recreation, and so on, but do not indulge in them in excess. Regulation in all these must be observed. Do not go to the extreme.

So we must regard all kinds of physical ailments as obstacles. A preventive method is the best method. That is why the Raja Yoga advocates the prevention of all the troubles. Somewhere we read: 'This body is the boat which carries us to the other shore of the ocean of life. It must be taken care of.' We must not neglect our physical body, because it is an essential instrument and the best means to the end, and that end is the realization of the highest Truth. We must not forget this ideal.

Mental laziness is regarded as an obstacle. Sometimes you will find that in trying to concentrate your mind, you will feel lazy, that is, you cannot wake up. There is the feeling of tiredness and mental laziness. The mind would not work. That laziness is caused by various things, and various conditions. You must find out what conditions have brought about that laziness and must remember the cause behind. Then mental laziness will vanish. Sometimes too much eating will produce a feeling of weariness, and if you try to concentrate your mind after a heavy meal, you will find it very difficult. Therefore, you should let that meal be assimilated. After three or four hours, if you try, you might succeed. But mental laziness is a kind of weakness. When we have used up too much of our mental energy in certain directions, we have no power or control over our mind. Then the mind will go to sleep, and to arouse that mind it is necessary to practise certain methods which would be helpful.

Doubt is another obstacle. We must not doubt this science or the effect that will come to us in the future. For instance, if we continue to practise, we will get certain results, and those results will come to us, if we hold faith or be in a receptive attitude and not of doubt. So we must have faith ; we must have firm conviction that we are going to get this result. No matter what happens, we are not going to stop, and we are going to get the result. That kind of firm conviction is called by different names, 'faith', and so on, but the ideal is that we must have that firm conviction and faith in ourselves. That is the most important thing. We must have faith in ourselves before we can have faith in God. Faith in one's own self is the highest form of faith, and upon that can be built the faith in God. I do not mean blind faith, but faith that will harmonize with our knowledge. We all must know that such results are inevitable. Of course, at first, it might be difficult to get into that conviction, unless we get some glimpses ; and after a practice for a few days or a few weeks, we shall find that certain glimpses will come to us so that our mind will be ready to have that kind of conviction. Doubts will arise in the mind about the truth of this science of Yoga, however strong one's intellectual conviction may be, until certain experiences, whether psychic or some other kind of experiences come, such as hearing or seeing at a distance, in the form of clairvoyance or clairaudience, or something like a vision of some kind, or some premonition of something that would be convincing to the individual. What might be convincing to one, might not be convincing to another. Therefore, each one should have that particular experience that would bring that conviction and faith. These glimpses strengthen the mind and make the student persevere. Sometimes we would find that the mind would not work. It is not exactly mental laziness, but it is a kind of calmness, without any exertion, and that state is also regarded as an obstacle.

Cessation is also an obstacle to the path of Yoga. Sometimes there would be a little concentration and a little meditation, and then it will suddenly stop and we shall not be able to push any further. This cessation means an obstacle.

False perception is also an obstacle. Sometimes we shall have hallucinations and in order to make our mind free from all hallucinations and false perceptions, we must reason and

discriminate. Discrimination is a great virtue. We must learn to discriminate whether it is right or wrong, whether it is true or untrue, and when we discriminate in this manner, we eliminate the false perceptions and keep those that are helpful and true.

Non-attainment of concentration (*alabdhabhumikatva*) is a great obstacle. Sometimes, your mind will be much distracted, that is, you will not be able to bring the mental energy into focus. There might be too much activity and restlessness of the mind, and, if your mind is very restless. you cannot concentrate. There are certain conditions under which no one can expect good results from concentration and meditation. For instance, if you eat a large quantity of meat and try to concentrate your mind, you would not be able to do that, because you have eaten something that has created the kind of energy that would produce restlessness in your mind. You see how in the menagerie the tiger cannot stand still, but walks back and forth, after eating chunks of raw flesh. That restlessness is a sign of some kind of mental activity, and that activity makes the blood rush into the brain. In that way we use up that energy by restlessness. And it is natural. Therefore, it is necessary to regulate your mind. You must not make your mind restless with food and certain actions. You try to concentrate your mind, and if you fail to do it, you generally blame this science and the teaching. That would not be fair. You would have to take a chance under proper conditions, and then, when you have practised under proper conditions and do not get results, you may blame the teacher or the teaching. But, otherwise, you will have to blame yourself.

Falling away from the highest state, when attained (*anavasthitatva*), is also an obstacle. Now there may be a time when you have attained to a height in the process of concentration or meditation, but after attaining to that height you cannot hold on to it. You fall away. Now that may happen in your experience, and that would be regarded as an obstacle. You might, for the time being, have controlled your mind from the attractions that you have on the lower planes or sense planes, but that was only temporary. The attraction or attachment was surely very strong, but by developing your will-power you had succeeded in conquering that attraction or attachment for

the time being. Then you had suceeded in attaining to a certain height in your concentration and meditation. But you could not keep your mind there. Your mind frittered away. It had not the strength. It was weak. Only it was able to reach that state for a short time. But the other attractions were stronger on account of a long-standing habit, and, therefore, they dragged the mind down. The more you subdue those attractions through discrimination, through right thinking, through reasoning, and through more faith towards the highest ideal, the better results you get. Then you do not fall away from that state which you attain through struggle.

Weakness and bad habits are also the obstructing distractions. These are called distractions, because they are opposed to concentration. These states should be studied carefully in your life, i.e. in your own mind. When you try to concentrate your mind, you are beginning to study your own mind, i.e. studying what things are prevailing, what vibrations are causing delay in attaining the results, and so on. The more anxious you will be for the results, the quicker you will find out what hindrances are in the way, and in this way you will be able to trace the causes of those distractions and gradually eliminate them inch by inch. You will have no further trouble if you can once conquer these obstructions and rise above them by keeping constant watch. You will have to watch your mind and body constantly. Think that the body is an instrument and the mind is also another instrument, and these two instruments must be kept in good shape. Otherwise the machine will not work. And how can you do that? By studying the obstructions that will prevent you from attaining to the results.

There are a few more obstructions described in the next aphorism, 31:

दुःख-दौर्मनस्याङ्गमेजयत्व-श्वासप्रश्वासा विक्षेपसहभुवः ।

'Grief, mental distress, tremor of the body, irregular breathing accompany non-retention of concentration.'

Grief is described as an obstacle. Grief of any kind, either from a loss of fortune, or from a loss of friends, is a mental state and it would be called an obstacle. If you try to concentrate your mind then, you will not succeed, because that grief has a different vibration, known as depression, and that holds down

the mental energy as if it is under a heavy weight. You have to lift that weight first before you can make your mind light; and unless your mind is light and peaceful, you cannot reach the highest. The heavy weight of grief will keep you down. Depression is the *rajas* plus *tamas* state of the mind. *Tamas* means inertia and it brings mental laziness and doubt. All these things come through grief and sorrow. Therefore, a person who is in sorrow or mourning, cannot think of the highest thing.

A person who is in mourning, is considered in India to be in a state when he or she cannot practise any higher meditation or worship, but is to be kept under certain restraint, i.e. he or she is not able to practise any high kind of meditation in that morbid state, because the devotees' minds are not capable, and for that reason they must either outgrow that state or conquer it. Now, how can you conquer the state of grief in the loss of fortune or friends or relatives? It can be easily conquered by using discrimination. You will have to learn how to discriminate between the real and the unreal, the eternal and the non-eternal, and the spirit and the matter. Things which we do not really possess, we cannot lose. A trend of argument could be brought up in that line to determine what is our real possession. Real possessions, if we have any, we can never lose. The things which we can lose, do not really belong to us. And in that way we can find that the loss of fortune is nothing. It is only temporary. It is just like a hollow beside the height of a wave. Every wave must have a hollow opposite to it. So, if you are rising on a height of fortune, you are naturally going down some day. You cannot keep up all the time on the surface. You are bound to come down. Therefore, the ups and downs of life are natural sequences. We must take them philosophically.

The loss of friends or relatives is not a real loss, because their souls are not dead. They cannot die. They leave their bodies and, if we have a strong attachment to their earthly bodies, we feel that we have lost them. That attachment proceeds from ignorance. It does not come from the right knowledge. From the right knowledge would flow the strong attachment to the immortal soul of our friends and relatives, and, if we are conscious of that, we would not have any grief,

even when they are out of sight. Through the right knowledge we know that death means that the souls have gone into another realm. They have left the physical garments of their bodies and have gone out of phenomenal sight, but they still exist. They are not annihilated. They exist and will exist eternally. In this way, if we reason and discriminnate, we can overcome all grief and sorrow.

Mental distress is another obstruction. It might be a kind of disappointment, but disappointment also causes mental distress. Various other things like envy, jealousy, etc. also cause distress. All these mental distractions are regarded as obstructions. Therefore, we must learn to conquer each one of them. We have gained the preliminary steps indispensable for the practice of Yoga. Then we have made our minds ready to do higher work. And now we are beginning to become more and more spiritual. To become more and more spiritual means that we are gaining more and more consciousness of our spiritual nature, which is free from grief, sorrow, and all other obstructions like doubt, and so on. Doubt causes mental distress. Doubt is destructive, while faith is constructive. Therefore, we must not encourage any mental state which is destructive in its nature, but always hold such ideas which are constructive in every way. Then we will have no more trouble. If everyone in the family has that one thought of constructive nature, there would be no dissension in the household. Therefore, try and practise to imbibe the constructive idea. Whether you are a husband, or a wife, or a child, just each one of you practise it; and when you find each one is trying to hold a constructive thought, the household will be like a heaven. There would be no discord, but perfect harmony will reign supreme all the time. Perfect harmony can come when there is only one trend of vibration. But, if one tries to build up an opposite current of thought, there will be a friction and there would be no harmony. One must not try to pull against the other even in a constructive way. All must harmonize their methods. If you study and practise this philosophy or psychology, which is very practical, there will be no disharmony in your life. It does not require any external instrument, but it requires your attention. And that is the foundation of all works of research, investigation, observation, and experiment. What good will

come from the external instrument, like microscope or telescope, if your attention is distracted when you are trying to look through it? If your mind is in distress, instead of looking through the microscope to the object, it goes astray. You do not see anything there and you do not find out the points that you wish to discover. That requires attention, and without this attention you cannot gain anything. Attention, in its developed form, is called concentration. Concentration means attention of a voluntary nature where the mind works and controls our distractions and other obstructing influences, and focuses the mental energy towards one object which is selected for study. In this way you study carefully. Study your own mind. These are only the suggestions that I am giving. Books give suggestions and teachers give suggestions, but you are the one who is going to work out those suggestions, so that you would receive the greatest benefit, and for that reason, the whole thing depends upon yourself. Practice is necessary. The more you would practise with reasoning and proper discrimination and right understanding of the subject, the fewer mistakes you would make, and be able to know all the truths that are buried under the veil of the socalled relative nature, i.e. mind and matter. Mind and matter are like veils. You do not know what mind is, and you do not know what matter is. They are relative terms. Now, how can you know what matter is? You cannot know what matter is, unless you know what mind is. You cannot know matter unless you study your own mind, and hold the ideal. The best way to study your mind is to try to accomplish something. Hold the ideal and try to reach up, and see where you fail. You hold that point and try to analyse it, why you have failed in your efforts and what is standing in its way, and then gradually try to remove it, and find it out. If you do not find it out at present, go on searching sincerely, and you will be successful. Some day it will come to you as a flash. Ambition is a thing that will make your mind run in one direction, i.e. towards the obpect of ambition, and unless you can control that, you will not be able to turn the course of your mind. For the time being. you must eliminate all ambitions and all other thoughts and disturbing elements from your mind, while you are practising concentration. You need not be kept without ambition and live in the world like a

fool. That would not be the idea. But while you are practising concentration and meditation, you should make your mind free from all these things. Forget them and try to gather the entire energy of your mind and focus it upon the subject.

Tremor of the body is the next obstruction. It is physical restlessness. First, mental restlessness has been described in the *Patanjalasutra,* and then the physical one. Some people cannot sit still for a few minutes. They rock and move their feet or other limbs of the body. That shows that their mind and body are not under control. They have got into a habit. When we can sit still for a few minutes, we shall find that we have gained a great deal. All these activities, like restlessness of the body, etc. are caused by the motor nerves. The motor nerves are centred in the spine where these nerve centres are, and when we learn how to control these nerve centres, we have controlled the motor activities of the nerves, and consequently, the muscles are brought under control. Then, the muscular cells obey the command of the mind. Just send a telegraphic message from the brain, over the wires of the nerves to the stations of the nerve centres, and from there the message will be distributed to the cells of the muscles, and as the receiver in the cells of the muscles has a mind and a memory, it will remember what message has come and will act accordingly. In this way, all physical activities are produced. But we do not know the physiological process, that mind is the controller-general in our body, and the captains and their lieutenants and sub-officers are stationed at the different nerve centres at different places, and the units of the cells, whether of the muscle or of the nerve, are the soldiers. They are carrying out the commands which come from the controller-general, the head. Now, you can understand how all these things are absolutely scientific and rational and necessary at the same time. The physical activity, tremor of the body, and also mental irregularity or restlessness, can be controlled by psychological or physiological methods. The physiological methods is given by the breathing exercises; and breath has a great deal of relation to the organic functions and the mental activities.

The science of breath unfolds the mystery of the physiological method. The science of breath tells us that when the mind and body are restless, the breath is irregular. Sometimes

you breathe fast and sometimes you breathe slow; you inhale too much of air through the nostrils at one time, and at other times you inhale too little. That is irregularity in the breath. Ordinary persons go through all these irregularities, but they do not pay attention to these things. Again, when you are exhaling the breath, sometimes one nostril is stronger than the other. You just hold your hand under your nose and blow out strongly and feel which one is stronger. You might find either the right or the left is stronger than the other. Then, at other times, you will notice it is just the reverse. At other times, again, you will find both are even. All these have been studied carefully by the Yogis in India, and they have made a science of it. They say that under certain conditions of the mind and body, a certain nostril will be stronger, and, at other times, other conditions will prevail. If they are reversed, and brought under a kind of rhythm and harmonious vibrations, the mind will be peaceful and restful, and all restlessness will vanish, and there will be an equilibrium of all the organic functions. There will be no disharmony or any kind of inharmonius vibration within the system at that time, whether cellular or organic. So you must have perfect rhythm, harmonious vibration, harmonious organic functions, proper organic position, proper circulation and proper elimination of the impurities out of the system. All these are helpful and beneficial to your health. When you take too little air in the system, i.e. in the lungs, you are lack in oxygen, and by lack in oxygen, your organic combustion is not perfected, and the result is that you cannot eliminate the impurities out of the system, and that poison sometimes permeates the organs and the whole body. Therefore, proper elimination is necessary, either in the form of secretion, or in perspiration, and so on. All these things are to be studied carefully. These are the physiological conditions. The Yogis recommend to study those physiological points and they are beneficial to health. There is a great deal to study and understand about the body and the germs, and how to keep one's self out of the infections and contagions, and so on. You must observe those things as they form a part of he Hatha Yoga. The Hatha Yoga means the science of keeping perfect health. A healthy body will bring a healthy mind. The Hatha Yogis start from the physical side, while the Raja Yogis from the

mental side, and that shows that there is a close relation between the two. If you start from the mental or from the physical side, you will come to the same point, because they both meet in the end. They are like two extremities and each will lap over the other. In this way, both systems must go hand in hand. When you talk about irregular breathing, that brings the physiological side, there is the Hatha Yoga; and when you talk about concentration, there is the Raja Yoga. So the difference between the two is clear. I have dealt with the Hatha Yoga in my book *How to Be a Yogi*. There is also a chapter on the science of breath.

Again, you will find another thing which is important. When you try to concentrate your mind, you will gradually notice that your breath will become deep and slow. Every time you think of God, or you are prayerful or devotional, your breath will become deep and slow. Every time you are passionate, disturbed by passion, anger, hatred, or anything like that, you will notice that your breath will become short and quick. These are the physiological changes leading to good or bad results. Hatred or jealousy creates poison in the system, and that you breathe oue. If your breath be passed through a certain chemical solution, you will find that anger or hatred has poisoned the system. It has been tested, and even now you can test it. But you need not go through all that test. Let the laboratory people do those things, and you take the results of their investigation, because your time is short and you have too many things to attend to. You take it for granted that these results are true, and you must not encourage any passion, or feeling like that to create poison in your system. Then you would live longer, enjoy good health, and prepare yourself for the accomplishment of the highest result in spiritual life.

I am not thereby advising you how to develop your psychic powers. I am coming to that point soon and shall show you that psychic development and the psychic powers are not the right things in the path of spiritual realization. The psychic powers are the categories of the mental plane. They are very attractive, and are regarded as obstacles to the path of Godconsciousness. Patanjali has described all the different powers of the mind, and he says that all these powers are

obstructions in the path of Godconsciousness. So the psychic powers are not to be searched for, but they will come unsought for. Let them come, but do not be anxious to receive them, because those powers will eventually become a source of bondage and hold you down to the psychic plane. It is not possible to understand these things easily, but when you will study more and go deeper into the subject and understand the psychological as well as the spiritual laws, you will be able to know that, and will also find the reason for it. But for the present the obstacles to the path of Yoga should be studied carefully. It is a fact that, when all the obstructions are conquered, the result would be a perfect concentration. Perfect concentration will lead to meditation, and meditation will lead to superconscious realization. Then we shall be able to know our immortal and true nature, that exists in our spiritual Self. We shall be able to know also that we have a finer body (*sukshma-sharira*) other than this gross body. The finer body is like the underclothing of the soul, and the outer physical body is the outer clothing of the soul. Again, in that finer body there is the causal body (*karana-sharira*) that retains all the potentialities or causal state of future growths, just like a seed. The seed form (*karana-sharira*) is the foundation of our finer body as well as of our physical body. When the soul passes out, it takes the causal body. Then it can develop the finer body, which you may call ethereal body (*vayaviya sharira*) out of that causal body. The ethereal body does not last all the time, because it has a temporary manifestation and after some time it withdraws its finer body and goes into that causal state. Then, when another attraction comes, it manifests another ethereal body. In this way it is able to go through different experiences, but the causal state is there, just as we have our causal state during our lifetime. When we go into the deep sleep state (*sushupti*), there we remain in our causal body. When we are in the dream state (*svapna*), we have our subtle or finer body. In the finer body we dream, but when we wake up (*jagrat*), we have this gross physical body in action. The same process and the same law control the different states in the other world.

Now, we shall understand that, that which will remain and continue to exist as the source of intelligence, is a perfectly

free soul which is beyond all mental and physical activities. When we have once realized it, we have gained the purpose of life, and the purpose of evolution is accomplished. Then we have become masters and enjoy perfect peace and happiness in this world, and realize that oneness with the supreme Spirit, which was realized by Jesus the Christ when he said: 'I and my Father are one'. This grand truth was realized by all other saviours of the world. It can be achieved and is realized by all the sincere seekers after Truth.

CHAPTER III

REMEDY AND PRACTICE

Patanjali says in aphorism 32:

तत्प्रतिषेधार्थमेकतत्वाभ्यासः।

'To remedy this, the practice of one subject should be done.'

The remedy here described is to overcome the obstructions and distractions to the path of perfect Yoga. In the commentary we read:

विक्षेपप्रतिषेधार्थमेकतत्वावलम्बनं चित्तमभ्यसेत्। * * यदि पुनरिदं सर्वतः प्रत्याहृत्य एकस्मिन् अर्थे समाधीयते तदा भवत्येकाग्रमिति, अतो न प्रत्यर्थनियतम्। ** तस्मादेकमनेकार्थमवस्थितञ्च चित्तम्।

If we can make the mind take the form of one object for some time, that will destroy all the obstacles to the path of divine realization. The mind stuff takes the form of the objects which we perceive with our senses. The impressions (*samskaras*) of the external objects are gathered through the doors of our senses and those impressions are stamped on the mind stuff, which is called *chitta* in Sanskrit. The mind stuff is finer matter in vibration. It has no particular shape or form, but it takes any form that it comes in contact with. It is like water in that respect. Water has no particular form, but it takes the form of the vessel in which we put it. If the vessel is like a jug, it will take the form of a jug, if the vessel is a vase, it will take the form of a vase, and so on. Similarly, this mind stuff is something like impressionable substance which is constantly vibrating, and that substance takes the form of the external objects. For instance, when you look at the globe of this lamp, your mind takes the form of that globe, and, if you hold your mind on that particular form for a certain time, you will have concentration, and then you would have no more obstructions. All those obstructions, which are described in the previous aphorisms, will be remedied if you can hold your mind on that particular object, whatever it may be. It may be a flower, may be a picture, may be a landscape or may be some abstract ideal. If you can hold your mind on that particular form for

a little while and practise every day, your mind will become steady. If you change the subject every time in your practice, that would not be so beneficial, because practice means the repetition of one subject every day, and when you have done that, the mind gradually gets a tendency to remain in that state for any length of time you desire. Therefore, this practice is given as the remedy. Of course, this is a piece of general advice. It is nothing particular for any particular individual, because the minds of individuals are in different states. They need, perhaps, individual instructions. But, in a general way, we can say that this is the method by which the obstructions can be removed.

If you try to hold your mind on one subject or one idea for a certain length of time, you will easily find out what the best method for holding your mind is. What disturbance you have particularly, no one can tell you. And, if I describe all the different symptoms that might or might not happen, that would not do you any good. Therefore, the best way is for you to try to hold your mind on one object or one idea, and fix your mental energy on that particular object day after day. Practise it for a week or for a couple of weeks. You would not be able to detect the causes of disturbance, unless you watch your mind very carefully, and when you watch your mind carefully, even then you would not know what was the cause of that particular disturbance. The disturbance might have come either on account of food, or some thought of grief, or some kind of mental laziness, or some kind of depression, or some kind of restlessness that made you unhappy. The after-effects of passion will linger in your system for some time. Every time you become passionate, you create a poison in your system, and that poison takes time to remove, as it will be explained in the next aphorism. If you are disturbed by anger, hatred, jealousy, or feelings of revenge, it would be difficult for you to concentrate your mind; and to overcome the different mental conditions.

Aphorism 33 of the *Patanjala* runs thus:

मैत्री करुणामुदितोपेक्षाणां सुख-दुःख-
पुण्यापुण्यविषयाणां भावनातश्चित्तप्रसादनम्।

'Friendship, mercy, gladness, and indifference, being

thought of in regard to subjects, happy, unhappy, good and evil, respectively pacify the *chitta.*'

Commentator Vyasa says:

तत्र सर्वप्राणिषु सुखसम्भोगापन्नेषु मैत्रीं भावयेत्, दुःखितेषु करुणां पुण्यात्मकेषु मुदितां, अपुण्यात्मकेषु उपेक्षाम्। एवमस्य भावयतः शुक्लो धर्म उपजायते, ततश्च चित्तं प्रसीदति, प्रसन्नमेकाग्रं स्थितिपदं लभते।

We must hold friendly attitude towards all living beings. We must think that we have no enemy. If somebody had done any harm to us, or injured or treated us badly, even then we should hold friendly attitude towards that person. We should never think of taking revenge or doing the same thing in return. That would be the practice. If anyone hurts you, you must not try to hurt him back, because in trying to hurt him back, you do not gain anything, but on the contrary, you lose. Suppose you hurt that person who has hurt you. But by doing that, you will not gain anything. You would simply give expression to your feeling of revenge, and that is all. But, by taking revenge, you have gained nothing. You have injured somebody and you have lost so much of your energy, which you could have saved for a better purpose. Therefore, it has always been said that we should try to love our enemies. Even Christ said: 'Love thine enemies. If anyone smites thee on thy right cheek, turn the left'. But he did not explain why. The reason for all such statements which are highly ethical, you would not find in the scriptures, but you will find in the Raja Yoga. Now, why should we not return evil for evil? We have learnt that golden rule: 'Do unto others as you wish others would do unto you'. That is returning good for good. We should do that. But higher than that golden rule, is to return good for evil. If anyone does harm to you, return good instead of returning evil. That is higher ethics. Return good under all conditions. This golden rule was known all over the world, even among the Chinese. You will find that golden rule was taught by Confucius, who lived five hundred years before Christ. In India, it had been taught centuries, before Christ. Another great preacher Lao-tsze was contemporary to Confucius. While Confucius was teaching this golden rule, Lao-tsze was the great philosopher. When he was over seventy years old, he came out of his mother's womb. That

means he was a very wise man, born with high wisdom, like an old man. All experiences he brought with him, and he was an ancient soul. He was older than his body. He was a great philosopher in China. His ideals are as great as the ideals of the Vedanta. While Confucius was preaching this golden rule, Lao-tsze was teaching the most ethical ideal: return good for evil. One of the disciples of Confucius asked Lao-tsze: 'If you return good for evil, what would you return for good ?' Lao-tsze replied: 'I return good under all circumstances. I return good for good and good for evil.' In that way he emphasized that the grand teaching of the higher ethics is to return good for evil under all conditions. That would make us Christlike, if we can do that. We must not try to encourage the feeling of hatred even towards our enemies. That is not higher ethics. We must not hold revengeful thought even towards our enemies. That is very difficult to practise. But we must remember that if our enemy has hatred against us and we return hatred for hatred, there will never come peace or happiness. On the contrary, it will grow stronger and worse, and where it will end, nobody can tell. So, returning hatred for hatred should not be taught as the ideal. If our enemies hate us, we should, in return, love them. It had been taught by Buddha five hundred years before Christ: 'Hatred is never conquered by hatred, but by love.' That is the everlasting ethical law. This law has been emphasized by Patanjali in his *Yogasutra*. He says:

अहिंसाप्रतिष्ठायां तत्सन्निधौ वैरत्यागः । २।३५।

Vyasa says that it is possible to achieve the ideal of non-injuring all animals: सर्वप्राणिनां भवति । So we must try to understand why hatred would be conquered by love. We must conquer the avaricious by generosity. We must conquer evil by good, practising the opposite way. If we practise the same thing in return, we can never conquer. All the great spiritual teachers of the world have uphold that ideal and the reason is given here. So we must have friendship for all.

We must also be merciful towards those who are in misery. Here 'merciful' means 'compassionate'. Practise compassion towards those who are suffering. We must have sympathy. Now, do you know what sympathy is ? Sympathy is that feeling

which is aroused in us when we can put ourselves immediately in the position of a sufferer and feel in the same way. If we can have that feeling, then we have sympathy. Otherwise, we have no sympathy. We must learn to put ourselves under those conditions, to see what we should do and how we would suffer, and then we can realize what great suffering the other person is going through, and how much we would be able to bear it. If we could not bear it, we must try to alleviate their distress, and that would be sympathy. We are not taught even how to sympathize with suffering people. If we did sympathize and try to remove their grievances, we would be able to help the poorer classes in a great many ways, not only by doing good to them, but by changing their circumstances and conditions, giving them a lift, and opening their spiritual eyes to see things in a clearer light, so that they would be able to bear their burdens more easily. The wise man can bear his burden more easily, because he has the power of discrimination and he knows the real nature of things. He knows that this world is like a dream. So, if you suffer in the dream, your suffering would vanish when you are awake, and that is a consolation. But, at the same time, the wise man would have sympathy, because, before he became wise he had been in the state of ignorance and he had accepted these conditions as reality and, therefore, he remembered how much he suffered then, and, he could change the mental attitude of the suffering people by imparting his wisdom to them; then he would be doing a great deal of good to humanity. Good can be done in that way and that is known as real good. He teaches them how to look at things, as they are in reality. Therefore, the greatest benefactor of the world is the spiritual teacher, and not the man who gives millions of dollars away to help the poorer classes with clothes and food. They are doing good to the body, but they are not uplifting their souls. As the soul is greater than the body, so a man, who can open the spiritual eyes of any individual and make him see things in their spiritual light, is the greatest benefactor. And that is the reason why people worship Christ. Christ did not give a fortune. He was not like Rockfeller who could sign a cheque for a million dollars. You would not worship Rockfeller, but you would worship Christ. Why? Because Christ had no material possession, and yet he helped

mankind. Buddha had a palace. He had a throne. He had a beautiful wife and a child. He had all the luxuries and all the comforts of a prince. But he renounced them all and went out as a beggar. He was moved with compassion to remove the distress of the people. He traced the cause of all suffering, sorrow, disease, and death and he found the remedy. And when he discovered the remedy, he was a beggar, without any clothes, without any home, and without anything in his possession. He walked out, ate whatever food was given to him, and began to help mankind. He was regarded as a saviour. So, the greatest benefactors of the world are those who can show the real nature of things and explain the highest truth, and make the poor suffering people overthrow all their burdens. They make them see the things as they are in reality. So we must practise compassion.

When people are happy, we ought to feel happy instead of being envious. We must enjoy their happiness as our own. And to the wicked we must not be indifferent, but we must be pitiful to them and try to help them. We must not condemn them, and must not hold any idea that we are better than they are, and they are going to be punished and we are going to enjoy, and that they are the sinners and are going to have enternal damnation. That feeling is not indifference. It is a feeling of condemnation which we have no right to feel.

We should compassionately treat all subjects that come before us. If the subject is a good one, we should feel friendly towards it. If the subject is one that is miserable, we must be merciful and compassionate towards that subject. If it is good, we must be glad, and if it is evil, we must be indifferent. These attitudes of the mind towards the different subjects that come before it, will make the mind peaceful. That is the way to make our mind peaceful. Watch your mind: what attitude you have towards the world and towards your enemies. Try to correct that attitude. While you are sitting and trying to practise, just go over your mental field and find out what attitude you have, and in order to overcome all these, the first thing you should do is to send friendly thoughts towards all. Be positive. Send towards the north, the south, the east, and the west your feelings of friendliness, love, sympathy, compassion, kindness, and happiness—towards all beings. Then you will

see that your mind is coming more and more under your control. It will be easier for you to concentrate. Most of our difficulties in our daily lives come from our being unable to hold our minds into this attitude. And that is why we cannot hold our mind to the object of concentration, and so it jumps and does the thing which we do not wish to do. For instance, if a man does evil to us, instantly we want to react upon it. Our reaction on evil shows that we are not able to hold the *chitta,* or the mind stuff down. It goes out in waves towards the object, and we lose our power. Every time we try to react on evil, we are exercising a force that is going towards the course which is destructive. Anything is evil when it is destructive, either physically or mentally. That is the standard of evil. Anything that is destructive in any way, is evil. There are two forces working in the world, one is constructive and the other is destructive. That which is constructive is good. We call it good and the world calls it good. That which is destructive is evil. It may be destructive in a small form or on a large scale, but it is evil just the same. If we return evil for evil, we are following the destructive method, and, therefore, it is evil and it does not do good to us. If we send out destructive currents of thoughts towards somebody else, they will come back to us. They will react upon us. Because every reaction must come back to the source of action. If I strike a blow on the table, the table will strike me back. The harder I strike, the harder I will receive the blow in return. If we send out our evil thought anywhere, we are the senders. It goes there and comes back in reaction, and we would have to take that consequence. We would suffer. So, that destructive method is not only destructive to others, but also destructive to us. That is the universal law. Therefore, evil should not be practised, and destructive methods should not be adopted. Hatred and envy are destructive. Jealousy is also destrutctive, because it would create a poison. A prominent physician in New York said that jealousy would create a poison that could kill twenty people. So, if we arouse that feeling of jealousy and poison every cell of our body, the future effect must be tremendous on our systems. The mother who is angry should not nurse her baby, because she will be nursing poison to the baby. That is a fact. All these things we do not know. We

are living in the world, using this body, and yet we are so stubborn in our ignorance that we do not want to know the truth. And that is the difficulty. But we must learn these truths and live up to the ideals. Then we will begin to realize what the highest divine consciousness is. We must hold that as the ideal and goal, but we must start from where we are standing at the present moment. There is a long ladder, and we are at the foot of the ladder. We must not judge how the top will look when we are up there. Let us judge now where we are and how to go up, step by step. This is what the Yoga psychology teaches. Therefore, it is something practical. It does not want us to memorize a certain list, that our mind is volition, cognition, will, and thought. What good will that do ? We may read that in the dictionary, but that has nothing to do with us. We must feel it, know what forces are working in us, and how to control them.

Every reaction, in the form of hatred or evil, is so much a loss to the mind. Every evil thought or feeling of hatred, or any thought of reaction, if controlled, will surely be in our favour. Every time you have a destructive method or evil thought, you are using up so much of the energy. You should remember that your mental energy has a limit. You have a certain quantity of energy under your control and you are using that portion of the energy in your ideas, in mental activities of different kinds, and in physical activities also. If you can utilize a portion of this energy for the good result, it is beneficial to you. But, if you waste a portion of that energy, so much of that energy is lost to you, and, therefore, you should learn to save it and conserve it. Every evil thought requires so much of energy. The stronger is your hatred towards anybody, so much more energy you are spending. How much more beneficial it will be, if you can store that energy and utilize it towards good. Then you will not have wasted that much energy. Very a few people know how to draw energy from the external surroundings or environments. For instance, you get your energy from food and transmute it, consciously or unconsciously, into thought force. You also extract energy from water. You extract energy from the sunlight, from the air, from all the surroundings, and you transmute it unconsciously into nervous energy, brain energy, and that stimulates your

power of thinking, intellect, and moral and spiritual powers. But, if you knew how to transmute that energy consciously, you would be able to replenish your store, which might get empty on account of dissipation and waste. But, if you do not know the method, you are nothing but a weakling. Then you have lost all the energy you possess, and you are the play-ground of all the germs of diseases. Surely there is not much value in your life then. So, save your energy and use it for the best purpose. You think you are very smart when you waste your energy. You think that you have attained a great and wonderful thing, but you are making a fool of yourselves. You do not know anything better. The very practice will reform any man who has the least sense. Any kind of work you are doing, or any habit you have, you can overcome. If you cannot, you must be a big fool. You do not care for yourself. You do not want to take any care of your own self and so you are the loser. That is what this practical Yoga psychology teaches us. So we cannot help becoming good and better; we store away our energy and try to utilize it for good purposes. It is not that we lose by thus restraining ourselves. If, instead of sending revengeful reactions we control them, we are not losing anything by it, but are gaining. We are gaining infinitely more than we suspect. Each time we suppress hatred or a feeling of anger, or any other passion, so much of good energy is stored up in our favour, and that energy will be converted into higher powers.

That is what the Raja Yogi does. He wants to save all the energy for the higher purpose. He holds one aim. For instance, he holds the aim of Godconsciousness. How can he do that? He finds out that there is a leakage of his energy, he is not strong enough; and so he must be physically and mentally strong, to accomplish that grand result and wonderful ideal. Thus he tries to save all his strength. By saving the energy, he saves his strength, and in the end he succeeds in focussing all that energy towards one object, and the result is wonderful. The stronger you are mentally, your will-power would be stronger. You send a command to your own self, to your own mind: 'Now, mind, you stay right there; you do not behave like a spoilt child, but conduct yourself like a sane person, and help me.' If you have this strong will, your mind

will obey. Otherwise, your mind will laugh at you. You would not be able to control it, and that is the secret. So, if you try to gain anything, you must have the strength. And that strength comes this way, by saving all the energy that you are dissipating all the time unconsciously and by inches. You must learn to store away that energy in the nerve centres, in the spine, and in the brain, and then you should be in a position to drive that energy towards the highest ideal, and the result would be wonderful.

All these exercises that are given here, are very helpful and beneficial. You must study them regularly. Try to understand the aim and object of this study. The study of the Raja Yoga will help you very much. You just think out and try to understand why you should save your energy, and after saving that energy, you should learn to transmute the physical forces into spiritual powers. You must remember that there are not two kinds of energy, but the energy is one. There is only a difference in the degree of manifestation. The same energy, when it manifests on the physical plane, is physical energy; when manifesting on the mental plane, is mental power; when on the intellectual plane, is intellectual power; and when on the higher spiritual plane, is the spiritual power. These are co-related. One can be turned into the others. Just as heat, light and motion come out from the same electricity, so different manifestations of energy are but the outcome of the same energy. A certain degree of vibration would produce heat, another degree would produce light, and another, motion. But they are all convertible, one can be turned into another. In the same way, physical, mental, intellectual, moral and spiritual manifestations are only different grades of the same energy. They are all converted, because they all come from one source and are going back, in a circle, to the same source. It would be easy for you to learn that. Suppose you have tremendous physical strength, i.e. tremendous amount of physical energy. Now you try to use it. You need not use it on the physical plane, but use it on the mental, and then transmute it. But, before you can do it, you must know the process of transmutation. You can learn it. Every day you practise concentration and the practice will make you perfect. The secret of this practice may be transmitted to you, and you

may find that it would be very easy in that transmission. Then you would be able to change it from the mental plane and transform that energy to the intellectual plane. You will then strengthen your memory. Your memory may be very weak, but practise a little every day and store away some of your energy, and you will find that your memory will become stronger. Watch over patiently and keep a diary, when you are practising. Keep a record how much you are gaining each day, and after a few months, you will find you are changed completely. If you follow the instructions of the Raja Yoga for one month, you will be a different man altogether. Your desires will be thin, and you will be able to feel differently. Your life will be better, your mind be more peaceful, your understanding be clearer, and you will be able to get a glimpse of the Infinite. But there are only a few persons who can devote time and energy to the study of this so closely and earnestly. But there is an aphorism which tells us that those who are determined, will reap the results very quickly.[1] If you have the determination to put your life at stake, sacrifice your life to get the result, and you will get it very quickly. Your determination will bring it. That is the secret. Whatever we sincerely desire, we get. Sometimes it so happens that we desire a certain thing and get it after a long while, and when we get it, we forget that we desired that thing, and then that thing is a detriment. Then we do not want it, and we wonder why did this thing has come to us. If you had kept a diary, you would have found that it was in your diary ten years ago, and you have got it now and you do not want it. You would rather be without it, because it is a detriment to you. So be careful about what you desire, because whatever you desire you get through the law of demand and supply. You may say, the law of nature is very kind or favourable or the Lord is very merciful. Whichever way you put it, it is the same thing. The Lord and the law are one. In this way, if you study and practise, you will find that your mind will become quieter, and eventually you will be able to gain perfect concentration. Through perfect concentration, you will be able to reach the highest goal of Godconsciousness, which is the ideal of the Raja Yoga.

1. तीव्रसंवेगानामासन्नः ।—पा सू १।२१

CHAPTER IV

THE SCIENCE OF BREATH

The science of breath is called in Sanskrit *pranayama.* The word *pranayama* is a compound word which consists of *prana* and *ayama. Prana* means life-force, or the vital energy, or that force by which we have our life. *Ayama* means control, i.e., control of the breath. That is the literal meaning. Why it is called the science of breath, we will now explain. Patanjali said:

तस्मिन् सति श्वासप्रश्वासयोर्गतिविच्छेदः प्राणायामः । २।४६

The first expression of life-force or *prana* is in the motion of the lungs. If a child does not breathe after its birth for some time, we give up the hope of that child. The first expression of life would be the breath, and the motion of the lungs produces the breath. It is the primary function, and all other functions of the heart, digestive organs, and others are secondary.

There have been cases in India, where a Yogi has been kept buried alive for forty days in a hermetically sealed box, the box being buried deep under the ground and covered with soil, and grains of corn being sown on the spot. The spot was watched day and night by Government officials, and after forty days, when the corn grew tall, the box was dug out, the coffin was taken out, and the disciples of that Yogi, after following the instructions of their master, revived his body, and he lived for a long time after that demonstration. He did not breathe during that time. His breath was stopped, and he had no way of breathing, because this box was lined with tin and no air could get in. There had been cases of bodies, held in deep water, tied to a post, and there was no sign of any change, but the Yogi was alive. A great many experiments have been made in India, showing how it is possible for the persons who have trained themselves to gain absolute control over the vital energy or life-force, which moves the lungs, and how they can suspend their animation at their will. I saw a Yogi in India who could

control his heart beat and pulse. At his will his pulse would stop. The physicians would examine his pulse and find that it had realy stopped. He was not in a state of epileptic fits or anything like that. It was a case of absolute mastery over the body.

The gross manifestation of the life-force of the physical body is the motion of the lungs. But to reach the more subtle, we must take the help of the grosser, and slowly travel towards the most subtle, until we gain our point. The idea here is that *prana* as the life-force is invisible. We cannot get hold of it. If we try to get hold of *prana,* we cannot do it. What force moves the lungs ? We cannot get hold of it, but we know its outward manifestation in the form of inspiration and expiration. The first action of *prana* is expansion and contraction. That is the first motion of life-force. That is universal. If you take a protoplasm and put it under a microscope, you will see it is a jelly-like substance in the form of a sauce. When it is alive, in its first expression of life, it expands and contracts. That motion is in the lungs, and that produces the inspiration and expiration. So, by breath, or inspiration and expiration, we mean that force which keeps the lungs active, from the grosser to the subtle. The subtle force or energy is manifesting itself in the form of expansion and contraction. By getting hold of the expansion and contraction, which are the gross manifestations, we get hold of the force of energy, which is active in that line. That is the aim of the science of breath, to control *prana,* and to gain mastery over the organic activities and the life-force or vital energy, which keeps us alive. When *prana* is controlled, we immediately find that all the other actions of it in the body slowly come under control. The motion of the lungs is like the commander-in-chief, which directs the organic functions of the whole system, and by gaining mastery over that force, which moves the lungs all other organic functions, are brought under control.

Now, the atomic energy, i.e. the energy that is in the atoms, is tremendous. Science is gradually beginning to grasp the value of the energy that is confind or imprisoned in the atoms. Take a piece of radium, for instance. When you see it in the dark, through a magnifying glass, you will find that the radium is shooting out minute particles of electrons. The velocity, with

which the particles move, is tremendous. It is the order of the velocity of light, which travels at the rate of 1,86,000 miles per second. That force or tremendous energy is found in that piece of radium. Think of the rapidity. An ounce of radium will produce so much energy that it will move the ocean steamer faster than coal or steam could move it. In the future there will be a method discovered, by which human mind will be able to utilize this imprisoned energy of the atoms, instead of burning tons of coal to generate and keep heat. If an ounce of matter is properly manipulated, you will get more heat from that ounce than you can get now by burning tons of coal. Future generations will probably find the method by which this can be done.[2]

But our point is now to understand the principle, that the life-force is there. All activity in the material world is produced by vibration, and that vibration is caused by *prana*. Wherever there is any kind of activity in the physical, mental or spiritual world, there is that *prana*. That is the common generic name, *prana*. It means life-force or vital energy, which is the mother of all other forces and energies.

If every atom is charged with *prana*, then by stimulating the vibratory conditions of that *prana*, which are now going on in our system, we shall be able to stimulate all the atoms, which make up the molecules and cells of the body, and make them vibrate on a higher plane, and manifest more energy and more powers, as we wish to express.

Every part of the body can be filled with *prana* and when that is done, one can not only control his whole body but can heal the diseases of others, by imparting to them his own health. He can rouse his *prana* to a certain state of vibration and transmit it to another person.

We must be careful about all the statements that we hear, that the Yogis can do wonderful things. We would not accept them as true until they are verified. We would not take that for granted. But there is a possibility of transmitting life-force to a distance, or curing by giving absent treatments. But there are many cases of fraud too. You must know that also.

Now you understand the rationale of all the healing

[2] This lecture was delivered on the 27th February, 1920, and the present atomic discoveries amply fulfils this prophecy.

methods, Divine Healing, Christian Science, Faith Healing, and all kinds of healing. The power that heals, is *prana*. Call it by any name you like, but it is a divine power. The whole universe is charged with *prana,* which belongs to the universe. No one can claim that this healing power of *prana* belongs to any particular individual, any Christ, any God-man, or any man in this world ; because, it is the universal life-principle and it is eternal. God dwells everywhere. God is all-pervading. Can you imagine a spot where God is not present ? Can you imagine a spot where there is no life-force ? It is impossible, because God is the living God, and life-force is the method, by which the whole universe is moving. So, how is it possible that the healing power could only be confined to one particular spot or to one particular individual ? A man might know the method by which he can raise a tremendous wave of this healing power, this *prana,* which is in the universe, and those who come in contact with that tremendous wave, will receive the benefit. That is possible. But the power itself is in each one of us, even in the lower animals, in plants and vegetables. You will notice that when a dog is hurt, he licks himself, and, by his licking and taking rest, he cures it. Now, scratch the bark of a tree. The tree will bleed, and after bleeding, that part which is scratched will be healed up gradually. Who does it ? It is the *prana* in the tree that does. It is the *prana* in the lower animal. But we say that nature heals it. It is a fact. Nature refers to the universal healing power of *prana.* If you remember that, you will not be surprised how it is possible for some persons to heal others, while others cannot do it. It is not the faith. Faith cannot heal. It is the power of this *prana* that heals.

The gigantic will-power of the world can bring *prana* into a high state of vibration. The great saviours of the world had the most wonderful control over *prana,* which gave them tremendous will-power and this is what gave them power to sway the whole world. The power to sway the world is the same power which produces attraction, and makes the person the centre of attraction, in whatever line he might shine.

The cause of disease is the disturbance of this *prana* in the physical body. If there be a super-abundance on one spot and a lack on another, that is a disturbance. That disturbance can

be remedied by bringing harmony, a kind of balance. When that balance is brought, the disease disappears. If there be any ache or pain in any part of your body, there may be some superfluity of *prana,* or may be a lack of *prana.* If there be a lack of *prana,* you direct your *prana* by your will-power to that particular spot, where it is lacking, and then you will remove the trouble. That would cure that trouble. And that is called *pranayama.* So the effect of *pranayama,* when you gain control over *prana,* is tremendous. You will be able to manipulate that tremendous force which is in your own system. You do not have to get it from anywhere. It is there already, but you arouse it and distribute it in your whole system and charge yourself with that wonderful healing power of *prana.* When you do that, you have gained the ideal result of the science of breath on the physical plane.

At present our feelings are very dull, because we are too busy to pay any attention to what is going on in our system. We are too busy with the outside world. The attractions are too many. We neglect our physical body, and do not care to learn anything about it, until we receive a blow on our head and just fall on the ground and cry aloud for help. That is the time when we will wake up. Otherwise we forget. We are too busy with amusements, pleasures, and duties, and all kinds of social calls, and everything. We have no time, not even half an hour to study our own body and keep our health in the right condition so that we would not be disturbed. Prevention is better than cure. You know that. So, if you keep your health in perfect order, understanding the conditions that are natural and the conditions that are not natural, or the conditions which would keep your health in perfect order, and other conditions which would create disturbance, disease, and an uneasy state of the body and mind, and then apply that method, you do not have to worry about it. The power is in your mind. Of course, it may depend upon how much strength you have to generate that power. You might be too weak, and you might need somebody to help you, either in the form of a medicine or some treatment, be it mental treatment or denying the disease. It is just the same thing. It is only arousing the healing power of *prana* by some method, which is effective under the circumstances. Now, that is very simple. So, all the

healing methods are nothing miraculous. If it were a miracle, then when a dog heals his cut, it would also be a miracle. You cut your finger with a knife, and nature will heal it. That healing is done by your subconscious mind, which is working upon the cells of the finger or the body. If you do it consciously, you will draw the life-force from every part of your system and force it there. When you concentrate your mind, you focus that living force of *prana,* which is scattered all over the body. You concentrate on one part. For instance, you concentrate your mind upon your thumb. Dip your thumb in a tumbler of water filled to the brim and the water not overflowing, but being just on a level with the edge. Hold your thumb there and concentrate your mind on your thumb. You will make your thumb grow larger in size and the displacement of the water will be perceptible, and the water will overflow. After you have concentrated your mind for a few seconds, you will send the blood to the thumb. If you can do that, you can send the blood also to the toe, and from the toe to any part of the body you want. When you concentrate on the forehead between the brow, you withdraw much blood in circulation from the lower part of your body and send it there. The lower part will become almost numb. You can withdraw all the sensation out of the lower parts of your body. Just try a little. The circulation will follow your thoughts, your power of the mind and your will-power. And all organic functions will follow your will-power. Only you have to let it go; the subconscious mind will take care of it. Just now, we have lost the power of moving our ears. Lower animals can do that, and some men can move their ears without touching them. I have seen certain cases where they move their scalp without touching it, just as the horse does. At one time we did that consciously. Now we have lost that power. We can get it back again. It will take a little time, because we have fallen into a habit; and in order to practise that, perhaps, we should not be able to spend some time and energy in that direction. But it is possible. That power can be brought back.

By the practice of *pranayama* the mind possesses the power to supply *prana* to any deficient part of the body. The science of breath includes all these different systems. It is a vast science, and this science was studied very carefully in ancient

India by the great Yogis who had lived many years before Christ. It is an old science. Of course, modern scientists are beginning to recognize this power, but they do not know exactly what the healing power is. They think God sends special favour to certain persons, just as they have faith in certain manifestations of God. That is the old superstitious way of thinking. That scientific way would be rational, and scientific truths are universal. There is no exception. But your whole dogmatic religion is based upon exceptions. There the mistake comes. Why should there be exceptions ? If there is one exception, that exception must be another law, and that law must be universal too, under like conditions. That is science. For instance, you believe that Christ was resurrected, and that was an exception. Nobody before him had ever resurrected, and nobody except those who believe in him will resurrect. Now, that is an illustration of an exception, and Jesus, the Christ, was an exception. We must all follow him. But that exception is a universal law. If Jesus, the Christ, resurrected, then all human beings resurrected in the past and will resurrect in the future, under similar circumstances. That is real science. If all human beings do not resurrect, Jesus, the Christ, never resurrected. That would be a scientific statement. Science would not admit even one exception. If there be any exception, that is another law, which would be universal. The laws of nature are uniform and universal. And this had been demonstrated in the *Sankhya* philosophy by Kapila and also by Patanjali, centuries before Christ. One of the aphorisms of Patanjali lays down that the laws of nature are uniform and universal. What has modern science taught ? Sir Isaac Newton first discovered the law of gravity. He saw from his window that an apple fell from a tree, and he pondered over it and pondered, and studied all the problems of mathematics and solved this question, and came to the conclusion and described the law of gravity. What did he describe ? That all apples that ever grew on a tree fell, and that all that would ever grow on a tree in the future would fall. That is what law means, to make an isolated incident universal. So, anything that is offered to you as an isolated incident, do not accept it as an exception, but regard it as a law that is universal. You can do the same thing, and would be able to do it under those

conditions. This is the rational basis of religion, and this kind of religion will be based upon science, philosophy, and logic. That is why the Vedanta is so tremendously strong. We do not build castles in their air; we build everything upon the solid ground of truth and logic. So, if any individual possesses healing power, do not consider that he is an exception. That power is universal. Only in that particular person, it might have been a special expression on a certain plane. The difference is only in degree. When you reach that plane, you will be able to do the same. Therefore, the science of Yoga tells us that what one Yogi has done, others will do under the same conditions. If a Yogi has buried himself for forty days, every Yogi can bury himself for forty days and still live. It is not an exception. Therefore it is called a science. Any other system that you study, which may be evolution, or anything like that, if it deals with exceptions, it is not scientific and rational, but is based upon heresy or tradition. Science demands universal and uniform law, and under the principle you will find that the science of breath is absolutely rational, and what it says, is truth.

Therefore, first of all, we have to learn how to control the energy that is in our own individual body. We cannot catch that energy outside of us, because we have no such power. We can only deal with that which we control or which we call our own. Your lungs are your own. Your heart action is your own. You would not be bound by the heart action of your fellow beings or by the lung troubles of another person, because that does not concern you. You are the centre of your own world, and the *prana* that is manifested in you, is a primary thing. It is the first thing that you can get hold of. That part of nature which is called microcosm, is a part of the macrocosm, which is the universe, and that part of nature is your own, which is directly under your power and control, or in direct relation to your being. Therefore, you learn to control. Control your breath, because breath is the outward manifestation of *prana*. You must not go all of a sudden and break yourself to pieces. The life-force is a powerful thing. It is tremendously powerful. It will knock you off your feet. You must not monkey with it. But go slow, and gradually try to understand the process. You must remember that it is the

gigantic life-force of the universe, which is manifested through our individual body, and this is the all-doer. If it is disturbed, it creates all kinds of trouble. If it is handled gently, it produces miraculous results. Therefore, we should learn slowly and gradually. Study your own system. Concentrate your mind on the different functions of your body, and you will see new revelations coming to you. You will understand the laws of nature, because whatever is in your body, is universal. You have nothing more or less than what exists in the universe. You are part and parcel of the universe. So, when you study one minute particle of matter, study it carefully, and by this study you will study the whole universe, because the same forces and the same laws are working in the microcosm, as are working in the whole universe. Standing upon that fundamental principle, study your own self. By 'self' here we mean the physical self. Start from the physical body and march on gradually. Study little by little by concentrating your own mind. See the action of your mind upon your whole physical organism, and see how it works, and how feelings gradually become subtler and deeper. Practise every day a little of the breathing exercises which you have taken—start and study. Regulate your breath. By regulating your breath you will be able to get a rhythm in your system, and that rhythm will produce wonderful results. It will bring harmony to your mind, and your organic functions will be rhythmic. You will be able to eliminate all the impurities of your system. You will draw in more oxygen. That is the physiological side, which you will study in the Raja Yoga. I have dealt with this subject also in my book, *How to Be a Yogi.* But the physiological side is not the only side. The other side is the mental side or the relation of mind to breath. When your mind is concentrated, you will find your breath becomes slow and deep naturally. You do not have to make any effort. Persevere and make your breath slow and deep, and your mind will be quieted. Any time when your mind is disturbed, or agitated or worried, go to the corner of your room and sit by yourself and take a few deep breaths. Regulate your breath and you will find at once your worry and anxiety gone. If you have suffered a loss, or of anything disturbs your mind, you throw it off. Perhaps you do not know how to throw it off. Just

take a few deep breaths, and you will see a most wonderful change. If your mind is overcome with grief or sorrow or disappointment, try to control the mind. Keep one spot in your room separate and sacred and there do not allow your mind to think of worldly things. Just keep the vibration of the room on a high plane, so that any time when you are disturbed and your mind is vibrating on a lower plane, i.e. on the plane of disharmony, go to that corner, where you have kept in reserve, as it were, the higher vibrations, and sit there for a few minutes. Atmosphere of that corner will permeate and influence your mind, and you will find a change. Your mind will be quieted. These are all facts. You can experiment with them and see how true they are. You do not have to go to any church. Indians have their own chapels in their homes. A room set apart for meditation, or, if they cannot afford a room, a corner in their room is screened off. There they sit and offer their own prayers and take spiritual exercises, like meditation, control of breathing, concentration etc. You do the same and make it a part of your routine work. You will find a wonderful change, and then you will fill not only your body, but your mind and soul also, with truths that are worth having. You will find that you have thus reformed yourself. You will be a different being. All the things that you do not know you will know; and all the questions that arise in your mind will gradually become answered in the silence. You just ask a question before you sit in the silence. Give a knock at the door of your spirit and the answer will come in the silence. The answer will be a revelation—an inspiration, and it will show you just the thing that you are trying to get, or wish to know. These are the most wonderful truths. You must remember that you are a child of God. There is nothing mortal in you, except your gross physical form and psychic mind. Again everything is immortal in essence, and that is your birthright to know. We are simply here to tell you this truth, so that you would be benefited by doing the things as we do; so that you would be able to know more and rise on a higher plane of consciousness and get a glimpse of the Infinite. Trace your relation with the Infinite and understand how grand, beautiful, and glorious you are in reality. The fear of death vanishes at once. You will be a blessing to humanity.

You all will become like Christ, like God. In fact, Christ means a state—a divine state. It means an individual who reached the state of Christhood and became Christ. Christ will be born in you, and that means you will attain that perfect state. Christ also explained that, but his disciples and followers did not understand him, and that is the reason why there is so much trouble in the Christian theology. Theology goes in one direction, while Christ's religion is entirely different. You must remember that when you understand the true spirit of Christ, Christ will be born in you, and you will be able to realize the same truth that Christ realized when he said: 'I and my Father are one'. The science of breath brings about that perfect state of realization.

CHAPTER V

THE PSYCHIC PRANA

In the study of the science of breath, we have learned what *prana* is, how it is the universal life-force and is working in our system in the form of the motion of the lungs, how it is the ruler of all the organic functions, and so on. Now we shall study the psychic *prana*. Let us understand how the psychic *prana* is related to our nervous system and all the nerve actions. According to the Yogis, there are two nerve currents in the spinal column, called *pingala* and *ida*, and there is a hollow canal called *sushumna*, running through the spinal cord. At the lower end of the hollow canal is what the Yogis call the seat of *kundalini*. It is described in the *Yogasastra* as *muladhara*, which is traingular in form, and in which there sleeps *kama-kala* or *kundalini*. It is the coiled-up static energy that sleeps, i.e. remains unmanifested in the basic centre, *muladhara-chakra*. It is situated at the lower end of the spinal column. The Yogis consider this basic centre as a lotus bud, and it gradually opens when the coiled-up energy awakens. Ordinarily it is sleeping.[1] It awakes and rises from the end of the spine to the brain, through the different centres. At each centre there is a *chakra*[2] or a plexus. The principal plexuses in the spinal column are called *chakras*, which mean literally circles or centres. Yogis consider these *chakras* as lotuses (*padmas*). Ordinarily, *kundalini* or coiled-up energy is like a snake. The snake is used as a symbol of energy, because its motion is spiral. When it moves it goes zig-zag, and when the current rises upward, it goes in a spiral form. That is the reason why Yogis represent it by the symbol of the snake. When *kundalini* awakes, it tries to force a passage through the hollow canal of the *sushumna* and, as it rises, step by step, all the psychic powers and visions, like thought-reading, clairvoyance, and clair-audience come to the Yogis. All these powers are revealed

[1] The word 'sleeping' here connotes the idea of unmanifested state.

[2] *Chakra* has been mentioned in the Tantra as lotus (*padma*).

when *kundalini* wakes up and goes from centre to centre upward towards the brain (*sahasrara*).

As the basic energy, *kundalini* awakes and rises upward, it draws with it all the nerve currents. Nerve currents are produced by *prana*. If you have ever practised concentration or meditation, you must notice that, when you go deep into it, your lower limbs gradually become numb. More, you would not have any sensation in the leg, and your nerve currents would go upward. You will feel an electric current, rising from the end of the spine upwards. All those feelings you can have very easily, if you try to concentrate or meditate. If your mind is really concentrated on one point, the circulation goes up, and as the nerve currents go, step by step, you gradually become unconscious of the lower extremities of your body. By being unconscious, you need not be frightened, because your consciousness becomes centred in the brain, or it might be in the solar plexus, or in any other centre in the spinal column, opposite the heart or lungs or throat. These are the different centres that will be described in this chapter. When the consciousness (mind) reaches the brain, the lower parts of the body become numb, as it were, and you are not conscious of your limbs. Then you become not actually unconscious, but you forget that you have limbs. Your mind is fixed on something higher, something more abstract, and gradually your mind goes from the concrete to the abstract, and from the abstract to the Absolute. These are the different stages through which the mind reaches the highest state of Godconsciousness. You cannot, at first, all of a sudden concentrate your mind upon the highest, but you must have to begin from the gross and go step by step into finer and finer. It is just as everybody does in target practice. If you take the smallest hole at first, you would not be able to hit it. You have to take a large spot, and when you have practised and your aim is correct, you will gradually be able to shoot at the minutest thing. The same thing happens in concentration. You, first of all, have to take a lower form, and gradually go to the subtle, and from the subtle to the abstract, and from the abstract you gradually transcend the realm of time and space and realize the Absolute. The Absolute is beyond our speech, thought, and beyond our conception of time and space. So long as we have thoughts in

our mind, we are far away from the Absolute, we are on the plane of relativity, and we are within the limits of time and space, which are limiting adjuncts to the transcendental Absolute. Therefore, that is the most difficult thing to do. But it can be done, and yet you cannot expect it all of a sudden. If you try, you would not succeed at first. You will have to practise. You will have to train your mind to go beyond thoughts, and then you will be able to enter into the realm of the Absolute.

When *kundalini* wakes up and enters into the centre of the brain (*sahasrara*),[3] the consciousness of the Yogi becomes detached from the gross sense consciousness. He is then above the consciousness of the body and surroundings, where he is sitting and meditating. All the conscious activities of his mind and senses stop for the time being. Nay, his consciousness is on a higher plane. It is never lost, but it works on a different plane. You will also notice that when your consciousness is connected with the sense perception, you are conscious of the surroundings. But, when you go to sleep, you are not conscious of your surroundings or the things that are in the room. Then you are conscious of another plane, where you are dreaming. And that is the mental plane. You are conscious of the dream, but not of the surroundings on the physical plane, because your mind is withdrawn or detached from the sense organs. You cannot be conscious of the table or chair, if your mind is detached from the organs of perception. If your mind is deeply absorbed in reading, you would not be conscious of the ticking of the clock, which is in your room and ticking all the time. That shows that your mind is deeply concentrated or absorbed. If you can voluntarily bring about that state of mind, you gain control over your mind. You are doing it unconsciously at the present time, but when you do it voluntarily and make an effort to withdraw your mind from the sound and noise around you will be able to do it. At first you would not succeed. But, the more you practise, the more you will realize. Nobody can give you these powers, because they are within your soul, only you have to arouse them.

Kundalini is the mother of all the higher perceptions. It

[3] It is called *sahasrara*, because the centre or lotus is possessed of thousand petals.

is sleeping in an ordinary person, but in a Yogi it is awakened and, therefore, the Yogi has the power to withdraw himself from the surroundings and become unconscious, and that means, he is unconscious of the surroundings, but conscious on a higher plane. He does not go to the absolute unconscious state. That is not desirable. But you should remember that your consciousness is working on different planes of existence. Now it is on the lower sense plane. Then it would be on the intellectual or mental plane ; or, if you go further up, you will rise beyond the plane of thoughts and enter into the plane of the Absolute. Then, again, it will come down and bring your experience back to your ordinary conscious plane. All these things can be done. The Raja Yoga describes these processes in a scientific way, by which any person can attain to these states. It is not to be understood as a special gift of God. Every individual soul is already gifted like that, being a child of God, and already possesses all these powers. When you study ordinary sectarian religions, the teachers will tell you that there are certain persons who have certain perceptions of the Absolute or God. And they are the specially gifted and chosen people of God. But all those ideas or beliefs cannot stand in the light of science. Science states that everything should be universal, and, if one has attained or reached a state, that can also be reached by others. If it could not be reached by others, it would not be scientific. If Christ reached a certain state, others have reached that state, and you will be able to reach that state too. Now, is there any method by which that state can be reached ? The Yogis in India would say that there is a scientific method. Some people might follow that scientific method without knowing, and get certain results ; but others would go intelligently and rationally and prove that these things can be done by anyone, who is earnest and sincere, and who would keep his end up. So they are not exceptions. Just think of Christ's body and mind and his power. He was a Yogi and had power. He could detach his soul from the body and mind. If he could not detach himself, he would not have prayed for his persecutors while he was on the cross and in the midst of greatest suffering. He withdrew himself and went into that state of calmness from where he could pray. That shows he was a Yogi. He had the power and he was not the

only one. He might have been one example at that time among a certain class of people, but there were other people in other parts of the world who had lived before his time and had similar experiences. They had gone through all those states and had the power of withdrawing themselves from the physical organism. Therefore, if you be so full of prejudice and have fanatical ideas as to believe that Christ was the only one and nobody else had such experiences, that would be a mistake. But, if you keep your mind open and study things scientifically, you will know that there is a certain law. Now, what is that law ? That law is that there is no exception to the laws of nature. Again, every exception is a law of nature. If Christ was an exception, then that exception was a universal law. And that is the point which the Yogis in India emphasize very strongly. If Christ attained a certain state, why should others not be able to attain that state ? There is no special gift of God reserved, because we are all children of God, and, therefore, it is our birthright. So, if you consider in that scientific way, you will find that everything will become easy to understand. Otherwise, it is all mystery. But there is no such thing as mystery in these teachings of the Yoga psychology. Mysteries can be explained scientifically by this wonderful system of the Raja Yoga.

Those, who have dissected the human body and the spinal column, have found that a thin fibre is there. The different plexuses that have their centres in the spinal cord can very well stand for the different *chakras* of the Yogi. These *chakras* are the plexuses through which the motor and sensory nerves branch out and go to the principal organs. For instance, there is a centre from which the motor and sensory nerves go out and are connected with the lungs, with the heart, with the digestive organs, and with other organs of our body. The Yogi conceives of several centres, beginning with the basic lotus, *muladhara,* and ending with the thousand-petalled lotus, *sahasrara* in the brain.

The centres or *chakras* are radiant, and different shining sensations radiate from them, as does light from the sun. You study those different plexuses, from the end of the spine upward, and come to the highest, the brain, which is conceived as the thousand-petalled lotus (*sahasrara-padma*).

The idea of the Yogi can be understood very easily in the language of modern physiology. There are two sorts of actions

in these nerve currents: one, afferent and the other, efferent; one, sensory and the other, motor; one, centripetal, and the other, centrifugal. One carries the sensations to the brain, and the other from the brain to the outer body. The sensory nerves produce sensation, and the motor nerves, activity. For instance, if you have any pain for the punching of your toe, the sensation will be carried by the sensory nerves, and you suddenly move your foot, because you do not like it. That is the action of the motor nerve. It is connected with the brain and ultimately linked with the centre in the spine. You feel disagreeable sensation and your mind orders you to stop it. So you move your foot out of the way. That motion is produced by the motor nerve which carries the order of the mind like a telephone message. These nerves are the wires through which the sensation travels and the activity comes as the result. So, there are these two sets of nerves which branch out from different centres.

Now we shall see why breathing is practised. We regulate the vibration of the molecules of the body through breathing exercises. If that is done properly, and if we get a rhythm in our inhaling and exhaling, the molecules will vibrate in harmony with that rhythm, and we will then generate a current almost the same as electricity, which may be called magnetic. And, when all the motions of the body have become perfectly rhythmical, the body has become a gigantic battery of will. That is why the Yogi wants to make his body a gigantic battery of will. First, he wants to train up, as it were, all the molecules of his system and vibrate them. They can produce tremendous vibration. The vibration will be so strong that, if he sits in a room, everybody will feel that vibration. He is throwing off that vibration all around, and you will feel it. The Yogis try to transmute the physical forces into mental forces and intellectual forces; and then mental forces and intellectual forces can also be transmuted into higher will-power and to other spiritual forces. Because, there is no difference in kind, between the physical and the spiritual. They are all connected. The same *prana* is working through the layers of these different planes of vibration, and they are inter-changeable. It is just as electricity is one, but heat, light, and motion are interchangeable. They are the different manifestations. The difference

is only in degree. They are all electricity. What moves street cars, is electricity. When it gives you light, it is electricity. And it can produce sound and music too. That is still electricity. All these are different manifestations. The same *prana* is manifesting on these different planes, and one can be transmuted or changed into another. The Yogi does that at his will. He takes a physical force and changes it into a spiritual force, and, therefore, he has a power of an inexhaustible store, as it were. He never lacks in his strength. That is the secret. That secret can be mastered by those who try. Others will feel that there is nothing in it, because they do not know and have not the experience and, therefore, their opinion would be of no value.

Now you understand the physiological side as to why you have to practise the rhythmic breath. It is because you want to get that rhythm. You know how powerful the rhythm is. For instance, when the soldiers march over a bridge, the bridge will vibrate so much that it will be shaken to its foundation. Therefore, they are ordered not to march rhythmically over a bridge. A thousand men walking on that bridge, dropping steps at the same time and going with rhythm, is a tremendous power. You try to breathe rhythmically a few times and see what a vibration you get. Your whole body will be shaken. Of course, you do not want to do it so as to put yourself into any kind of uneasy state or to get sick over it, but a little experiment will convince you that it is possible. Sometimes in New York, when I was meditating in the class like this, I would be so vibrating that the whole room would be affected by that vibration. Anybody can do that. There was no need, but I did it just to convince all that it could be done.

If we can generate a rhythmic action in all the organic functions by our will-power, we have gained control over all the organic functions. That means that our will-power is stronger than all the organic functions. Otherwise, it would not change the course. Now it is going on in its natural course. Our heart is beating in a certain way, lungs are going on regularly, and digestive organs are performing their functions. All these are not under the control of our conscious will, but they are subconsciously going on. But these could be brought back under the control of the conscious will, and, when that is

done, it will prove to you that you are the master. Your body is the instrument which you are directing. At present, you think that you are the slave of your body and the body is your master. But it is not. It is just the opposite, and the sooner you become convinced of that, the greater benefit will come to you; because, then you will know that the body is not indispensable to you. You can stand outside of the body. The fear of death will vanish at once, when you can withdraw your mind from the sense organs and the body. At the time of death you should not be afraid. Because, you will then throw away the body, as you throw away your old coat. But, ordinarily, you are so attached to the body that you are afraid of. You become bewildered,—what will you do, and what will happen to you? And you thus go into a state of oblivion, into a state of darkness, at the time of death. And actually, you will go there in that state of darkness, if you do not make efforts to come out of the darkness. But, when are you going to make an effort? Do you think that the time of death is the best time to make an effort to get out of that darkness? No, while you have full strength and good health, that is the time. You die many times before your natural death. You may be physically dead, but that is nothing. Physical death does not kill you—the immortal *Atman*. That is only temporary. The moment you forget that you have the body, it is similar to death. What else? Again you come back. Yogi dispels darkness by developing that power through these different practices. There is no doubt that it can be done.

The aim of *pranayama* is to rouse the coiled-up power, in the *muladhara*, called the *kundalini*. *Kundalini* is a power at the end of the spine, which I have described before. *Pranayama* means the control of *prana* or the vital breath. And how can that control of this *prana* be attained? It is possible to control the vital breath through the breathing exercises.

Now, the *kundalini*, or the coiled-up energy, which is sleeping at present, can be aroused through the breathing exercises and concentration. It can also be aroused by other methods. The breathing exercise is the most scientific of all the methods; but other methods are called by other names, such as Bhakti Yoga. The same *kundalini* can be aroused through devotional exercises, through love and prayer. What happens when you

pray intently? Your mind becomes concentrated through emotion; you forget everything connected with the body. And, if that emotion be very strong, your mind is concentrated and your breath becomes rhythmic, and the result is, you generate a current in the system and the *kundalini* is aroused. You need not have to practise the breathing exercises, but through devotional exercises, the same result can be obtained. All those who have gone through the path of devotion and prayer and other worship, have attained to the same result only in another way. But the aspirants do not know what happened to them. They might understand that the grace of the Lord came, and they were lifted up above this plane. That would not be a scientific explanation. That might do all right for those who have faith in such ideals, but when you bring it down to the scientific point of view, how do you explain that? You explain it just this way. What do all the saints accomplish? Why do they get such wonderful powers? How do they get them? They get them through the ascending of *kundalini,* but they do not know it. This is the only science in the whole world which explains the cause of all the experiences of the great saints and saviours of the world, and, therefore, it is the most scientific system that was ever given to the world. The more you study, the more you will understand what all these mean. Then, after studying and gaining a little experience, you read your scriptures, and there you will find some truth in those passages which were mysterious to you at one time. But, of course, in the scriptures there are lots of things which you do not want to understand, because there may be a great many statements given out by those who had certain ideas about things. But underneath all these, there is truth, and that truth can be discovered by a few only. Others take everything literally, and they fall into deeper error. They think that every word that is written in the scriptures is the word of God. I heard once an Episcopalian minister in London. During the Diamond Jubilee of the late Queen Victoria, I went to his church in London where this minister was preaching. He was preaching about the progress which the church had made during the Victorian age. He said: 'We believed that the Bible was the word of God, but during the Victorian age, we have learned that the Bible is not the word of God, but the word of God is in the Bible'.

And that is a great difference. There is a lot of trash and superstition in it, and a lot of mistakes in it. You could not believe, for instance, the story of creation that the sun was made after the earth had come into existence. Your science disproves it. The sun was not created after the earth had been finished. It could not be possible. And, if you consider that as the word of God, that would be a very serious thing, because it could not be so. Then you can say that the power of the Lord is mysterious and inscrutable; you must not ask questions—that would be blasphemous. Well, shut your eyes and go to sleep. That is the way it is done. Those things you will reject. There is no sense in believing blindly in those statements which are false. You know that Moses never wrote those books. How could he write about his own death? He describes how he died and what happened after his death. They were written a long time after Moses had died, and the story of the Genesis was taken from the story that had existed among the Phoenicians and Babylonians. The original tablets have been excavated and kept in the British Musuem, from which the Jews made up that story. There you will find the two versions in the first and the second chapters of the Genesis. Those are the two versions discovered on the tablets. What is the use of believing those versions literally? That does not do any good to us. Find out what truth there is. This is the age of science and reason, when we have to do it. Otherwise we will remain superstitious and make no progress. We shall have to pick out the passages that will harmonize with science and reject the rest, as far as the description of the creation of the sun, the moon, and the stars, and so on, is concerned. But, as to the other things—the experiences on the spiritual plane,—they might be based upon some kind of truth. You will find lots of fictitious statements, for instance, the personal Devil. But there is no such thing as the personal Devil. It is an old mythological being, Ahriman, which was taken down from the Zend Avesta. Ahura Mazda was the creator of the good and Ahriman was the creator of the evil. The Jews never had the idea of the Devil before they came in contact with the Persians, during the Babylonian captivity, 598 to 538 B.C. At that time, they accepted Persian ideals, and afterwards, handed them down to the Christians and accepted them as the gospel truth. The

Higher Criticism of the Bible has discussed those things. You will have to use your judgment in finding out the truth. You can create a devil by your thought, and visualize him and be frightened by him. The Devil is the destructive evil force personified. Any thought, that you hold, if it is going to destroy and injure others and make you more and more selfish, is devilish. Do not encourage it. If you do encourage it, you are under the influence of the Devil. In this way, you must understand the truth. The creator of good is all right. But, if we believe in the creator of good, who would be the creator of the better and of the best, and then who would be the creater of the worst ? There cannot be two creators. Then God would be limited. So, in this way, many difficulties will arise, and in order to avoid them, we must understand the absolute Truth. We must solve the problem of life and death, and then we will enjoy our life. We need not be frightened all the time that we are born in sin and iniquity, and we are going to eternal perdition. The Lord will save us. But how is the Lord going to save us ? If He made you so that you are going to eternal punishment, who can save you ? Then you will say some saviour must come. That is the scheme of salvation. That is all right. Let some people believe, who cannot grasp anything better, but it is not for those who are rationally minded people. Therefore, you should open your mind to truth and accept truth as it is. If you want to gain experience and get the flash of Godconsciousness, just practise a little, either through devotional exercises, or through prayer, or concentration, or breathing exercises, and arouse *kundalini,* and then you will find wonderful things. Then those wonderful experiences will convince you that you are a soul, and that soul is separate from the body. You are not confined within the body, and you are not going to eternal perdition. You will be able to see your future where you are going. The future is right now. But it is covered with the veil of darkness. Pierce that veil and go through it, and everything will be beautiful. That is what we want to know. That is what religion ought to teach us, to make our life beautiful, to understand the truth, and to bring God nearer to this plane. Let us realize divinity in and through all the acts of our daily life. That is the ideal of the Raja Yoga. The Raja Yogi understands the ethical aim, and he strives for

it. He knows the different methods or systems, and takes them up, step by step, and, if you want an explanation of it, you can have it. In this way, you will learn that the fundamental ideal of all the experiences of the saints and saviours of the world are there. It is just the rousing of *kundalini,* the coiled-up energy, and that energy contains all the spiritual powers, all the psychic powers, and, in one word, everything.

When you find that these psychic powers are coming with tremendous force, you should be glad to get rid of them. They would be a terrible bondage. They will be a nuisance. Once I told you how a man, who was a clairaudient, came to me. He was hearing all the noises of the city, and the whistles of the boats and trains at a distance. He used to live in Brooklyn. When he would try to go to sleep, he would be hearing all these noises and was going crazy. He said; 'Can you help me stop it? I am going cracy.' Suppose you go in a street car and you are sitting with quite a number of passengers, and you have the power to read the thoughts that are going on in the minds of those passengers. Would you be happy? I would not envy you of your position, because it is a most terrible state of mind. It would drive you crazy. You would be glad to get rid of that power when you will come to know its true nature. So thought-reading is not a pleasure. Similarly, you will find that all the psychic powers are great hindrances and obstacles. In the Raja Yoga these are described later on. First, it states all the powers that are attained and afterwards explains how they are all obstacles. Therefore, you must be very careful about how you are to practise and what you get. Do not be fooled or deluded. Certain powers are very fascinating, but they are also the most dangerous. Therefore, if you are simple like a child and go straight forward with one ideal, not accepting anything which comes in the way, you would reach the highest state of Godconsciousness and nothing short of it and then you would be able to overcome those tempting powers and limitations, and there would be no fear and danger any more. Then you will be able to know the truth, and when you know the truth, you will become free from all bondage. Christ said to his disciples: 'Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.' That freedom of the soul from all bondage, is the ideal of the Raja Yoga.

CHAPTER VI

THE CONCENTRATION

We have studied the meaning of *pranayama,* and what *prana* is. *Prana* is the life-force, or the vital energy. We have also studied the relation that exists between *prana* and our respiratory process. The motion of the lungs is caused by *prana,* the vital energy, and it is working in our system. It is seated at the different centres, in the spinal cord, and it controls and governs the various organs of the body. By controlling the motion of the lungs, we gain the power of mastery over all the organic functions. We have also learned the relation of the respiratory process and our mental states. When our mind is restless, our breath is irregular, short, and quick. When our mind is peaceful, devotional, full of unselfish love, and feeling of faith and love for God, our breath is deep, long and regular. All the changes, which we find in our breath, are conditioned by our mental states, and vice versa. When we regulate our breath and change the short quick breaths into long and deep ones, then we indirectly regulate our mental states. Therefore, the science of breath has been of great importance. It is a physical method, but this physical method has psychic results, and, therefore, the practice of the science of breath is regarded as an aid to concentration. When you find that your mind is very restless and you cannot concentrate upon any object, you take a few deep breaths and regulate your breathe, and you will find that it will be easier for you to concentrate your mind upon any subject, whether it is material or business or higher subjects—spiritual or divine. The process of concentration is the same, but the object of concentration varies, and necessarily, the result which we gain through the power of concentration, also varies. If we fix our mind on business affairs, we cannot expect to realize God or the infinite being; but we gain the immediate results in the way of success or understanding the problems concerning our business situations and business questions. On scientific lines also you will find the same. The result will be the discovery of the laws of nature, even if you

concentrate your mind upon material objects. For instance, if you concentrate your mind on atoms and try to find out their cause, you will be able to discover the source. By the same method, all the finer particles known as electrons were discovered through the power of deep concentration, and afterwards instruments were invented to make the discovery easy. Now, there was a time when the scientists thought that atoms were the final units of matter and they were indivisible units, but now we know better. Now they are not indivisible units, but are divisible. In fact, each atom consists of corpuscles or electrons. A hundred corpuscles or electrons will make up an atom. These electrons again are the negative centres of electricity. Positive centres are known as nucleus.[1] There is one positive centre around which the negative centres or electrons are revolving and that revolution of thousands of electrons around the positive centre (nucleus) makes an atom. The speed of these electrons is very fast, as fast as the speed of light, which is 186,000 miles per second. We cannot imagine that speed. Think of 186,000 miles a second! From here to New York is 3000 miles. In 1/6000th of a second you can send there an electric message over the wire. That would be the proportion of the speed. But, however, all this has been accomplished through the power of the mind of man. The mind of man is the most wonderful instrument. It is the instrument which the soul uses to cognize the objects, on this plane of senses, and also to know any other things that are beyond our sense perceptions. Gradually we rise higher and higher, until we reach the highest state of the real vision of the Absolute, which is the infinite source of consciousness and intelligence. The Absolute is worshipped under different names, and we call the same Absolute God, the infinite Being, or the supreme Spirit. We cannot concentrate our mind upon the supreme Spirit, unless we have gained and developed that power. So, first of all we must learn how to develop that power, and go step by step.

Now, before we come to the discussion of concentration proper, there is a step preliminary to it. That is described in

[1] Positron was discovered in 1933, and the knowledge about the structure of the atom or its nature was hazy, when this lecture was delivered (1920).

the *sadhanapada* (2.54) of the Raja Yoga. It is called *pratyahara,* which means gathering force or energy. Patanjali says: 'स्वविषया सम्प्रयोगे चित्तस्य स्वरूपानुकार इवेन्द्रियाणां प्रत्याहारः।' In fact, the rays of the mental energy are scattered, going through the doors of our senses into the external world. In that way we are becoming conscious of the external objects. Now, we have to gather those scattered energies and focus them towards one point, before we can learn how to concentrate our mind, and that step is described here as the preliminary one.

At present, you all know that our senses are more powerful than our will-power. Our will-power is weak. The moment we see anything pleasant, we naturally become attracted towards that thing. If we hear music, our mind is attracted there. At present the mind is working under the control of impressions that we receive through the senses, and we have no power to overcome them. But, when we have gained that power, we can withdraw our attention from one object and fix it upon chosen objects, which we like to think upon. Then we can hold our mind away from any disturbance. For instance, when you are concentrating upon a divine subject or the supreme Spirit, if you hear a street organ at that time, would you go and begin to dance, or would you concentrate ? What would you do ? The ordinary mind which has no control over it, would take the rhythm and follow the music, and the concentration would be thrown overboard. But, if you can withdraw your mind from the sensation, that you get through the ears, you will not hear the sound. You know how sound is produced. Sound is produced by the vibration of air. That vibration of air enters into your ears and strikes the tympanum and produces vibrations which are again carried by auditory nerve to the cortex of the brain, and produces there certain molecular changes. Then there is the conscious entity which thinks and cognizes those vibrations of the molecules, and interprets those vibrations into sensations. The brain does not perceive that sensation. It only gets the vibration, and the conscious mind interprets that vibration and makes it a feeling or sensation. Otherwise, it would have nothing to do with our conscious entity. That can be done only when the soul or mind receives that. If the soul or mind is detached from that centre, the vibrations might go on, but there would be no

response. Just as when you go to sleep, the same vibrations are there from the noise of the street car or any other kind of noise outside. They are entering into your ears and producing those molecular changes in the brain, but your mind is asleep and you do not hear it. How can you hear it ? Only when you are conscious and put your attention, you recognize that there is a certain vibration, and when you recognize and translate it, you call it your feeling. Otherwise the brain might be vibrating all the time, but would not produce any sensation at all. As for example, in a dead body the vibration might be going on, but there is no sensation. Similarly your eyes may be wide open when you sleep at night, but as your mind, i.e. attention is not there, you do not see anything. There are some persons, who go to sleep with their eyes wide open, as some animals do, but they do not see any colour or light, because their mind is withdrawn from the centre of vision in the back of their head, in the cortex of the brain. There occurs a vibration of the colour, but as there is no receiver to receive and translate it into a sensation of colour, the person who sleeps with eyes wide open, would not see any colour. It shows that we can attach our mind to the centres of sense organs and detach it, but we do not do it voluntarily during our waking state. It has become almost a subject, which we do not know anything about. But, when you analyse your mind and compare what happens during sleep, you wonder if that can happen during sleep and why you cannot do it while you are awake. Withdraw your mind from any organ and that thing will stop. It would no longer be yours. For instance, if you have any disagreeable odour you are smelling in the room, withdraw your mind from the organ of smell and you would not feel it. In the same way, if any disagreeable sight comes, withdraw your mind from the organ of vision, and you would not see it. That is so, because you are doing it unconsciously. Only bring that into the realm of your conscious mind, and that is quite possible. That is, what the Raja Yoga tells us and what we are doing unconsciously, can be done consciously. It is not that there is some power which we should get from above the clouds, or which would be a special gift, but it is in every person. Everybody has that power, only he does not know how to use it wisely. Therefore, through practice, that can be developed,

and when that is accomplished, the result is that the mind becomes free from the control of the senses. At present the mind is a slave. You can see that for yourself that mind is slavishly following the appetites and desires of the senses. It has no control. But you will have to detach the mind from the organs, which are only the instruments like the machine. The mind has created these organs and is utilising them to serve certain purpose, and when that purpose is served, there is no more use for the instrument. It might take another instrument. That shows that you are the soul, and your body is the instrument which your soul has created through desires. Of course, the creation does not mean the coming out of something out of nothing, but it is assimilating the materials from the environments and manufacturing out of that material some organ, which would be useful to you. It is just as you have done with the organs of digestion, the alimentary canal, teeth, and so on. If you have no desire to eat, your teeth, alimentary canal and stomach and digestive organs would be worthless. If any one stops eating and using the teeth and alimentary canal, he would be atrophied and would die. So he gets the life by his desire and for the use.

In this way you find out that you are the manufacturer of your instruments. If you can manufacture one, you can manufacture twenty or more. So, when this body is gone, you should not be sorry for it. You take that power with you to manufacture another, and you are not gone or annihilated. That idea would give you great encouragement and strength, and you will find that this life is not the only one. It is like a link in the chain of your past and future lives. That one link must not be neglected, but it should be kept in proper order, so that the next link may be a good resultant of the present one, and in this way you may proceed higher and higher, until you come to the highest standard of life and fulfil the purpose of your existence. For that reason, you should study very carefully your mind and mental functions and their relations to the organism and organic functions.

So, gathering of the scattered rays of the mental energy towards one point, will help us to understand what is going on within us. At present we are eating, drinking, sleeping and doing these different kinds of work, day after day, automatically,

like a machine. We are attending to certain business, struggling a little, fighting with our competitors, and earning bread by doing such other things. But we are not fulfilling the highest purpose of life. We may go on doing all these things, yet we shall find time to do something else, to study ourselves, and to study our mind. That is more important. Otherwise, we cannot take care of the instrument. We do not know the laws. If we are ignorant of all the conditions and the laws, we would be constantly violating the laws and get sick and suffer, while our ideal would be to avoid all sufferings and all causes of trouble. Knowledge is power, and, therefore, we should have knowledge. When we have knowledge, we know the conditions and methods, as to how to better ourselves and live on this plane and gratify our desires of the highest nature, not merely selfish desires, which are so narrow that we do not recognize the rights of others and the selves of others. We should understand that our individual selves are related to the universal Self and related to humanity, and by recognizing that, we should live in the world to help humanity and the growth of the future generations in a higher line; and then the future races will be able to remove all the difficulties and troubles that we cannot remove at the present time. That way we will set our examples for the good of those who are coming next.

You all know how hard it is to control your mind. When you sit down and try to concentrate your mind, you will find that it is very difficult. The mind runs away, slips out, and does not obey your commands. It is by nature restless, and that restlessness has been compared by a great poet in India, to a monkey. You know that a monkey is naturally restless. But the poet found that the natural restlessness of the monkey is not enough to describe the restlessness of our mind, so he said that the monkey was drunken freely of wine, and he is a drunken monkey. You know how restless he would be then. And that was not enough that he was a drunken monkey, but he was afterward stung by a scorpion. You know a scorpion is like a tarantula. It is very poisonous. A person who has been stung, jumps about forty-eight hours and does not know what he is doing. Even that is not the climax. So he added to it that afterwards the monkey was obsessed by a demon. That is the condition of our mind. Think of the restlessness

that you have to fight with. Your mind, which is naturally restless, drinks the wine of self-pride and vanity. So it is very restless and cannot sit still. It shakes its head and goes about. Then it is stung by the scorpion of jealousy and envy. After that it is still worse. And then the demon of egoism comes down and sits on the chest of the person, when he is finished, that is, completely overcome. Now you have to control that monkey-mind. How shall you do that ? You will have to train this monkey-mind, so that it would obey your commands.

The first lesson is to sit for some time and let the mind run on. Sit in silence and let the mind run wherever it goes, but keep a watch. That experience of watchful waiting is very good here. Keep a watch and let it go, but do not lose sight of the mind, but watch where it goes. Remember always where the mind goes. The mind turns back to see whether it is watched or not, and, if it finds somebody watching, it does not go very far, but comes back. That is its peculiar character. Just like a trained monkey, if you are letting him go, he runs and turns back to see if the man is watching. If he is watched, he will not go very far. Such is the case of the mind.

You remember the illustration. I said that mind is like a lake. The surface of the lake is like the conscious plane and below the surface is the subconscious plane towards the bottom. Every time you gratify a desire, that impression goes down to the subconscious plane, to the bottom of the lake, and there it stays. It stays there for some time in the form of an impression (*samskara*), and that impression again rises up in the form of a bubble, and that bubble is the desire. That desire comes up on the surface for the same thing. Whatever you have enjoyed once in a while, your mind has the tendency to repeat it and to want it again. If you have eaten any unusual and very palatable dish, which you never ate before, or ate once in a while, you would have a desire to eat that again. That is the tendency of the mind. In every function, any desire or sense pleasure which you enjoy, the impression of it goes down to the subconscious plane and comes up in the form of a bubble and that bubble spreads on the surface and forms ripples and waves, and then you have to gratify the strong desire and strong impulse in order to stop that restlessness of the surface. Next, when you gratify that desire, those waves subside and go down

to the bottom in the form of an impression, and rise up again in another desire. That is the process going on everyday with everybody. So, the mind is bubbling up, and when we try to control it, the latent impressions will be coming up. Try to control your mind, and you will find those all kinds of hideous things will come to your mind. You will be surprised to know terrible thoughts you have within yourself, and sometimes you will be ashamed of those thoughts. Sometimes, you will find that, what you did when you were a schoolboy or a schoolgirl, you have not forgotten, and it comes up forming a mental picture and the whole scene comes before you. Your object of concentration will vanish and you will be enjoying this wonderful experience that you have gone through. And that might last for a few minutes, perhaps longer, and then you would suddenly wake up to notice what you had been doing. Your mind was in something else. In this way, if you let the mind run, all these forms will come and disturb your peace of mind. Even sometimes such ideas, that you have never held consciously, will come up, probably through the impressions of your past incarnations. They would come and take form, and you might visualize them. Of course, every individual will have different kinds of experiences, because there cannot be any one standard. As two faces are not alike, so two minds are not alike. They are on different planes. Yet we are all human beings and have human minds. But they are all monkeys just the same.

How can you control your mind, unless you know where it is going and what it likes to do? You must watch and find out. Then you will be able to control it. Give it the full length of the reins. Mind's vagaries will come down gradually. In the first few months, you will find that the mind will have a thousand thoughts, later you will find that it is toned down, perhaps, to seven hundred, and after a few more months, it will have fewer and fewer, until at last it will be under your perfect control. You must patiently practise every day. You must not be discouraged. Hold that aim that you are going to control your mind and make the drunken monkey sane and sober, and, if you hold that ideal and go ahead with diligence and perseverence, you will succeed. When you do succeed, you will be surprised to find what a wonderful change has taken place in yourself. You would be a different person altogether.

You would not be the same person as you were when you started. The whole mind and attitude and everything will be changed. It is a wonderful practice. It would be a new birth. You would be born over again and you would be born in the spirit. That would be the baptism when you can do that.

Each one must demonstrate that he is not under the control of anything, but is the master of his body and mind. If you can do that, that demonstration will not only prove to you that the mind is the ruler of the body, but it will also be a proof to everybody, who will come in contact with you. You would be setting an example, and that is a great gain. Of course, we must not think that this will make us richer with material wealth. But, when we have practised this and gained the power, if our mind is inclined to gain material wealth, why that would be the simplest thing to get? When a man has controlled his mind, the whole world is at his feet; if a man is running after the world, the world runs away from him. That is an old proverb, and every word of it is true. If you are trying to catch something, it goes away from you, but, if you keep still, it will fall at your feet. Of course, by keeping still, I do not mean that you will be lazy and idiotic, but you should live like a master, like God in man. God possesses everything. He owns everything and yet He does not brag about it. He has all the wealth, all the riches. All the gold mines that you can think of, He possesses, but what does He care for them? But yet you have grown so miserable and so poor, a little thing will make you feel so rich. But that is only an account of ignorance. You can live like a monarch, although you do not own anything. Make a demonstration of all that you have, and be unattached to it. Because attachment is the cause of all kinds of disease, sorrow, suffering, and misery. So deny them, as the Christian Scientists are trying to do. But they do not do it rightly. They think that they are denying them, but they are really running after them. And that is the defect. If they practise just as they preach, they should deny them, and that is the greatest truth. There could not be anything greater. That is at the foundation of our philosophy, and that was taught centuries before Christ. You may give a new name to it, but this is the only philosophy which teaches that.

The controlling of the mind, and not allowing it to join

itself to the centres, is *pratyahara,* and it is the preliminary step to concentration. When one has gained that *pratyahara,* he can take the whole of the mind from one place and put it on another, with the most wonderful results. There is nothing to distract and nothing to disturb, and his concentration becomes so simple that he manipulates all his energy in any direction he chooses. It is just like a stream flowing in one direction. You cut a channel and let the whole water go through in that direction. The whole course of the stream will be changed. Now the stream of your mind is running towards objects of the senses. Cut a channel and direct it towards the Infinite, the supreme Spirit, which is the master of everything, and that whole stream of energy. If it is not allowed to run in any other direction, it will flow through there, and the other bed of the old stream will dry up. If you want to change the course, bring it back again. So there would be that power. That is in store for each one of us, who would sincerely study and practise. It is making a new life, and realizing the divine relation that exists between us and the universe. This man becomes divine.

After *pratyahara* comes the next step. There are eight steps in the Raja Yoga. The sixth one is concentration and is called in Sanskrit *dharana.* Patanjali says first about *dharana* or concentration, next about *dhyana* or meditation, and then about *samadhi* or superconsciousness, in the chapter on *vibhuti* (*vibhutipada*). He says:

देशबन्धश्चित्तस्य धारणा ।३।१।

तत्र प्रत्ययैकतानताध्यानम् ।३।२।

तदेवार्थमात्रनिर्भासं स्वरूपशून्यमिव समाधिः ।३।३।

When these three, *dharana, dhyana,* and *samadhi* are practised together, that act is called *samyama* or 'perfect control'.[1] This perfect control is attained in the superconscious state, where there is the full manifestation of pure consciousness.[2]

Dharana means the holding of the mind on a certain point. Ordinarily, your mind is unruly and restless. So at present, if you try to concentrate, it will run away. You will have to bring it back and hold it on to the point where you intend to con-

1 त्रयमेकत्र संयमः ।३।४ 2 तज्जयात् प्रज्ञालोकः ।३।५

centrate. Practise it again and again. This would be the preliminary practice before concentration. Everybody will have to do that. That is very important, and that process is called *pratyahara.* And then comes concentration (*dharana*). Hold your mind on one point, and that would be meditation (*dhyana*). After the perfection of meditation, the state of superconsciousness (*samadhi*) is attained. Now, to understand clearly the state of concentration, take an example of holding the mind on a little finger. If you want to hold the mind on your little finger, you will have to think only of the little finger and not of any other part of the body. You will have to forget then that you have a body. Your mind will be held absolutely fixed upon your little finger, and this is an instance of the state of concentrated attention or concentration. For practising concentration you can hold or fix your mind on any other thing or point. You can fix the mind on any other part of your body, and then your mind-stuff or *chitta* will be confined and limited to that part, and you will attain the state of concentration.

Now you understand what concentraion means. By concenration, you can send the flow of blood to any part of your body. By concentration you can control the circulation of your blood. For instance, you concentrate your mind on your thumb, put it in a glass of water filled to the brim, so that it does not overflow. Hold your thumb there and concentrate your mind on the tip of your thumb, and you will see that your thumb will expand and will become larger in size. Because, by concentration you are sending the blood there and the water will begin to overflow on account of the displacement. It will prove to you that you have the power to send the blood to any part of your body. When you have cold feet, send the blood to the feet. If you have rheumatism or anything, create circulation in that part. Through concentration you can do almost anything. You will feel a tingling sensation in any part of the body. Blood produces sensation when it circulates. First, it is like a very slight sensation ; then, when it becomes strong, you will feel ache or pain. Sometimes you get a headache, because you have congestion of blood in the head. Think of your toes and your headache will go. Send the blood down, and so on. You would produce wonderful results in your whole body, and it would be a new field open to yourself for your

own benefit. That would be the immediate result. You will be able to demonstrate for your own self first. Then, if you feel like sending your whole mind to God, the divine Being, you will be able to do that, and thereby to withdraw yourself from the material body. Let the body remain at rest. When you are able to separate yourself from the body, you will know what the soul is and what immortality means, and how to conquer death. All these are wonderful gains or wonderful results. A man who possesses these powers, is like Christ. He is an incarnation. He is a saint. But each one has the potentiality of becoming a Christ, and that is the most wonderful truth. These great teachers and great masters set the examples before the people. Christ never meant that he was the only Christ. He never said that. On the contrary, he said that Christ would be born in you. Anyone who follows his path, will become a Christ. Buddha said that there had been many Buddhas before him, and many would come after him. All the great masters have said that. It is only their followers, who make them narrow and drift into bigotry and fanaticism. But the great masters never claimed anything like that, which their followers ascribe to them. They claim fanatically their own path as the only way, the only marked path, which will lead the individual soul to become perfect and divine. They believe that there is no other path. But, in truth, there are different paths: the path of love and faith, the path of devotion, and the path of worship and work. All these are paths or means, and they will all lead to the same goal eventually. They will all lead to the concentration of the mind and the mastery over the senses. Through love that can easily be done. If you fall in love with God, that is the easiest way. Do you know what happens when you fall in love with God? You must forget to eat, forget to drink, and forget to take care of anything else. That is the real falling in love with God. Just as a young girl may fall in love with her lover. She has nothing else to do but to think of her lover all the time. She forgets to dress and forgets everything, and attends all the time to her lover. That is what that falling in love means. Very a few can fall in love in the truest sense, rather pretend that they do fall in love. He, who falls in love in the truest sense, has a great mind and has a great loving heart. There are very rare examples of it. Real love will lead the soul

to ecstasy. Saint Theresa had that most wonderful love and she regarded God as her lover. The Sufis have that. There are Vaishnavas and other devotees in India, who have that. It fact, most wonderful strength comes through love. So also that through devotion.

Now, what do you mean by devotion ? Devotion means constant thought of the subject. A wife is devoted to her husband. What does that mean ? It means that she thinks all the time about her husband, and what he likes and what he does not like, she does not want to judge. She wants only to please her husband. And that is devotion. So, if you are devoted to God, what will you do ? You will constantly think of God and of what He likes. You will not do anything He does not like. Now, is that devotion easier than concentration ? This question is obvious, because devotion is the practical concentration. Through devotion we gain the power of concentration more quickly. This is a scientific process. This is the psychological or analytical side of it, which you will never find in the path of emotion. Therefore, through love, you will get concentration and meditation, and the psychology of love proves the fact. Concentration brings most wonderful powers. But, before you have accomplished concentration, you will have to practise *pratyahara,* the gathering of the scattered energy of your mind towards one object. Many times you will fail, but if you persevere and practise everyday, you will succeed in the end. You will be able to appreciate the value of concentration, and eventually you will become a free soul. A free soul is one to gain absolute mastery over the body and the mind. This is the ideal of the Raja Yoga.

CHAPTER VII

THE MEDITATION

We have studied the different steps to concentration. Let us now discuss the subject of meditation. The difference between concentration and meditation has also been discussed. When the mind is fixed upon one object, whether external or internal, concrete or abstract, if the flow of thoughts remain steady towards that object for a certain length of time and the mind runs unbroken, as it were, towards the object, it is meditation (*dhyana*). The illustration, that has been given, is that the current should be unbroken, just as when you pour oil from one vessel into another, it does not break and there is a continuous flow (निरवच्छिन्नतैलधारावत्). If the mental energy flows continuously towards the object of concentration and remains in that way for a certain length of time, it would be called 'meditation'.

It has already been said that the second aphorism of the third chapter *vibhutipada* of the *Patanjalasutra* runs thus: तत्र प्रत्ययैकतानताध्यानम्, and the first aphorism states: देशबन्धश्चित्तस्य धारणा। *Dharana* is holding the mind on to some particular object, and the unbroken flow towards that object is called meditation or *dhyana*. In the commentary, Vyasa says: नाभिचक्रे हृदयपुण्डरीके मूर्द्धिज्योतिषि नासिकाग्रे जिह्वाग्र इत्येवमादिषु देशेषु बाह्ये वा विषये, चित्तस्य वृत्तिमात्रेण बन्ध इति धारणा।१। तस्मिन् देशे ध्येयालम्बनस्य प्रत्ययस्यैकतानता सदृशः प्रवाहः प्रत्ययान्तरेणापरामृष्टो ध्यानम्।२।

That is, when the flow of our mental energy is absolutely fixed on the navel base, or on the lotus of the heart, or on intelligence of the brain, on tip of the nose, or on the front part of the tongue, or on some external divine symbol (*pratika* or *pratima*), it is called *'dharana'* or concentration ; and when the flow is uninterrupted and constant, and the object of concentration becomes one with the mental energy, it is called *dhyana* or meditation.

Concentration is the precondition of meditation. Medita-

tion is more important for the spiritual realization; and it is essential for attaining to the last step of the Raja Yoga, which is called the superionsciousness (*samadhi*). Your mind is constantly running towards the external objects, and when you control the flow of your mental energy from running towards them and keep it fixed on higher objects, it is called meditation. For instance, when you concentrate or meditate upon some spiritual subject, God, or your true Self, or some idea like 'I and my Father are one', your mind ought to be steady upon that subject. If your mind is not steady, you cannot catch the real glimpses of the subject. Simply repeating the words: 'I and my Father are one' would not give you its true and spiritual meaning. The object of meditation is to understand the real meaning and to realize it, not merely to know it intellectually, but to feel it and to be one with the ideal. For instance, you will have to analyse the word 'I'. What does it mean? What does it refer to? I do not mean the dictionary meaning of the word 'I', or of that pronoun. By the word 'I', what do you feel when you think of it? What part of you is that? Is it your head? Is it your foot? Is it your whole body? What is that 'I'? Now, that would be the meaning, the real subject, which is understood by the pronoun 'I'. It cannot be expressed in mere words. When I ask you: who are you and where is your 'I', do you mean your arm or any particular organ, or your brain or nervous system, or any particular centre? Certainly, you will say that you do not know, and that would be your answer. But when you know it positively, you will say: 'Yes, I know what I am'. And that knowledge comes through meditation. First of all, you will have to grasp the meaning of 'I', and then the meaning of the Father, and then of the formula: 'I and my Father are one', or of 'I am God'. You have to form a concept or mental idea of 'I' and 'Father' and then you have to make a third concept that combines these two into one. The word 'I' is a limited personality, and the word 'Father' is the unlimited infinite spirit. First, you must have a clear conception of these two, and then after having those two clear concepts, you combine them into one. It may be asked, how would it be possible for a finite limited personality to become infinite? That would be a great problem that you have to solve in your own mind. If I solve it for you, that will not help you. Each individual

will have to solve it himself for grasping the true meaning of that particular formula: 'I and my Father are one'. When you do that in meditation, your mind no longer plays upon your limitations. You must necessarily transcend all the limitations; and when you have done it, you are getting close to the Infinite, whom you regard as the Father or the infinite Spirit. In truth, that infinite Spirit is beyond your conception, beyond your perception and all your thoughts and ideas. You have to lift your limited personality on a higher plane, so that all the limitations drop off and you will become one with the Infinite. Then you will understand the real meaning and realize what Christ meant. You may repeat the words: 'I and my Father are one' a million times. That will not do any good. But you will have to realize it. By 'realization' I do not mean the intellectual perception or understanding, but it is the feeling, the immediate awareness of oneness with your Father in Heaven. Then you will remain no longer a limited personality, but will be one and identified with the Infinite. Otherwise you cannot be one. To get that realization, you will have to train your mind. But, when you try to train your mind, your mind runs away from you. If you hear the least little noise, your mind is so weak that it will be distracted. For instance, you are thinking: 'I and my Father are one' and there is a noise in the street, your mind will be distracted and will leave that thought and run after something else. If you are going to do that every second, how can you get the real meaning? That is the reason why all these great sages, spiritual teachers and masters, who are known as Yogis, say that you must train your mind, you must make it so that it would not run away from the object of concentration, no matter how strong the vibration of the air or ether may be around you, that you could remain in that deep contemplation, undisturbed for the time being. As you go deeper and deeper, you would grasp the real significance and meaning. The meaning cannot be grasped until you become one with the meaning. And that is realization. Therefore realization means to be one with the object. Knowing is being: *'brahmavid brahmaiva bhavati'*. When you know a thing you are one with that thing mentally and not physically. In other words, your mind has a limitation. All things that you

know, are inside the limit of the horizon of your mind substance. Anything that is outside of that horizon of your mind, is unknown to you. You do not know what is really in the moon, because it is not within the range of your mind's horizon, and therefore it is unknown. When you know a thing, what do you do ? You bring that thing, which is outside the range of the horizon of your mind, within the range, and then you become conscious of it. But that range is necessarily a limited one. If you try to bring the infinite Spirit within that limited range, you would not succeed, because the infinite Spirit is unlimited, and so you will not be able to bring the infinite Spirit within the range of your limited knowledge. You may try to bring the Absolute in the range of the phenomenal consciousness, but you cannot. For instance, there is something in the next room. That is in the dark and so you cannot see it. You have to bring that from the dark into the illuminated sphere where you are conscious of it, and then you know it. The same thing happens when you know of a strange object. A strange object stands outside the illuminated space of the room. There are lots of things outside of the wall, and you do not know them. Bring them one after another within the limit or sphere of your vision, and then you can see them and know what they are and how they are related, and so on. That is the way by which all phenomena are known and studied. What are the scientists doing ? They are trying to bring things beyond within the range of their knowledge, by inventing instruments and looking through them within the sphere of the senses. As far as they can study through observation, they are conscious of them, and that is the limit of their knowledge. But that kind of knowledge you cannot apply to God. If you try to do that, you make God limited and finite. Therefore, the infinite Being cannot be brought within the sphere of the finite mind. Now, in this case, what will you do ? You must try to know the Infinite and break down the limitations of your mind and expand the range, so that you would make it as unlimited as possible. Then the Infinite is grasped to a certain extent. But, when the Infinite is grasped to the fullest extent, you are no longer finite. All the limitations of your mind are gone. That is what you have to do, in order to know the highest Spirit, which is the Infinite, and the process in the

first place is to bring your mind within the control of your will, so that the mind would not run away from you through the doors of the senses. You can get hold of it. You can do that in silence. If you drive your mind towards the ideal and hold it steady, your mind may try to run away, but you will stop it, and when you have stopped it, you will gradually expand it. Then remove the limitations. Try to find out where the limitations are, and remove them. Every time you find a limitation, and you say that you do not want it. Remove all the obstacles, and when your mind is firm and steady, you will find that your meditation is good. Then you rise above the consciousness of your sense plane. That is the state of superconsciousness (*samadhi*). At that time you are no longer conscious of the external objects. You are no longer conscious of the physical body too. They are the limitations of the mind. You are dropping them off one after another and are entering into the limitless plane where this ordinary consciousness cannot exist. In the superconscious state (*samadhi*), you do not become unconscious. It is also a state of consciousness where the limitations are gone. At that time, you are conscious of something which is unlimited. You are conscious of the Infinite, and that consciousness of the Infinite takes the place of the consciousness of 'I' as a limited personality. Then you would be able to say, as Christ said: 'I and my Father are one', because you feel then that there is no limitation, no limited personality is in you any more. Then you are expanded. You have eliminated all the limitations. That is very difficult to do. So long you have the attachment to this phenomenal world and things of the senses, that limitation becomes stronger and stronger. You cannot break away at once. In order to do that, you will have to train your mind. You will have to discriminate that this is not what you want, and hold the attitude that these things of the world do not give you what you want. Just think that you want to get something transcending, which is the consciousness of the Infinite. You cannot get that supramundane consciousness through the sense plane. You have to reason and discriminate in your own mind. You have been trying to study every little phenomenon that is happening within the range of your sense consciousness, but that does not satisfy the soul. The knowledge of the phenomena would not

answer the vital questions that arise in your mind, and so you are dissatisfied. Therefore, you want to go beyond this, and that is the natural tendency of each individual soul. That tendency must be fulfilled sooner or later. No one can keep off the fulfilment of that tendency. In this way, if you reason it out, you will find that meditation is the only process by which you can get to that point. But it requires constant practice. You should devote a portion of your time as routine work to train your mind at home. You are not trying to get some experience that would fascinate you and some of the people around you with certain miraculous powers like thought-reading or getting messages from the subconscious mind, or some kind of premonition of things that are going to happen. All those powers are trivial. These can be gained at any time, but those who have gained the trivial powers, have not the consciousness of the Infinite. Therefore, you are not going to be one of those. Your aspiration should be higher, because you are trying to know the Infinite. What do you care whether you can read the thoughts of other people or not? That is nothing to you so long as you know that this is only a kind of psychic power. Of course, that power might come to you unexpectedly, as you are progressing. Those powers of healing and others will come to you and some can utilize them for a time. But those powers come and go. If you do not live the right kind of life, those powers will disappear. And, when they do come, they show you that you are progressing or advancing in your life, but they are, in truth, not permanent. Therefore it is said in the *Patanjala-yogasutra* that one who tries to realize the Infinite, should practise concentration and meditation alone, so that he would not be disturbed by the distractions or the modifications of the mind (*chittavritti*). The companionship of different sorts of people also distracts the mind. So, he who aspires to control his mind, does not want to mix with the people who do not appreciate him. He does not go out with a drum and call people: 'Oh, I want this', but he keeps to himself and goes into silence and tries to practise. When he mixes with different sorts of people on social grounds, he is not particularly attentive, and so he does not enjoy their company, because, his mind is running after something which is bigger, grander, and more worth-while.

Now, you must have determination, and practise everyday, no matter how much you are able to gain. Keep up the practice, whether you can gain all that you want in this life or not. You should not think of that, because it would depend entirely upon your own effort. One person may gain the result in three days, and another might take longer. There would be the difference. So you do not know how soon you can get at it. You do not know your own power. You do not know, when your subconscious mind will wake up, and how quickly you would get results. It depends upon the intensity of your desire to gain that highest knowledge. But, when you start once along this path, you need never be sorry, because as far as you can progress in this path, so far is your gain, and even the least done in this path will bring wonderful results. The least effort that you can make, will surprise you when you see the results. You must not look for the results, but keep up steadily. If you seek the results all the time, you will neglect your work. Therefore, put your whole mind in the effort to gain the highest. After you have somewhat progressed, and if you look back, you will find that you have gone quite a distance. But, if you take a step and watch, you will never get forward. First, run without looking backward. Then you will see that you have different surroundings altogether and a different landscape. That will prove that you have made progress. But, watching every step is the work of a fool. It would be just as foolish as if you sow a seed and see the seed is sprouting, and everyday you pull out the root to see how the root is growing. You see, the root is not very big, and put it back again. Next day you take it out again. But, if you do like that, you will never have a plant. You are too impatient for results, and, consequently, you are ruining the plant. Some people do that kind of things, and they never gain much success. So you must have patience, faith and perseverence, and go ahead. Do not look backward. Leave it all. Whether you are making any progress or not, that is not for you to judge. Time will decide that. When the time comes, you will find out whether you are making any progress or sitting still or coming backward. But you should have the determination that you must run. Go ahead, and that is the idea. When you have that, the least effort will produce most wonderful results. You must put your

whole heart and soul into it. When you are going ahead, plunge into it. Do not think of forwardness or backwardness or any other side. That is the only way you can become a soldier. When you are marching in the battlefield, if you think you have left your country behind and be looking backward, you would never become a soldier. You can not do that, if you have the right kind of training. Now, you are a soldier of God. Exactly the same training is necessary for the spiritual ideal. So you must march along the path with firm determination, and you must not stop until the goal is reached. That is the ideal. Now, with that ideal, anyone who will start, will gain wonderful results in a short time.

First of all, it will tone down the nervous excitement. That is the first result; but, if you are anxious to get that result, you will never get it. If you do not seek it, it will come. If you keep up that anxiety to get that quietness, you are making yourself nervous by your anxiety. Therefore you drop it.

Again, you should not be hot-headed, running into paroxysms of temper, when you are under the least little disturbance. But bring calmness, and try to see things clearly and calmly. If you are a singer, you will find that your voice is improving. If you are a vocalist of any kind, you will find the same thing. Sound health will be followed by beautiful voice. The practice of Yoga cures all the defects in the voice. In fact, those who practise Yoga earnestly and diligently, acquire many psychic powers. Sometimes they hear sounds from a distance. This sound is not like spirit bells, but a sound that comes from within. It is a finer perception. There are sounds which you do not hear, and, if you have a finer perception, you can hear those sounds which are ordinarily beyond your perception. You will be able to see things in the dark. That is one of the powers of the mind which manifests them.

There are two kinds of practitioners: some, who try to reach the highest and to be Yogis, and others, who try to get certain results so that they can remove their immediate troubles. For instance, they improve their health, or gain a little concentration, so that they can carry out their business properly, or gain a little knowledge. They do not want to go very far. So, there are two sets of instructions that can be given: one, for those who are going to devote their life and

make every effort to reach the highest and will not stop till that goal is reached; and the other, for those, who want to go up to a certain point and no further. For them there would be different instructions that are immediately helpful. Those who want to make very rapid progress, should remember that in the book of the Raja Yoga different remedies are given for different kinds of students who have different ideals. So you must not get all the things mixed up.

The food question is very important in the practice of the Raja Yoga. Sometimes we neglect that. More food is necessary for him, who is doing hard work and spending more muscular energy than as necessary for one, who is not using so much muscular energy, but using his mind and brain power. So, all those should be considered. If you are trying to sit still and quiet your nerves, and if you have a very strong passionate nature, you should not want to eat such things, and drink such stuff as would arouse your passionate nature and make you more passionate, but you should be careful to eat such things as would make you less passionate. If you are easily set into anger and have all kinds of disturbance in your mind, you must eat such food as would make you more quiet and not easily disturbed. There are such foods and each one should find it out for himself or herself what is the best for him or her. In fact, you will have to choose whatever you wish. You are not forced into anything, but to use your discrimination. What kind of food helps you in your meditation, find out for yourself. I do not have to give you directions, unless you have any doubt about it. But it is easy to find out for yourself. For instance, you notice a man who has been a vegetarian for long years. If he eats a piece of meat, it will throw his whole system out of sorts. He would be all upset and he would not be able to digest it. It would make him sick. For a meat-eater, any vegetarian diet would be just and harmful at first, if he gives up meat entirely. After inheriting the tendency towards meat, his whole system is accustomed to absorb nourishment from meat and this system does not know how to absorb nourishment from vegetables. I have noticed many students who had been strong meat-eaters, but suddenly gave up meat-eating and became vegetarians entirely. They became anæmic, depleted in strength, emaciated, and did not get enough nourishment. So,

you must not make sudden changes. You should do it gradually. If you are in the habit of eating meat too much, just have mixture food. Mix it with vegetables, and gradually increase vegetables and cereals, and use less meat. Now-a-days the price of meat is so high that even President Wilson[2] is trying to become a vegetarian.

You will find that when you are beginning to concentrate, the dropping of a pin will sound like a thunderbolt going through your brain. That is not an exaggeration. If your mind is absolutely concentranted, and if somebody knocks at the door, that knock will sound like the report of a cannon. The least little noise will give you such a shock. That means your mind is more concentrated, your attention is fixed on something else, and you have to come down from that plane to the other plane, where you hear the noise so suddenly. It requires tremendous effort of the mind to come down, as it were. You will find that it is so.

If the organs are purified by eating pure, desirable, and nourishing food, they will keep our mind in a good condition. When we purify our blood, if there be germs of disease, we must throw them out, i.e. eliminate them by breathing exercises. We must remember that the body is the best instrument we have and we must learn to take best care of it, because with this body we can reach the highest goal. The body is like a boat by which we can cross the ocean of death and go to the other shore. And that would be the ideal. We must not live to eat. There are two kinds of people, some eat to live, and some live to eat. The latter is the glutton, and the former uses the body as an instrument to work for higher results. So we must not encourage gluttony, but we must consider that the body should be taken care of for the higher results. Give the body proper food and proper nourishment, and always remember that you are using it as a machine for a higher purpose and a higher ideal. As the organs get finer, perceptions will get finer too.

These are the stages through which we have to pass, and all those who persevere will succeed. So we must not be impatient. Get it clear in your mind first of all, how far you

[2] Mr. Wilson was the President of U.S.A. at this time when this lecture was delivered.

want to go in your realization, and how much you can persevere and how much effort you can make without disturbing your daily routine work. Each one will find it easily according to the circumstances. No two persons have the same circumstances, so general instructions will not be satisfactory to each individual. It is best for you to find out the means for the highest end. Give up all argumentation that will distract your mind. Do not discuss spiritual lessons and instructions with people who do not understand you. Let them find out their paths of progress for themselves. If anyone is as advanced as you are, you will understand him easily and might be helped by him. Of course, you can talk about these things with a certain reservation, and find out where you stand and where your friend stands. If you become one in your ideals, you can let him study a little, and then bring him down to get the instructions as you are getting.

There is an expression that the truth is within us. It has a deep meaning. Naturally we search all over the world to find the truth, but we cannot find it. Again, when we cannot find it outside, we fall back to our own resources and try to find it within, and there we discover it. In fact, the truth is already in us, but we do not know it. Even we do not know how it is, where it is, and how to get it. That is the reason why we need an eye-opener, who is called in Sanskrit, *guru*, the master, who opens the spiritual eye. And that is the definition of '*guru*' or master. So, if you have the good fortune of having such a one, who has opened your spiritual eye, follow him. Everybody needs such a spiritual eye-opener. Even Christ and all other great masters needed it. Therefore, it is necessary to have a spiritual master, who will guide you. He is not a visionary one who is supposed to live in the clouds or astral plane, but just one who is morally good and sincere and who has divine realization. Under his guidance, if you follow the methods of concentration and meditation that are given to you, you will be able to go faster, because it all depends upon your own sincere effort, as I have said already, and the result is bound to come. You must persevere and go on practising.

We can do that in ordinary subjects. Any one who can get something better, will go on and try that. But in spiritual realization there is only one ideal, and that ideal is the Infinite.

There is no other ideal for material gain or gaining power. If that ideal is firm, we do not run around from one thing to another, but we hold that as the most sacred thing of the soul. You keep it as a secret. You may run around to get certain information on different subjects, but that other thing is entirely your individual affair and you keep it for yourselves, and no one has any right to disturb or question it. That would be your religion. No, there begins religion. Religion does not mean a mere study of books or observing doctrines and dogmas, and going to a place of worship once in a while. It would be a constant thing within you. You are trying to reach the ideal, and that ideal is yours what satisfies you. You are all free to choose your ideals, because all ideals will eventually lead to the one source. They are just like radii of the same circle, and the centre of the circle is God.

Take one thing up and do it, and see the end of it, and before you have seen the end, do not give it up. He, who can become mad upon an idea, will see the light. That becoming mad does not mean going to a lunatic asylum. Have the necessary earnestness and firmness while going to accomplish it and have full confidence, so that nothing else will take away your ideal. Those who only take a nibble here and there and fritter away their energies, do not make much progress. Go deep and practise daily. Take a little time, control your nerves and practise a little breathing exercise. That will quiet your mind, quiet your nerves, and polarize the molecules of your cells, and you will develop a power within yourself. Then concentrate your mind, and gradually go from the concrete to the abstract, and from the abstract to the Absolute. You will find that the result will come faster, and you will have a wonderful time. Your whole nature will be changed and transformed. You will be born over again. That is the second birth. That is baptism. It does not mean sprinkling a little water on the head. That water might be full of germs and it might be poison. That is not the idea of baptism. It is baptism by fire. Fire is the symbol of spiritual life and wisdom. That will burn up all the dross and make your body and mind pure and clean.

CHAPTER VIII

THE SUPERCONSCIOUSNESS

The last of the eight steps is called *samadhi*. *Samadhi* means a superconscious state. It comes after meditation. Meditation is called *dhyana*. and it comes from concentration or *dharana*. So, concentration, meditation, and superconsciousness are the three principal states. Concentration leads to meditation, and meditation leads to the superconscious state. We have explained how difficult it is to concentrate the mind at first upon the highest absolute Being. We can concentrate upon something that we can perceive with our senses, or that has a form. We can easily concentrate upon some business proposition or some mathematical problem; but, when we try to concentrate our mind upon something that is unknown, it is very difficult. For instance, when we say God is the Spirit, or the Spirit is dwelling within us, we do not know what the Spirit is like. We cannot form a mental concept of the Spirit, and, for that reason, it is very difficult to think about it. But the best way is to know, first of all, what our ego or the self is.

We are all familiar with the meaning of the word 'ego'. The ego is that which says, *I, me,* and *mine*. In other words, 'ego' is the self-conscious entity, the thinker, the doer, and the performer of actions. When we eat, we do eat consciously, and we are conscious of the sensation of eating. The body takes the food, but the sansation of eating is felt, not by the body, but by the ego. The enjoyment is not felt by the body, but by the ego. The food goes from the mouth through the alimentary canal into the stomach, and that creates sensation. Stomach has no feeling. The alimentary canal has also no feeling. There is something, which is outside of all these things and yet one is using this instrument who has the power of feeling. The self is the ego or subject, which always feels. Now, from this definition, you can get hold of that something in each one of us, which feels and which says 'I', 'I feel', 'I am unhappy', 'I am sorry', 'I am suffering', 'I have pain', etc. All these are the feelings. These feelings are not rising at random. They

are not coming up and going down without having been held together by one entity, and that entity, which holds these different kinds of feelings together, is our self. It is called in the Raja Yoga the *purusha*. The *purusha* is the spirit, or that which feels. It is immaterial. It is like a witness (*sakshi*). It stands beyond, yet it is connected. It is not separated. The mind, with all its various modifications, becomes the instrument of the spirit or *purusha*. It is like the dynamo, and this dfnamo generates the power. The spirit, using this dynamo, comes in contact with energy and with all the functions of the body and mind, and through these functions, it comes in contact with the external world. The external world means the objects of senses. We can perceive only five objects of the world, with the five senses that we possess. If we had more senses, we would have understood other things which we do not perceive now, because we have no more than five senses. Now you understand the nature of the self. It is a reality. It is an entity. Now that reality or entity cannot be denied, and yet its true nature is not revealed to us. We do not know much about it. When I ask you to concentrate your mind upon your spirit, you would not be able to do that, unless you have a certain idea or a clear understanding of the nature of the ego which feels. When you try to concentrate your mind, you are the one who is concentrating upon an object of concentration. There is a duality of the object and the subject in the process of concentration or knowing. You are the subject, and the object of concentration is distinct from you. Suppose you are concentrating your mind upon a flower or you make a mental picture of a beautiful rose. Now that mental picture you are looking at or thinking about, is the object of your thought, and when you are the subject. So, every time, when you are conscious of a thing, there is a subject and also an object. The subject is always the thinker. It is that which feels. So the object is a mental state of the subject. We cannot see the flower outside of the mind, but we can feel it as the mental state. We are conscious of the impression of the flower that we gather through our eyes or other senses. That mental picture is the object of our consciousness. But, in our superconscions state (*samadhi*), the subject and object become one. There is, at first, a difference between the subject and the object,

and that is called *savikalpa samadhi*. In that state, there exists the duality of the subject and the object, and so, you are conscious of the object, which is distinct from you, the subject; just as the flower is distinct from yourself. If you can hold your mind on the form of the flower, that would be the concentration (*dharana*). If you can hold on and keep your mind in that particular form of the flower for a certain length of time, without thinking of anything else, that would be the meditation (*dhyana*). If the form vanishes, together with the meaning of the flower, the spirit of the flower only remains, and you are not conscious of anything else, which would be the state of superconsciousness (*samadhi*) of the first nature. Superconsciousness has also great many grades or degrees.[1] It is called the superconscious state, because it is a state above our ordinary consciousness which is on the sense plane. When you are conscious of the spirit or life-principle of the flower, which forms its background, you rise above all the forms, which are limitations. Then you are no longer conscious of your sensations. Your body remains motionless and the external objects do not interfere with your concentration. Your mind will remain peaceful and quiet, and it will not be agitated by any noise. Even if a cannon is shot nearby, that will not also disturb your mind, because the mind is then absolutely beyond the reach of the senses and sense perception. And that proves that it is a state which resembles the state of deep sleep or *sushupti* to a certain extent. In deep sleep or *sushupti*, we are not also conscious of any noise. There may be a loud noise or a fire in the next house, and you might be fast asleep, without knowing anything about it. Shall you compare the state of deep sleep or *sushupti* with that of superconsciousness or *samadhi*? No, you cannot compare them, although apparently the former appears similar to the latter. Now, what difference is there? In the deep sleep state or *sushupti*, you go down to your subconscious plane where the mind or intelligence (*manas* or *buddhi*) is fully covered by the *tamas* quality (*tamaguna*). It is inertia, dullness, or darkness, which suddenly comes over the conscious brain. It is covered up, as it were. The light which was illuminating your mental sphere,

[1] These grades or degrees are, in reality, the grades of feeling or levels of consciousness.

is turned out, and that would be known as the subconscious state or *sushupti*. As in the darkness you cannot perceive or distinguish anything, so also with the subconscious state. If there be a tremendously strong light in the room, your eyes would be dazzled and you would not be able to see or distinguish any object. Or, if you look at the sun for a few minutes, your eyes would be so dazzled that, if you turn around and look at anything, you would not see that thing. What is the cause of it ? Does it happen due to darkness caused by the dazzling of the strong light or the light of the blazing sun ? Yes, but this kind of darkness i.e. ignorance does not prevail in the superconscious state (*samadhi*). But it exists in the deep sleep state or *sushupti*. In the deep sleep, the consciousness or intelligence is fully covered by nescience (*avidya*), and the distinguishing or discriminating faculty remains unmanifested or dull. The superconscious state is quite different, because, though consciousness or pure intelligence is overpowered by the causal nescience (*karana-ajnana*) or *maya*, yet the self-effulgent light of the pure consciousness reigns supreme in the superconcious state, and so the power of discrimination and knowledge are not lost there. • Therefore, if you enter once into the state of superconsciousness (*samadhi*), you will be a new man, possessed of divine knowledge or pure consciousness. And there lies the difference between the deep sleep state (*sushupti*) and the state of superconsciousness (*samadhi*). Another difference is noticed between them that, when a man of ignorance awakes from the deep sleep or *sushupti*, he remains as ignorant as before. No change is found in his experience or knowledge, but when he comes down[1] from the highest state of superconsciousness (*samadhi*), he is entirely changed into a different man. He becomes a man of divine illumination or a God-man.

In the deep sleep state (*sushupti*), the vibration of the mind substance becomes very slow, but in concentration it becomes very fast. In concentration, the mind vibrates more rapidly than on the ordinary plane of consciousness. So, do not lose your consciousness in the state which comes through concentration. Of cource, some people try to concentrate and go to sleep. That would be an obstruction. You should rouse

[1] Coming down or descent from the state of the superconsciousness (*samadhi*) is known as *vyutthana* in the Yoga philosophy.

yourselves from that sleeping or unconscious state. But, in the state of superconsciousness, do never become unconscious, though you are not conscious of the sense objects. In the highest state of superconsciousness, you are conscious of that which is beyond the realm of reason or relational thoughts, you are then conscious of the Infinite, the eternal Reality, which can never be revealed to your mind or understanding through the sense consciousness. The true nature of the Spirit is beyond your thoughts, beyond time, space, and causation, and, therefore, it is very difficult to make a mental concept of the Spirit. You cannot think about it. You can try to think, but the mind fails, because the mind is ordinarily accustomed to think within certain limitations of form or within time and space.

Again, you cannot think of anything without repeating its name. If you try to think of the table, you cannot hold the thought of the table, without repeating the name of the table. When you are thinking of the table, you are mentally repeating 'table, table, table'. Now try to concentrate your mind on a rose. You are mentally repeating at first, 'rose, rose, rose'. Otherwise, your mind will be distracted by other things. You hold your attention by repetition of the name. In all the religious orders, you will notice that the repetition of the name of the Lord is considered to be a great aid in concentration, and with the rosary comes the counting of beads and the repeating of the prayers. All these are helpful. They all have meaning, and as to why they have been introduced into religious orders, you will be able to understand, if you know the secret underlying the truth. The Raja Yoga alone can explain the underlying truth of all these things. All symbolism, ritualism, and ceremonies, and all religious performances of various cults, doctrines, dogmas, and so on, can be explained by the Raja Yoga. But the aim and object of all these are the attainment of the superconscious state.

Now, let us see the difference between the superconscious state and the conscious state. The conscious state can easily be distinguished from the subconscious one. For instance, when we eat, we eat consciously, but, in digestion the digestive functions take place in our system and they are governed by the subconscious mind. We are not conscious of the digestive functions. When we are asleep, our heart continues to beat

and lungs continue to draw air in and expel it out, but we are not conscious of it. They all are governed by the subconscious mind. So, the subconscious mind performs a great deal of work and leaves the conscious mind to attend to the immediate conditions and pay attention to those things which are most important. Then the conscious mind or our conscious self turns those down into the subconscious plane, which may be compared to the cellar. The conscious plane is the main floor of the building, and the upper floor is the superconscious plane. The vision that we get from the upper floor, we do not get from the cellar, and neither from the main floor. Now, in order to make room on the main floor, we do not want to keep everything on it, but we put it down in the cellar, and whenever there is a demand for anything that has already been used, we go down to the cellar and get it. The conscious mind has a cellar which is called the subconscious mind. Every impression that we get is pigeon-holed. When we go to see a movie, we see certain things and they attract our attention. We like them, and when we do not like them, the impressions go down. We do not want to carry these all the time on the conscious plane. We put them down in a pigeon-hole in the cellar, and there they remain. In course of time, these will come up again, and, if anybody asks what we saw there in the movie, we just put our attention there and draw out the impressions from that pigeon-hole to the main floor and we can talk about them. That is the way we are living at present, but a very few people can analyse their own minds and understand what is going on within themselves. Every impression, every idea, and every thought and gratification of the desire leave a stamp, and that stamp is pigeon-holed and kept in the subconscious mind. So the subconscious mind may be compared to a vast storehouse of the conscious mind.

Then take the illustration of the waves. The conscious mind is on the crest. Thus you take the crest of the wave, the surface of the top part. That may be called the conscious plane, and the lower part, the bottom of the wave, which is very large and has more space, is the subconscious plane. The superconscious plane is like the space which is above the crest. So, analyse the conscious plane and distinguish it from the subconscious one, and try to reach through concentration and

meditation, the state which is higher than the other two states. Ordinary psychologists do not recognize this superconscious state. They do not know anything about it. They say that all inspiration or revelation or higher spiritual realization comes from the subconscious plane. But in the subconscious plane, there is nothing that is very important. But it has already been said that it is a vast field and all that we have experienced already is pigeon-holed there. Yet the subconscious mind has no power to transcend time and space. It can be said to be a state of inertia or darkness. So, if anything comes like illumination, or revelation, or inspiration, or communication with the Divinity, or prophetic vision, it does not come from the subconscious plane. It emanates from the superconscious plane, and so, it indicates a state higher than the conscious plane.

Another point will make you realize the difference between the states, subconscious and superconscious. When a man goes to sleep, and when the same man wakes up, there is no difference between the waking man and the sleeping man. For instance, if one goes to sleep as an idiot, he comes out as an idiot, when wakes up. He has not changed into a wise man all at once by sleeping, or by going to the subconscious plane. But, when he goes to the superconscious plane, he becomes a wise man and a saint when he wakes up; because, in that plane he has realized God, the Absolute. That is the difference. If deep sleep, that coincides with the subconscious plane, were the same as the superconscious state, then every time you go to deep sleep, you would realize the Absolute; and after you wake up, then you would become saints and divine masters. But you are not. That will make you realize the difference between the states, subconscious and superconscious.

The superconscious state (*samadhi*) is the ideal of the Raja Yoga. All the problems of life can only be explained by going to the root of things like mind and matter and all phenomena; and the root of all phenomena is not in the phenomena, but beyond the range of our senses, beyond our thoughts. Thoughts are a certain function, and we have to go beyond the realm of thoughts in order to reach the cause of all thoughts. It is the causal state, and the causal state is like the seed form of the universe. We cannot go to the root or causal state of the

universe through our senses, because our senses are operating on the plane of effects or results, which are known as phenomena and not causes. The causes are inscrutable, unknown and unknowable. For instance, we do not see the electrons. We do not understand the cause of atoms. We do not even perceive the atoms with our ordinary senses. We need the help of the powerful instruments, and still we do not know the cause of the atoms, what produces atoms. Our senses are working on the effects, the forms, tables, chairs, etc. All these are made up of atoms and molecules. We are living in the effects or the phenomena. But the causal state is beyond all phenomena, because phenomena do not exist there. Everything remains in a latent form, just as the seed. When we look at a seed of an oak tree, we do not see the oak tree there, but the oak tree is there in the seed like an impression. It is already there, but we have no power to see it. We can see only it when it grows into a big oak tree. That is the effect, but the effect lies in the cause. Otherwise, it would not come out. If the oak tree were not in the seed, that seed could produce other kinds of trees; there would be nothing to stop it; there would be no regulation. But, when the oak tree alone is in its own seed, no other tree, than an oak tree can be produced by it. Now, we can realize that, when we plant oat or wheat, we cannot expect to get rice or mustard out of it, because in the seed there is no other form than that of the same kind. The more we study the objects of nature, which are known as phenomena, the more we realize that the seed is underneath all these and it contains the whole of the tree. But, there is no expression in the material form, as we see with our senses. The whole universe—the sun, the moon, and the stars, and the form of the human body. The animal forms, and vegetable forms,—all existed in the causal state before coming into being. None or nothing was there to see and recognize it. All were a mass, as everything was sleeping. Then, through the process of evolution, it woke up and came out gradually in material forms. One impression of it took the form of a vegetable, another came out of that, and so on for millions and millions of years, and then it became like the world, as we see it. It will go back again to that causal state. It might go back at any time, but naturally it takes its own course of evolution and there it goes. That causal

state retains all the potentialities of the forms or what we call the phenomena. When we go to deep sleep, we go to the causal state, but when we go to the superconscious state, we go beyond the causal state. And that would be the difference. It is the state where there is neither cause nor effect, but it is the eternal, absolute Truth or Reality, it is what we understand by the term 'God'. As that is the ideal of our life, that ideal must be realized sooner or later. No matter what we do at the present moment, this will not satisfy us, and this will not help us very much. It is only in passing. We are going through these experiences and gathering a little knowledge here and a little knowledge there, and storing them up. We are all marching towards the big knowledge, wisdom, and realization of the Divinity. That realization does not come by reading books. You may read scriptures all your life and study the nature of creation, but that will not do any good. You have to understand the meaning. Take one word of the scripture and go down into the state of superconsciousness. Try to feel it. Take the word 'God', for instance, or 'infinite Spirit' or 'absolute Spirit', or 'Love', or 'divine Wisdom', anything like that, and concentrate your mind upon it. Think about it, meditate on it, and, when you enter into the superconscious state, you become conscious of the meaning. You begin to feel it. The moment you begin to feel it, you are in the state of superconsciousness. That is realization. It is not a little intellectual understanding of the meaning and not like studying the dictionary meaning. It is the feeling (*anubhuti*). You have to feel it. The more you feel it, the more you rise above this plane; the more you are divine, the more saintly you become.

That is the idea of all religions. All the scriptures teach that. Jesus became Christ by that feeling or divine realization, and, if you can feel that tomorrow, you will be like Jesus. There would be no difference. It is not that your sins are holding you down. Sins are the errors or the hideous things that appear in darkness, and they are there as we do not know the law. These are the works of the mind that is ignorant, and that ignorance is the original sin. So this ego is born in ignorance, and you may metaphorically say that it was born in original sin and it must be crucified, and today is the day of crucifixion. Crucify your ignorant and sinful ego. That is

to be crucified, and then the resurrection of Christ will come. Feel that. Go into silence and there you feel that you are going to crucify old Adam ; and when he is dead and gone, then the resurrection of the true spiritual being comes. It has already been said that Christ means that ideal state. It does not mean any form or personality. Jesus means the personality. So, that is the essence of Christianity, and that essence of Christianity should be felt in the spirit by all individuals. Every soul will sooner or later be crucified in matter and resurrect from matter into spirit. That is the aim of the Raja Yoga. The Raja Yoga helps you to rise above this ordinary sense consciousness of the ordinary mortal ego, and transcend all the realm of thought and nature into superconscious state, where you will become like Christ. Superconscious state (*samadhi*) is another name for Christhood, Christos, the Anointed, the perfected one, i.e. one who has realized the eternal Truth in Godconsciousness.

So religion, philosophy, and psychology are all in one. When you study this, you do not leave out anything, but understand the secret of everything ; and not only you understand, but try to live up to it and practise it. The more you practise it, the happier you become, because you rise above this mundane world of cares and anxieties, sorrow, suffering, misery, disease and death ; and then enter into a state where there is neither sorrow nor suffering, nor disease, nor death ; nor there are any attractions of material things, nor passions ; nor desires for all ordinary objects, but where there are only peace and happiness, and blessedness and perfection. All these are described as the goal of the highest religions of the world. The Raja Yoga helps you to reach that higher state, i.e. the state of superconsciousness, by studying your own mind. Through concentration, you get at the root of all phenomena. Everything becomes like an open book. Would it not be worthwhile to study this more carefully and understand the meaning and try to grasp the truth and realize it, and become saintly, divine, and one with the eternal Spirit ? What other purpose of life can we serve ? Eat, drink, go to sleep, have a little amusement, beget children, and carry the burden of education and all the worry and anxiety,—that is the ordinary regular life. But is it all ? Is there not anything higher than this ? That

is the question which the seeker after truth asks. That question is innate. That question is inborn in us. Our soul will never be satisfied until that question is solved. What is the nature of that question? It is what is all this for and where is the end of it? The end of it is in Godconsciousness or superconsciousness. We are passing through these sideways and byways and gaining experiences and learning, and as soon as we learn one thing, we throw it down and say: 'I am through with it, I do not want it.' We must get out of it and get something else. That is the desire. Can we stop that desire? Who can stop it? The very moment a human being came into existence, that question arose, and in trying to find the solution to that question, we have all these different systems of religion, philosophy, psychology, science, and all kinds of impressions, instruments, and so on. These are all to solve that one question. What is all this for? Where does it come from and where does it go? So we must solve that question, and the solution can come, not by running after things, but by going into the innermost centre of the universe. And that innermost centre of the universe is God, the Spirit, the Infinite, and the eternal Being. That infinite eternal Being has no worry, no anxiety, and no care. He is birthless and deathless. He is free from all sorrow and suffering. So, if we understand this true self clearly, we shall see that our true self, the centre of our little world or microcosm, is just as perfect as the centre of the universe, because God dwells in man. The kingdom of Heaven is within us, and there is the centre, and you cannot help it. If we can reach the little centre, the centre of our little world, the microcosm,—then and then alone we can understand the centre of the big universe, the macrocosm. They are one and the same. Therefore, if that centre is within us and urging us from within to realize it, who can stop that urging? Death cannot stop it. We may die a million times, but still we will be born with an intense longing to know it, to realize it and to be one with it. That is the tendency of the soul, and that tendency can be satisfied only by entering into the state of superconsciousness or Godconsciousness.

All the different steps in Yoga are intended to bring us scientifically to the superconscious state (*samadhi*). Furthermore, this is a vital point to understand that inspiration comes

now just as much as it came to the old prophets among the tribes of Israel. They were not really different from us, What was the difference if at all ? Perhaps, they were more cruel than we are today. And still we have prophets. Why should we not have prophets ? Do you think God has left us and it is the reign of the Devil now ? It is foolish to think that our forefathers had prophets and we are so degenerated that we cannot have them. Why do you not become a prophet yourself ? You have a chance. Take a chance, and remember that you can become a prophet, by entering into that state of superconsciousness.

First, you have to learn what meditation is, and then, when you have entered into that state where the conscious mind is no longer working on the sense plane, but rises into a plane beyond the senses, and goes beyond thought, that is superconsciousness (*samadhi*). Do not be afraid that you will be choked to death. There is no fear of that. You will continue to live and live a better life. Even if you, for the time being, come out of your trivialities and attachments and attractions to the world, what does it signify. You will learn the results that these things do not belong to you. That would be a great lesson. You all need it. Suppose you get out of your body and find that you are looking at your body appearing as dead body. From that moment you will no longer be afraid of death. You will say. "Why, this body is just like a suit of clothes; if the body is destroyed, it does not destroy me". That would be a great gain. You will have firm faith in yourself, and know that all these attachments and everything related to physical body are only temporary. You need this to manage now, and understand that this is only the beginning of your realization of yourself, and then you must rise higher and higher, step by step, until you enter into the realm of your true nature, the Self, which is beyond the ego, the background of the thinker, the doer, and the performer. And then, when you come to the infinite Spirit, which is the basic ground of the universe, you will be able to be conscious of that oneness, and will be able to say from the bottom of your heart, in the same language as that of Jesus the Christ: 'I and my Father are one.'

CHAPTER IX

THE KRIYA-YOGA

We have learned that the last step of the Raja Yoga is the superconscious state. We have also learned it to be the ideal for which we have to practise. It is the highest state through which we are conscious of the Infinite, or the Divinity, dwelling not only within us, but around us, and in everything. That highest consciousness is very difficult to acquire. It requires a long preparation and purification of the heart (*abhyasa* and *chitta-shuddhi*). It requires also concentration (*dharana*). The power of concentration should be developed into meditation (*dhyana*), and meditation will eventually bring that superconsciousness (*samadhi*).

We have learned also the preparatory stages in concentration. We have to withdraw our mind from the external objects and fix it upon one point or object, which is very pleasant and spiritual, and which we like to think about. Then, after that, we have to overcome the obstacles. I explained to you the different obstacles to concentration. Those obstacles you will find described in one of the aphorisms of this Raja Yoga.[1] After overcoming all those obstacles, one should practise to gain that power of meditation.

There is another method of overcoming the obstacles, described in the second chapter of the aphorisms. The first aphorism tells us,

तपः स्वाध्यायेश्वरप्रनिधानानि क्रियायोगः । २।१

That is, mortification, study, and surrendering fruits of work to God, are called the *kriyayoga*. The *kriyayoga* is the same as the *karmayoga*, which means the method of work or action. The word *kriya* is derived from the Sanskrit root verb *kri*, to act. From the same root word the English word 'create' is also

[1] The obstacles have been described in the second chapter.

derived. So, 'create' originally means 'to act' and *kriyayoga* means the *karmayoga,* or the method of work. We have been studying this method in the third chapter of the *Bhagavad Gita* also. You will find that the Raja Yoga and the *Bhagavad Gita* harmonize. Their ideas and ideals are one and the same. They both describe the same thing, only in different terms. The *karmayoga* teaches us that one cannot live without doing some kind of work. And that activity must either be physical or mental. Now, how the activities of the mind and the body can be made to help us towards the purification of our heart is the main point. All the works that we are doing in our daily life, should be a help to our onward progress to God-consciousness, and we should understand very clearly how to make them a help. Every kind of work, walking, doing any kind of household work, and even the manual work, such as scrubbing the floor and washing the dishes, should be regarded as the acts of worship. How that can be done ? That is the point which the *karmayoga* teaches. Every kind of work, good or bad, should be offered to God and the result of such works also should be offered to Him. That is described as surrendering the fruits of work to God.

But, before I come to that, I shall first of all explain mortification. Mortification means those hardships or conditions which make us realize the ultimate truth, and that ultimate truth is the highest consciousness of the ultimate reality. The physical tendencies are naturally towards luxury and different sensuous enjoyment, and all our senses are tending towards that. If we let the senses run wild, we go into troubles. Each one of us has that experience, more or less, that one who follows the tendencies of the senses, is bound to come to grief, sooner or later. But one who can restrain the tendencies of the senses, is a master. He can evade all the pitfalls, diseases, and troubles that are sure to come to those who follow those tendencies blindly. Therefore, mortification means that, when our senses are directing our mind towards external objects, we should control them. For instance, if we have the desire to eat all the best things, we should practise fasting, We should have just the opposite things, when our senses demand of us, and our lower mind is forcing us to acquire certain things. We should do just the opposite, and that is the meaning of morti-

fication. In the *Katha Upanishad* of the Yajur Veda, it has been described:

आत्मानं रथिनं विद्धि शरीरं रथमेव तु ।
बुद्धिन्तु सारथिं विद्धि मनः प्रग्रहमेव च ॥
इन्द्रियाणि हयानादुर्विषयांस्तेषु गोचरान् ।
आत्मेन्द्रियमनोयुक्तं भोक्तेत्यादुर्मनीषिणः ॥

'The organs are the horses, the mind is the reins, and the intellect is the charioteer. The master of the household, the king, the Self of man, is sitting in the chariot. The wise say that man thinks himself the enjoyer, when his Self is identified with the mind and the senses'. The central idea of these lines of the *Upanishad* is that we must regard the *Atman* as the rider, and the body as the chariot. The illustration of the chariot was given, because in olden times, there were no automobiles or carriages, except the old-fashioned Greek chariot. You have certainly seen in some of your shows the chariots with two wooden wheels and no spring. Those were the chariots which were used in war in those days. So the poets took those chariots as illustration. You may take the illustration of the automobile, which is a self-moving and self-directing machine. The body is the chariot, and the rider is the soul. The driver, the charioteer is the intellect. The power of discrimination, understanding and the power of determination are the functions of intellect. The mind is the reins, and the senses are the horses. So the rider is seated in the chariot, and the driver is driving the horses. Now, you try to make a mental picture, and that will give you a clear idea of the relation of the body to the soul. You may meditate upon that. That will give you a beautiful subject of meditation. Regard your own body as the chariot, and your senses of sight, hearing, smell, taste and touch as the horses. There are five organs of knowledge, and they are eyes, ears, nose, tongue and skin. These five are the five horses, which are drawing this chariot, and the roads are the objects of the senses. For the eyes there is colour; for the ears, the sound; for the nose, the odour; for the tongue, savour; and for the skin, touch. These are the objects of the five senses which we perceive. We cannot know anything of the external

world, beyond these qualities, which we perceive through the senses. Our external world is composed of light, sound, smell, taste, and touch. When we see a thing at a distance, we are not satisfied. We want to touch it, feel it, smell it, tap on it and hear the sound. We want to taste a piece of food, if it has any particular taste. Then our mind is perfectly satisfied. Beyond these we cannot know anything else. So these five senses give us all the knowledge of the external world. For instance, when you look at a flower, you feel it, smell it, taste it, and hold it near the ears, whether it has any sound or not. All these are the gates of knowledge, and these are regarded as the horses. The objects of the senses are the roads where the horses are travelling. Intellect holds the reins, and the reins are the mind. Now, if the charioteer is unwise and does not know how to govern and control his horses, then these horses which are very unruly and wild will drag the chariot over all the rough places and ditches, and eventually the chariot will be broken to pieces and ruined, and the rider will fall into the ditch, just as it happens to an inexperienced driver in an ordinary wagon.

You can imagine how many people were ruined by not knowing exactly how to control these horses. Their intellect was weak, and they had no power of control. A man who is following all the dictates of these senses to gain a certain sensation, is violating all the laws, and, perhaps, he becomes a thief or a murderer, and goes to prison, and is electrocuted in the end, and so on. All these crimes are committed by those people who have no control over their organs. And those are the pitfalls or ditches, into which the chariot is dragged by the unruly horses. But, if the organs, the horses, are well-controlled, and, if the reins, the mind, are held well in the hands of the charioteer, the intellect, the chariot reaches the goal.

Now, what is the goal ? The goal is Godconsciousness. In order to reach that goal we need control over our senses. The chariot must be driven carefully. We must not neglect or violate any of the laws which govern our physical, moral, mental, and spiritual life. The real meaning of mortification is the holding the reins firmly, while guiding the body and the mind. It does not mean any torture, but it means curbing the desires, so that our intellect will take every step with proper

understanding and knowledge proper reasoning and discrimination. All these are necessary. Before we take one step, we must think twice and discriminate. Discrimination is a great virtue in our ordinary every-day life. If we do not discriminate, we go to rack and ruin. Therefore, whether we are Yogis or not, we should discriminate, before we do anything. In truth, we are all *karmayogins,* more or less, so long as our minds and bodies are active. Every man, every woman belongs to the working class. By nature we are forced to work, or to be active, and so we must learn to regulate the work and hold the reins firm, and control the horses, so that we would travel with discrimination, and avoid all the rough roads, dangers, and difficulties that are in the way. That is the result of mortification. So we should avoid all the pitfalls and dangers, and not let the body do anything it likes. If we allow it to do anything it likes, there would be no end of it. We shall go into great difficulties. We would be so delicate that we would not be able to stand the conditions of the weather or the change of climate, and so on. We would be miserable. Every little thing will affect our body and mind ; our concentration will be at stake. We would not oe able to hold our mind upon anything. We would be so delicate that our life would not be worth living. Therefore, undergoing a little hardship and enduring all the changes and difficulties are good. In India, we practise these. We go out and sleep under the trees and walk bare-footed, so that our feet would not be so delicate, and we would be able to stand the sunshine and rain and all the changes of climate and conditions. I remember, when I had been travelling in India, long before I came to this country, I used to walk barefooted. First I could walk only a few steps ; then, through endurance, I made my feet so firm and strong and callous that I could walk over sharp stones and frozen path. I used to walk thirty-five miles a day over snow and ice in the Himalayas, over glaciers. Through the power of mind, one can gain absolute control over the body. The body would be like a slave, and the mind would be the ruler. But, at present, we have allowed the body to run wild, and naturally our mind has become so weak that it cannot govern the body. So we must turn the tables, and make the body the slave of the mind. Our mind is the ruler. Mere talk will not do, you have to practise

what you think or say under all conditions. We should hold the thought that our intellect is the charioteer, mind is the reins, which the intellect is holding tight, and our soul is the rider, above all . The body must obey the command of our will-power. Then we would be practising mortification. Thus we can gain a great deal. It is absolutely practical. One cannot avoid all these practices, because they are helpful at every step. We shall notice that, as we shall be progressing each week, we shall be gaining in our will-power, and more discrimination will come to us. Our vision will be clear, and we shall be able to see things and understand the laws in a better way than we do now.

Another thing that would bring the control over our mind is the proper kind of study (*svadhyaya*). We should study such books as would remind us of the ideal, and help us to understand the relation between the mind and the body, and the relation between the soul and the physical condition.

Regarding study (*svadhyaya*), Vyasa says in his commentary: स्वाध्यायः प्रणवादिपवित्राणां जपः, मोक्षशास्त्राध्ययनं वा, i.e. study signifies the practice of the sacred word *om* or *pranava*, and also the culture of those books, which will help us to get the transcendental knowledge. The word '*pranava*' is an epithet of the determinate Brahman (*saguna-Brahman*). It is known as a universal and sacred language, which helps us to appreciate the nature of the *Atman*. So we should concentrate our mind upon it, and the concentration will unveil the mystery of our soul.

Again the mere study of books does not bring illumination unto the soul, but it intensifies the faith, self-confidence, and spiritual practice of man. There should be a fixed ideal behind the study, and that ideal is to reach the highest goal of life. Study without discrimination brings *vada* or argumentation, and not *siddhanta* or real decision. The spiritual seeker never entangles himself in the net of mere argumentative fighting or speculative thinking, but he goes deep into the reasoning and finds a solution of the mystery of life. In the first stage of practice of Yoga, reasoning or discrimination is essential to clear the knots of doubt, and to strengthen our mind. It is quite essential for the beginners to discriminate why this is so and so, whether this leads to this thing or that thing, and whether

blind faith has any value or not. All these he argues in his mind. He exercises reasoning or discriminating faculty and comes to a conclusion. Then he is decisive and no longer argues or reasons in the same way.

There runs a Sanskrit *sloka* which means: 'Infinite are the branches of knowledge. There are many things to be learned. But time is short and there are many difficulties which we have to overcome'.[1] Half the portion of our life is spent in sleep. The other half can also be divided. A quarter is gone in infancy, another quarter in old age, and the remaining half is spent in the struggle for existence.

Therefore, where is our time to study and to know this infinite universe? Under these conditions, what shall we do? We should take the essential thing, and learn the essence of the phenomenal world in a short time. We should take the essential and drop the non-essential parts, just as a swan drinks the milk and leaves the water. And, therefore, a Paramahamsa or wise man is named after that aquatic bird, who has the power to separate milk from water, when it is mixed, and he drinks the milk. Milk stands for the essential part, the real truth in the midst of all the phenomena, and the non-essential part, the dross, is the water that is left out.

So we have to find out, in the midst of all the phenomena that we perceive with our senses, what is the essential and the most valuable thing, and then, we should take that like the swan and drink. We should leave out the non-essential parts, because our life is too short to go after non-essential things, and to accumulate all that trivial knowledge, which does not do any good to anyone. But the knowledge of our immortal nature helps us, and, therefore, we should try to get that knowledge, and anything that helps us in gaining that knowledge, we should study, but the rest is only the passing of our time just with trivialities.

The study of various kinds of sciences and philosophies and different branches of psychology and astronomy is very

[1] अनन्तशास्त्रं बहुवेदितव्यं स्वल्पश्च कालो बहवश्च विघ्नाः।
यत्सारभूतं तदुपासितव्यं हंसो यथा क्षीरमिवाम्बु मध्यम् ॥

helpful or rather essential at first, so long as we want to get a certain idea of what they can teach, and how far they can teach the human mind. But, when we come before a stone wall and cannot go any further, we drop them. What shall we do then ? Then we try to find out a solution. So we should try to find out the solution of our life, by realizing the essential, through the practice of Yoga. By studying books, we gain intellectual knowledge, and most of it is guess-work, but we cannot find the origin of things. For instance, we do not know the origin of life, or consciousness by studying all the sciences, because that is beyond the reach of our finite mind. Therefore, if all the satisfying explanations of our questions are in the Infinite, we must go to that fountainhead by right knowledge. So long as we are whirling round and round within the limitations of the finite mind, we cannot get the origin of anything, but we shall be groping in the dark, and shall never be satisfied. We may follow one idea for a certain length of time, and then find in the long run that the idea is absolutely wrong, and, therefore, we do not know where we stand. For that reason, it is first necessary to discriminate, which is the essential thing. Then go to it, try to realize it, feel it, and become one with it. If the Infinite be the reality, and if the infinite Spirit is the origin of everything, we should find the origin of the whole universe in that infinite Being. But how to realize that infinite Being ? Simply by going into the state of superconsciousness (*samadhi*), and that is the highest end of our life. So we should realize the divine Truth first. We cannot convince another unless we have a conviction in ourselves. Let us gain, therefore, the conviction in ourselves, and our very presence will be convincing to other people.

The next thing is surrendering the fruits of work to God. But we started with the idea that we cannot live for a moment without doing some kind of work. So we must do such works as would help us towards the realization of the Infinite, the ideal and goal of our phenomenal life. But how to make all works—acts of worship ? How can we do that ? It can be done by surrendering the fruits of work to God.

Rishi Patanjali says: 'ईश्वरप्रणिधानानि', which means surrendering everything to God. The commentator Vyasa says:

ईश्वरप्रणिधानं सर्वं क्रियाणां परमगुरावर्पणं, तत् फलसंन्यासो वा। Similarly in the *Bhagavad Gita*, the Lord Sri Krishna says:

कर्मण्येवाधिकारस्ते मा फलेषु कदाचन।
मा कर्मफलहेतुर्भुं मा ते सङ्गोऽस्त्वकर्मणि॥

Here 'तत् फलसंन्यासः' means, to work without seeking for the result of the work, which again means disinterested work. For this reason, the Lord says in the *Gita* that it is our duty to work in the spirit of worship, and not to ask for its result. The disinterested work, i.e. work as worship never binds a man in the chain of delusion, it rather emancipates him, and illuminates him with the self-revealing radiance of the knowledge of the *Atman*.

God is the source of infinite knowledge. He is the teacher of all teachers. He is dwelling everywhere, as well as within us. Now, if He is the source of everything in the universe, then all the activities that are manifested by our minds and bodies, are the activities or expressions of the forces that are coming from God Himself. God is the infinite intelligence, and His body is the force-centre of the universe. Again that force-centre or energy is the primary state of all activities and all forces. The sum total of all energy forms the cosmic body of God. Therefore, all forces, mental and physical, are only expressions of that all-energy God. The sun's rays are emanating from its luminous body. Now, the force, that is in the sun, does not belong to the sun, but it belongs to the universal Being. The energy that is manifested through sunlight and heat are no other than the expressions of that one eternal energy, which forms the body of God. So, if all the activities are the workings of the divine force or energy, what right have we to claim the results of works as our own? That is the question to be answered by each one of us. Have we any right to call the result of these actions of body and mind as our own? No, only the ignorant or deluded persons do that, but not the wise ones. The wise ones think, if these are the expressions of the divine energy, the results of all the works we are doing, must go to the eternal source of all that energy, where they belong. The devotees make a free offering of the results of their works of body and mind at the feet of the Lord. That

is the most beautiful idea. So we should make our whole life a chain of worship, because worship means surrendering to the will of the Lord. But, how can we surrender to the will of the Lord ? First, we must surrender the results of our activities and works at His feet. Every evening, before we retire, we should think over all the works that we have performed during the day, with our body and mind, and make a free offering mentally of the results of all the works. These results must go to the divine Being, and we must make a free offering of them to the almighty Spirit.

It has already been said that this idea has been emphasized in the *Bhagavad Gita,* and it is also found in the Raja Yoga. It is very helpful, as it purifies our mind and heart. Not only this, but it also takes away all our responsibility. So long as we are seeking the result we are responsible for it, and we are in bondage, and therefore, we cannot avoid that attendant suffering. But, if we throw all the responsibilities upon the shoulder of God, or the infinite Spirit, then we are trying to realize the absolute freedom even when we are working, and living the ordinary life of the everyday world.

In this way, if we surrender all the fruits of our works to the Lord, we have no more responsibility, and we have no more worries and care. But we must not be lazy. We must be active. We must be working all the time, using our mind and body. The body must be active, and the mind must be active. All the senses must be in full force to perform their functions. Do not worry about the results, because the results are in the hands of the Lord. But, at the same time, we must remember that every work that we are performing with our body and mind, will bring the result through the law of action and reaction, and, if we do not accept them or be not affected by them, we are free from that bondage. But they are bound to come to us. Whether we worry about the results or not, they are coming to us by the law. If we seek them or worry about them, we become happy or unhappy, hopeful or disappointed. Every time we expect a thing, we are sowing the seed of disappointment. We must remember that, and by remembering, we must not expect anything. It is our duty to give everything that we have, without expecting anything better than what would naturally come to us. Why should we expect ? We

perform our duties, and there they end. The results are bound to come, and the law will force the results on us, even when we do not want them. But we have been taught for the results. Of course, that is not unnatural. The law of demand and supply is always governing our physical life on this material plane. If we want a thing, we can get it. But that ordinary kind of desire is not what is to be considered so much as the sum total of all the desires. The sum total of all the desires should be recognized as a tendency, and if our desire be towards God, or towards the realization of Truth, then all the minute desires for our piece of bread, clothes, furniture, etc. will fade away. But as to the results of our activities, taken all collectively, if we do not accept them as belonging to us, but make a free offering of them to the Lord, we are free. But our natural apprehension is, we cannot live in this world, unless we have the immediate gratification of hunger and thirst and so on. We have to satisfy that, but, at the same time, we should know that the great works which we are doing should produce wonderful results, and those results would go to the source, from where all the energy has started. Then we have no more worry and anxiety. For instance, if we have a large family to support, we need not worry about it, the good and the virtuous conditions of our family life are guaranty enough for the Lord's protection. Everything will be determined by the Lord Himself. Just have unshaken faith, and let the divine will guide them all. We do not have to worry, because each one of us is a child of the Lord. We are only the instruments in the hand of the Almighty. In this way, we can live in the world, and yet we are not of the world. We are performing all the functions, in conscious co-operation with the divinity, to elevate mankind, and to help humanity, and, at the same time, we are sowing the seed of freedom and liberation of the soul. We must not forget the ultimate goal, which is the purpose of life. The purpose of life will be fulfilled, when we have gained that freedom and realization of the infinite Spirit.

We must not try to receive all the credit for the good works that we are doing, although that is the natural tendency of the human mind. It is the weakness of the human mind to receive, to demand, and to seek all the credit. But, if we are mentally offering to the Lord the results of our works that we have per-

formed, we would not accept any credit, because, we would think that all the credit goes to the Lord. Then our life becomes humble, meek, and gentle. Christ never received any credit for himself, but when anybody said anything in praise of him, he said: 'Praise the Father'. That is the ideal. Christ set an example, but he did not show us the way, by which it can be done in our everyday life. And here we find that by surrendering the fruits of our works, we get to the same point, and live a Christ life, without receiving any credit. Let us give all the credit to the source of all power and all intelligence and all knowledge, God, for the good works we have done. If, on the contrary, we seek credit, we are becoming egoistic and self-conceited, which is not a virtue, but a limitation. The Lord Krishna also says in the *Bhagavad Gita*: कृपना फलहेतवः, i.e. they are misers who ask for the results of their works. Asking for the result of a work is a kind of attachment. It makes us more strongly attached to our petty self and its activities. We should, therefore, try to get over it. But how can we get over it? By not receiving any credit. It would make us humble; and humility is a virtue. Give praise to the Lord, and do not try to take share of the praise that is poured upon you, if you are living a good life; but let all praise go to the Lord, and you will become humble, meek, and gentle, and you will be the salt of the earth. What a beautiful conception, and how simple it is! The more you study and practise this, the more you do not have to worry about anything. You are just moulding your whole life in the mould of a perfected mind like Christ, or Buddha, or Ramakrishna, or any one like them. They set us the example, and we make their lives as standards, and follow their path. That is the reason that each one of them says: 'I am the way.' Follow me, I am the path.' They really show the path to divine realization. You have to do just as they have done, and follow their way, not by merely setting them on a pedestal and just keeping to look at the picture. Follow their path, and that is real worship. Real worship means that you should remember the ideal, and be devoted to the ideal, and try to follow the path. Then your life would have a certain meaning, and you will find the spiritual meaning and significance of your life. Then you will see that your whole attitude towards life and the world is changed; and you

will also realize in yourself a purpose. Instead of feeling discouraged, you will feel encouraged and enlightened. You will feel that you have a new ideal now to work on; and you are going to find the result, which is the purification of the heart, and the attainment of the highest consciousness. Then this life will appear to you just like a school. You are going through all these different grades of learning step by step. You have to learn a great lesson, and graduate from the school, by attaining liberation or freedom of the soul, by realizing the immortality of your soul, and the true nature of your spirit. So, in this way, one can live religion, eat religion, drink religion, walk religion, and talk religion. And that is true religion. Religion is not a certain set of dogmas, doctrines, beliefs, and certain convictions. But you must feel the presence of the Divinity in you; you must realize that you are the Spirit, and are related to the universal Soul. You should realize that your body and mind are only the instruments, through which this higher Spirit, with all the divine energy, is working and manifesting its powers. As you are an instrument, you will glorify over this, instead of being discouraged. Whatever you are studying is only like a child's play, but your real study will come, when you will come to know the relation of your mind and soul to the divinity.

So, remember again that beautiful idea of the chariot and the charioteer, the reins, the horses, and the rider. The rider is your true Self. Go to your innermost being. Withdraw your mind from the physical form, and go deep into the innermost essence through introspection, and there you will find yourself in all glory. You cannot have any imperfection, as your self is birthless and deathless. Then you need not be ashamed of anything, as you are one with the universal Spirit. You will be able to declare before the world that you are a child of the infinite Being. You are not a slave of the body and mind, but they are all your instruments or means for attaining perfect freedom. What a grand and glorious idea that is! And that idea you should always hold before your mind's eye, and through your work you will be able to attain to it. So, *kriyayoga* or *karma-yoga* leads to work, and teaches you the secret of work: how that work should be performed, and how you should be able to surrender the fruits of your works to the

Lord. By doing that, at every step, you will be able to gain knowledge of the laws, and you will also learn what is essential and what is non-essential. You must remember that in all religions, there are two things, the essential and the non-essential. The non-essentials are the doctrines, dogmas, beliefs, theories, ideas, etc. The essential is the knowledge, and realization of the infinite Spirit. And that knowledge and realization of the infinite Spirit were held by Christ, Buddha, Ramakrishna, and all great saviours, as the highest ideals of all beings. You must hold the same ideal before your mind under all conditions, and then you will not forget the true meaning of the saying which Christ gave so beautifully: 'I and my Father are one.'

CHAPTER X

THE NESCIENCE AND THE WORLD

The first aphorism of the second chapter of the Raja Yoga describes, and explains the principal points of *kriyayoga*. It runs thus:

तपः स्वाध्यायेश्वरप्रणिधानानि क्रियायोगः । २।१

'Mortification, study, and surrendering fruits of work to God, are called the *kriyayoga*. Mortification refers to self-denial; study means to go through such works as would remind us of our immortal nature, our perfect relation to the Infinite, and surrendering the fruits of works. If we surrender the results of our works to God, our hearts are purified, and through purification of the heart (*chittasuddhi*), we can realize the ultimate truth of the universe. We have already discussed these things.

Different methods of Yoga are described in the second aphorism, as the means of minimizing the pain-bearing obstructions. They are helpful to the practice of concentration. Through concentration we learn how to overcome the obstructions that have been described in the third aphorism of the *Patanjalasutra*. The obstructions are:

अविद्याऽस्मितारागद्वेषाभिनिवेशाः पञ्चक्लेशाः । ३

That obstructions are five, and they are: ignorance, egoism, attachment, aversion, and clinging to life.

The commentator Vyasa also explains the fivefold pains in a lucid way. He says: क्लेशा इति पञ्च विपर्यया इत्यर्थः, ते स्यन्दमाना गुणाधिकारं द्रढयन्ति, परिणाममवस्थापयन्ति, कार्यकारणस्रोत उन्नमयन्ति, परस्परानुग्रहन्त्री भूत्वा कर्मविपाकं च अभिनिर्हरन्ति इति, which means that the fivefold pains are no other than the false impressions (*mithya samskara*), and they cause the manifestations of the categories like *mahat*, etc. They are the cause of the chain of cause and consequence, and produce *jati*, *ayuh*, and pheno-

menal enjoyments for those, who live in the domain of nescience or ignorance.

So we have to learn how to deny not only matter, but also the mind or the mental modifications (*chittavrittis*) that cause pains and sufferings to us, as they are regarded as obstructions (*antarayas*).

Now, what are the characteristics of obstructions ? There are different manifestations of them, and the first is nescience (*avidya*). Here nescience or ignorance refers to a mental state. It is not a negative state, but is a positive one. It is known as the undifferentiated consciousness. For instance, when we see a piece of rope in the dark, that appears to us like a snake by mistake. We get frightened. That may be regarded as a delusion, or something like that. But it is unreal, and yet, at the same time real, so long as we do not know that it is a piece of rope. So long as we are frightened by it, it appears as real for the time being. It is a seeming or apparent reality (*pratibhasika-satta*), because it produces palpitation of the heart, and we get frightened, and we suffer. If it were unreal at that time, we would not have these effects, and, therefore, that particular perception is caused by what we call the undifferentiated consciousness (*ajnana* or *avyakta*).[1] At that time, we are conscious of something, but we are not conscious of the rope. We are conscious of something that appears to us like a snake. It is not differentiated correctly. So it is a positive state, and yet it is unreal.[2] When we bring the light and look at it,

[1] The word 'undifferentiated consciousness' means the *avyakta* or causal nescience or *maya* that co-exists with the third vedantic prime principle, *Isvara*. Advaita Vedanta says that the causal nescience co-exists with the *Isvara*-consciousness in unmanifested seed form, and it cannot easily be differentiated or discriminated from the *Isvara-chaitanya*, and so the *Isvara* or *Isvara-chaitanya* with the unmanifested causal nescience (*karana-ajnana*) is called the *avyakta* or the undifferentiated consciousness.

[2] The non-dualist Vedantists are of opinion that nescience or *ajnana* or *maya* is not real, unreal, and real-unreal. It is not real (*sat*), because, though it is mistakenly perceived, it is negated, i.e. corrected by knowledge of the Absolute. It is not unreal (*asat*), because it is apparently perceived for wrong notion. It is not sometimes real and sometimes unreal (*sadasat*), because it is absolutely negated or corrected, when knowledge of Brahman (*brahmajnana*) dawns upon the horizon of a man's intellect. So nescience can rightly be said or conceived as the unspeakable or undescribable (*anirvachaniya*) *maya* that seemingly causes the bondage of man, but is corrected by the transcendental consciousness forever and ever.

we find that we are mistaken; it is not a snake, but it is a piece of rope. That is an illustration that would give us an idea of what kind of nescience is referred to here. This we can apply to various things, especially to our conditions of life, when we think that we are one with the body.

The sense of 'I' or egoism (*asmita*) is the next obstruction. That means 'I-ness', 'I', and 'mine'. All these limiting ideas (adjuncts) are coming or rising in our minds, but we do not know anything about who this 'I' is. This is an undifferentiated consciousness (*avyakta* or *maya* which co-exists with *Isvara*). Sometimes 'I' is referred to the body. When we say, 'I am stout I am thin, I am tall, or I am short', we refer to the body. As regards the mental state or feeling, we say: 'I am hungry, I am thirsty, I am angry, I am suffering, I am happy or I am unhappy.' We use the term 'I' in reference to all these things, but which is the real 'I'? Can you tell me which part is the real 'I', and where it is? It is an undifferentiated consciousness (*prajna* or *avyakta*). We are conscious of ourselves, but we do not know what we are in reality. Sometimes we think of ourselves as one with the body. Sometimes we are thinking of our mental states, and we have no power to differentiate at the present time, and, therefore, we are absolutely ignorant about ourselves. Yet we are using this consciousness as the only means by which we can know the external world related to us. Now, anything that is not related to me, or to the sense of 'I', does not appeal to us. We are afraid of losing something that we call our own, and the thought of opposition also arises. Whenever anything seems agreeable to us, it gives us a pleasant sensation, and we like to keep it, we like to hold on to it, and enjoy it. But, if anyone tries to take it away from us, we do not like it. A burglar goes to a neighbour's house and steals everything. So long as those things do not belong to me, I do not bother my head, and we think that the police will take care of it. But, when the burglar comes to my house or my room, and takes things, I have a sense of loss, and I do not like it. Why? Because I want to keep those things, because those things give me pleasure. In that way, we have the attachment to the objects which give us pleasure, or create an agreeable sensation, and we like to keep them and hold on to them. But anything that is against it and brings pain or suffering to us we

dislike. That is known as aversion. That is another mental state.

Again we do not know exactly what we are, whether we are spirit or matter. We do not know, because the spirit and matter are so closely blended that we cannot differentiate how far matter goes, and where the beginning of the spirit is. That is the reason why we have this mistake, the sense of 'I'. Now, where does it exist ? In what part of the body is that 'I' ? Am I the limbs, the legs, the arms, or some particular organs ? No. If we were arms or legs, then soldiers who have lost their arms and legs, must have lost parts of their 'I'. But they have not lost anything in their sense of 'I'. The sense of 'I' is just the same, whether they have the whole body, or part of it. Nothing is lost in that sense, if part of the body is gone. And, if that soldier, who lost an arm or a leg, thought that he was the body alone, he would have lost a portion of that sense of 'I', but he cannot differentiate. He would say that his leg is gone, but the leg is not himself. He does not say that the leg is 'I', but he says 'my leg is gone', with an entire feeling of possession, just as you would say, 'my chair is gone'. It is the same way, or it is like the machine that you are using. You may say, my chair is gone or my machine is gone, but it is not 'I'. You can see that very distinctly. But, where is this 'I' ? Perhaps you will say that I do not know. There comes the great difficulty. So, in studying practical psychology, you must first of all understand where this 'I' is, and why you like certain things, and dislike certain other things.

The last of these obstructions is called the clinging to life, which means the 'will-to-live'. We have this strong will-to-live. We all want to live. But, where do we want to live ? That does not make any difference. We simply say that we want to live, and that will-to-live you will find not only in the human beings, but also in all kinds of animals. They all want to live, and they are all afraid of losing their life or entity. If there be any cause of separating themselves from their life, that is called the cause of death. We all dislike that. Now, this will-to-live is at the foundation of all works of our life. This will-to-live is so innate and deep that in the minutest protoplasm it exists, and it is the cause of all evolution. The protoplasm takes different stages, and manifests in different forms of animals. A

protoplasm might take the form of a bird, or a reptile, or an ape, or a human being. Through all these different stages, you will find there is a constant desire to live, and upon that depends the first principle of the theory of evolution, which is known as 'the struggle for existence'. The first manifestation of this desire is the desire to keep the phenomenal body. If any animal does not find food and enough sustenance in the process of evolution, he dies. The first effort to get something to eat, which is within us, is not different from the will-to-live or desire to eat, which we find also in the lower animals, like dog or cat, or horse or bird, or other animals. This will-to-live is universal. Even in a plant there is that will-to-live or struggle for existence. A plant has the desire for food. You place a plant in a glass box, where there is not much nourishment, and put nourishment outside of that box, and it will shoot out its roots. It will feel the existence of food there. It has a sensation in the roots. It has consciousness and feeling, in a way, in the roots. It goes through that box. It will make a crack to get that food, just as an animal, if kept confined in a room, comes to know if there is food in the next room and tries to get it. It has the same desire. Upon this desire is built up the theory of reincarnation. The will-to-live does not leave us, even when we give up this body, but it continues. It is inherent in the living soul or the germ of life. And so long as there is the will-to-live, there would be the manufacturing of the physical form. First, when there is a protoplasm, it has the will-to-live. It subdivides itself, and manufactures different kinds of cells, and the cells produce different organs, the alimentary canal, the digestive organs, etc. Then, if it wants to see in the dark to get some food and cannot, it manufactures the eyes. It manufactures the organ of the ear to hear sound, and the organ of smell, and so on. So, the desire to see produces the eye ; the desire to hear produces the ear ; the desire to eat produces the teeth, the alimentary canal, and the digestive organs. If there were no desire to eat, we would not have any teeth, or any digestive organs either. So, we must remember that all the desires evolve from that first primary desire to live, the will-to-live. The will-to-live is at the bottom of every soul, or every individual, whether human or animal, or departed spirits. So long as that desire exists, we manufacture the form by absorb-

ing the particles of matter from the environments, in the form of food or drink, and so forth. We are gathering every particle of matter which is good for the growth and sustenance of the body. Our system knows what kind of food would be helpful, and what is injurious it rejects. If we give to a dog anything that is mixed with something and that is not good for him, he would not eat it, he would leave it out. That is called an instinct. Every cell of our body is possessed of feeling and consciousness. Even if animals happen to take something that is disagreeable, they throw it out. In this way, we are gathering from environments the particles of matter which are helpful in the growth and sustenance of the body. As we are doing in our lifetime, we shall be able to do that in future, and when we have given up this body, we shall do it again, because what we have done once, we can do over again.

We are the manufacturers of our body. By 'we' I mean that 'germ of life' in which the desire or the will-to-live exists. That substance is not destroyed at the death of the body. We must understand this idea or secret very clearly, so that we would know the foundation of our existence. All these things would be helpful to us, and we would be able to find out, step by step, the mental conditions that happen to be within us.

In fact, the nature of the spirit is the true meaning of 'I', and it is an immortal and immaterial substance, that is blended with matter at the present time. Sometimes we ascribe the attributes of matter and material form to the soul. It is a physical condition that relates to the body. Through ignorance we ascribe it to the soul or spirit which is entirely different, and become conscious of ourselves as one with the body. We ascribe the senses of organs to our immortal soul, such as 'I see, I hear, I smell, I taste', and so on. If we lose one of our eyes, we say, 'I am blind'; if we lose our ears we say, 'we are deaf'; and so on. We ascribe all these physical conditions to the soul, but the soul is entirely distinct from these physical conditions, and its nature is intangible. For clarification, I shall give you an illustration. What did you do, or what were you, when you were a child, a boy or a girl in school? You had the same sense of 'I', as you have now, as far as that sense is concerned. I do not mean you have the same body. I do not mean that you have the same mind. But you have the same sense of 'I',

the sense of identity. You may remember that you were a boy or a girl in the school, and you played with your playmates. You may remember what your mother did, when you were five years old. You might trace that you are the same individual. You might be married. You might be father or mother, husband or wife, or something else, whatever it may be, but your sense of 'I' is the same. It has not changed, although your body is changed into a new one. Every seventh year our body renews completely, and the atoms and molecules of the body are entirely changed. In fact, every day we are dying, and every moment we are changing. It is just like a whirlpool. There is no rest in the body, or in the mind, but both are constantly changing, and are arousing powers, and gathering the forces of nature. We are, in truth, constantly drawing energy from the atoms, from the sun's rays, food and drink, and surroundings, and when we lose that power of drawing energy from nature, we have become old. Then we are sick and cannot make good use of the body, and it falls to pieces.

Again, we use up all our energy by neglect, or abuse, or by all other trifling matters. So our door of reason is shut, and we do not find the ways how to acquire and hoard new energy from nature. And that is the real cause of our sufferings. But, if we keep our eyes open to the secret, and know the process, and draw the energy intelligently from the womb of nature, then there will be no suffering. Where there is knowledge, there is power. And that is what we need to do. We must do it intelligently and consciously. Whatever food we eat, we know that it is going to produce some effect, and we are drawing the energy from it. So, in a sense, we are the creator of ourselves. If we do not understand that we are the creator, we cannot understand the Creator of the universe. How can we understand the Creator of the universe, when we do not know who is creating the body which we call our own ? Do we think that God is putting His hand from behind the clouds, and eating and digesting and making blood for us ? No, we are doing it ourselves. We should not blame God, or give credit to Him, because we ourselves are doing it. Of course, God is within us in the form of spirit. We may read in the book that 'the kingdom of Heaven is within us.' But where is that kingdom ? We do not know anything about it. How could

we know it when we do not know who we are in reality? So we should understand these fundamental principles of existence, and thus we should build up everything upon these principles, and we shall find that our life will have a new meaning. All the drudgery will appear to us just as a blessing. We shall find most wonderful things through all the works that we are doing today, whether it is a business or anything else. They all have meaning, and we suit everything to our purpose and to the highest aim of life. What are we going to do, and where are we going? What is the aim? We are doing the same rounds of work or duties, day after day, week after week, month after month, and year after year. But what for? We may say, somebody placed us here, but we cannot help it, and we must go on doing just as our fellow brethern are doing. That makes us foolish, as a sheep in a flock. When one sheep goes one way, the other one of the flock must go the same way, whether it is right or wrong, they do not care. That is a deplorable condition, and that is what we are doing. But, if we do it intelligently, we gain so much, and avoid so many things that are unnecessary, and, by avoiding them, we make our lives pure. Otherwise, by doing things against the laws and through ignorance, we make ourselves miserable.

When we suffer any pain, that is a delusion or *maya*. There is no such thing as pain, in reality. It is the screaming of the cells. When the cells find any disagreeable vibration, they scream, and you call it a pain, and you say that your soul is suffering. I will give you an illustration. When somebody steps on your toe, you feel pain. Where do you feel it? You feel it in the toe. But the toe itself has no sensation at all. You feel it in the back of your head. The sensory nerve carries the sensation through the spinal column to the back of your head, and there you have sensation. Then, afterwards, you trace the cause of that sensation, and find the pinching of the toe, and locate it. So the toe itself does not feel it. The toe might be cut off, and if you disconnect your mind from that organ of feeling, the toe could be amputated, and you would not have any feeling at all. A great many soldiers have done that, and have had their arms and legs amputated, without any anæsthetic. And it is possible, because by withdrawing your mind from the body, you go outside of it, and your body drops

down dead, as it were. Only a portion of your self is working through the body, using this machine, the organ, and the brain cells, just as a musician is playing on the keyboard, by touching the different keys. Now, where lies the music ? The music is in the soul, and not in the brain, just as the music is not in the piano, but in the soul of the musician. In this way, if you analyse it, you will find that you are already outside of the body, and you are holding on to it, overshadowing it, and using it to serve certain purpose. But you may not know that purpose, still you are doing it unconsciously. Ignorance or undifferentiated consciousness (*ajnana*) is the cause of all the suffering, attachment and aversion, and will-to-live on this plane.

That is what is described here. Then Patanjali goes on to describe further in his Yoga psychology, what the nature of nescience is, and so on, in the next aphorism. It would be very interesting for you to study it seriously. Take it up, and analyse it in your own mind, and find out whether it is true or not. There is absolute truth in it. So long we have been living in the darkness of ignorance, and making ourselves foolish by certain kind of beliefs. But beliefs, when they are not based upon truth and fundamental principles of the universe, do not do any good to us. They are just as unnecessary as blind faith. You may think that all these truths are not true or real. Who is going to verify ? The only way to verify is to find it out in yourself. Because, if you solve these problems for yourself, that will not help another soul. So each soul will have to solve it for itself, because you are the centres of your own world, of your world of feelings, thoughts, desires, convictions, beliefs, and knowledge. That is your world. I cannot enter your world, and you cannot enter into my world of feeling, thoughts, or ideas. You cannot describe it either, and neither can I. But each individual soul is the centre of his world of ideas. So, if you are the centre of your world, first try to understand it, and see the workings of your mind. Your thought rises, but are you a thought ? No, it is your thought and you are the thinking principle. But you erroneously say, it is your thought. A desire rises in your mind, but are you the desire ? No, then you will be changing instantly and continuously. One desire rises in your mind, it drops

down, and another rises. If you are the source of desires, then, when the source of desires stops, you must be dead. But you are not. When you have no desire at all, you still live. Then what is it? It must be a mental function. Still this mental function could not be yourself. It is something that is reflecting within you, and producing these thoughts and desires like a kaleidoscope, which is an optical toy, in which one sees an ever changing variety of beautiful colours and forms. They are taking forms in the form of desires, and reflecting upon yourself as on a mirror. These reflections of the mind are again reflected upon you, and you catch that reflection, and call it your own. But that is the undifferentiated consciousness (*ajnana* or *maya*). If you have differentiated consciousness (*jnana*, i.e. *vichara*), you would know the difference between the reflected substance (*pratibimba*) and the *Atman* (*bimba*), your true self. It is like the mirror. But you do not see this difference. You cannot discriminate the real from the unreal. Therefore, the least thing upsets you, and you become nervous and suffer. But you have no right to suffer, because you are always like the clean mirror without any shadow or dust in it. You cannot hold yourself pure like that mirror. Shadows are continuously falling upon it. They are like clouds. Just as in the blue sky, there is not a speck of cloud, and you see one black hideous cloud with a terrible figure. You can imagine a dragon or a monster like a devil. Then another like an angel and beautiful landscape, passing behind it. All these are passing one after another in succession. Just as these clouds do not touch the blue sky, so these clouds of pain or pleasure are passing through your mind or state of consciousness, and do not touch the blue sky of your soul. You are just like a witness (*sakshi*). You are clear all the time, and if you can hold on to that, and become conscious of that part of yourself, all the pains and pleasures may come and go,—what do you care? They do not touch you, because you are above them. That is the state of God living in the form of a man. That is the real man.[3] The apparent man to whom it is terrible, is shivering and frightened, and he is angry and suffering and crying and making all kinds of noise. It is terrible, because he is guided by nescience, or un-

[3] Ramakrishna Paramahamsa used to call the real man *man-hus*, i.e. the man who is conscious of his real nature and undying glory.

differentiated consciousness. The wise man is one who has differentiation between the real nature of the soul and the mental conditions plus the physical conditions. All these are outside of us, and yet we call them as part and parcel of our own being. What is the cause of it ? Because we have no power of differentiation, or discrimination (*vichara*), and so the undifferentiated consciousness or *maya* causes all these troubles.

For instance, you are the father, or mother of your children, but what part of you is the father or mother of the child ? That you must decide. If you call yourself the soul, and the child a soul, you are neither the father nor the mother of the soul of your child. You have not given them the soul. They brought the soul with them. You have only given them the body. You have become just the channels, through which your children have got the body. They might have inherited certain traits, but 'the child is the father of man'. The child might be called an innocent baby, but the soul of the child possesses all the impressions and ideas of the previous incarnations. It will be explained in the next aphorism. Every time when you enjoy anything agreeable, that enjoyment passes away. The feeling of enjoyment is momentary, and though it lasts only for a few seconds, it leaves an impression or stamp on the mind. The impression lies dormant in our subconscious mind. It may arise again in the form of another desire, to keep that and to enjoy that over again. That is the innate tendency of each mind. Anything that is very pleasant, you want to enjoy again. If you enjoy some good thing to eat, or good music, or any pleasing sensation, you like to keep and enjoy it over again. Do you know why ? Because that impression, left dormant, produces another desire to repeat it, and when it is repeated, that leaves another impression, and it goes on and on. For instance, when a man first begins to drink, it gives a very pleasant feeling, and he likes it. It makes him forget his troubles, and it exhilarates. He likes that feeling, and that feeling leaves an impression on him. Whenever he has a little trouble or difficulty, or anything, he remembers that agreeable feeling, and wants to have it repeated. He knows how to get it, and drinks. Gradually that impression becomes stronger, until it becomes a habit, and he becomes a drunkard, and he cannot get over it. It is a series of impressions which

is so deep that it goes to the bottom of his consciousness, i.e. to the bed of the subconsciousness, and he cannot get over it. In that way, all our habits are formed, and these habits mould our character. These different habits that we possess, whether they are good or bad, form our character.

Another illustration might be helpful to us, to understand how this impression is created by conscious efforts. When we begin to play the piano, we have to train our fingres to fall in a certain way, and watch the keys, and give a suggestion to our muscles; and every time we try to make a sound, we are training our muscles, and the cells of our muscles. Now, that effort is a conscious effort. It creates an impression in our mind, and that impression is very good. Next day we feel a little better. We must remember that the cells have memory. Muscles also have memory. If they did not have memory, we would have to make that tremendous effort every time and we begin to play. But we do not. We accumulate those impressions until they become automatic, and when they become automatic, we do not have to bother with our conscious mind, about the training of the muscles, and so on. We go on playing and think of something else and talk with our friends. Our hands perform all the work. That is a habit. We might call it an instinct. That is the way all habits or instincts are formed. The lower animals do many things instinctively. For instance, the duck, as soon as it gets out of its shelter and finds water, begins to swim. That is an instinct. Where did the instinct come from? That is very difficult for ordinary scientists to explain. But instinct is a previous habit. It is the conscious effort that has been made in the past. Thousands of years ago, when the first ducks came into existence, they made that effort, and that effort has been repeated again and again. In that way all the habits are formed.

The fourth apporism runs thus:

अविद्याक्षेत्रमुत्तरेषां प्रसुप्ततनुविच्छिन्नोदाराणाम्। २।४

The impressions are caused by nescience or undifferentiated consciousness, and they appear in fourfold states. Sometimes they are dormant or sleeping. Then they are attenuated, over-

powered, and expanded or awakened.[3] We can imagine that our mind-substance is like a lake, and the bottom of the lake is our subconscious mind, where the impressions go down. We can also imagine that in the bottom of the lake every impression is charged with a kind of gas, which produces bubbles, and the bubbles come up in the form of fine bubbles to the surface. When it is coming up from the bottom through this water, it is the attenuated state of that desire. Then, when it comes to the surface, we are conscious of it, and we have the desire. It gathers strength, becomes larger and larger, and produces ripples on the mental lake, i.e. it produces waves of impulse. That is the expanded or overpowered state, when it becomes waves. One wave might overpower another, or might counteract and subdue it. For instance, if our nature is loving, when we are angry, our anger overpowers our love. We cannot be loving and angry at the same time. One is predominant, and that checks the other. If that predominant one takes the form of an impulse, it drives us into insanity. We forget ourselves entirely, and do terrible things, just like an insane person. We lose our power of discrimination, memory and everything. We are lost, and it is beyond our control. So you see, how important it is to understand the mind working out all the things that we are doing every day, and how we are creating our desires by enjoying them. Every time we enjoy, we create or sow the seed of new desires, and we go on repeatedly. That is the reason we cannot stop it, and we are going on day after day. When we give up this life, do you think all these impressions will be gone? No, they are dormant or sleeping in seed form. Wherever we go, we take our mind with us, and conse-

[3] The commentator Vyasa says regarding if:

अत्राविद्याक्षेत्रं प्रसवभूमिः, उत्तरेषां अस्मितादीनां चतुर्विधकल्पितानां प्रसुप्ततनुविच्छिन्नोदाराणाम्। तत्र का प्रसुप्तिः? चेतसि शक्तिमात्रप्रतिष्ठानां बीजभावोपगमः, तस्य प्रबोधः आलम्बने सम्मुखीभावः प्रसंख्यानवतो दग्धक्लेशबीजस्य खम्मुखीभूतोऽप्यालम्बने नासौ पुनरस्ति, दग्धबीजस्य कुतः प्ररोह इति. * * विपर्य्यास-प्रत्ययकाले उपलभ्यन्ते, क्षीयमाणां चाविद्यामनुक्षीयन्ते इति।

Vacaspati Mishra also comments on this 4th aphorism in the same way.

quently, we take all the powers of senses and impressions with us. Naturally, when a child is born, he brings all these impressions of his past life with him, and the child might develop into a god, or a demon. If he has these evil tendencies, he is a sleeping demon. How can we tell the secret ? The old idea, which was given out by the English philosopher Locke, that, when a child is born, his mind is like a blank sheet of white paper, nothing remains in it, and the child gets everything from outside, is a mistake. There is a proverb: 'The child is the father of the man.' In truth, everything rests within him. He does not learn anything from outside, that he has not got already. Remember, when we are training a child, we can only let the child grow, develop from inside out, and watch the child so that it would not be injured. We let it develop, and just bend the course of its thoughts and desires and ideas. But it will develop in a certain way which is its own. It might resemble the ways of the parents. Sometimes it does, and in most cases it does not. A person may have two or three children. They are all different, and have different tendencies. Heredity does not explain all that. It explains only part of it. It does not explain why a child should inherit. If we are a school teacher, we know, when we are teaching in a kindergarten school, certain children have certain tendencies. If we give them something to do, they will do it just the opposite. That is what they like. If we try to force any idea into the child, it would not learn. It is the evolution of the child's mind from inside out, and not from outside in. Just as when we plant a plant, the evolution does not begin from the bark to the core, but from the core to the bark. It makes the bark as the last thing. Tear off a piece of bark, and it will form another bark. The evolution is always from the inside. The seed of evolution is in the soul, and the soul expands as we grow, and the soul develops it into a full consciousness. The child is sleeping at first, and then it begins to dream and gets ideas. Perhaps it remembers its past. Sometimes it might feel that it has experienced something. It may have visions, and see the finer forms. Some children do, because they are conscious, and that is the reason they cry most of the time and would not go to sleep. They get frightened and see hideous things. It is very difficult to rear such a child properly, because, unless the

parents know something about it, they are at a loss. They may call the doctor, or grope in the dark. They do not know anything. Naturally the child suffers, and the parents also suffer. It is a most responsible kind of work. However, we must understand these principles that the innocent baby is not after all very innocent. He is the father of the man, as he is going to be in the future.

These impressions are called *samskaras*. That is the Sanskrit term for it. They are left by past actions and are called 'attenuated.' 'Attenuated' means the first awakening from the dorment state. The next state is 'overpowered'. If there are two or more desires rising at the same time, one is stronger than the other. You will find in your mind that some desire is there, and another comes up, which is stronger than the previous one, and that overpowers the previous one, and forces you to do something else. It often happens during our lifetime. Then that previous one is overpowered by the other. Now, we may have a certain character developed, but we have other characters, which are dormant within us now. This present character is not all that we have. We may have double or triple personalities. In fact, we have a long, continuous past. There have been germs of many personalities in us.

These multiple personalities are manifested under special abnormal conditions. But one is subdued by the other. Our present is the most powerful one that has overpowered the other personalities, latent in our subconsciousness. If that power is taken away under certain abnormal conditions, as it happens in certain cases of insanity, the power of control is lost, and the latent personalities wake up. A person may remember something of one life and something of another, and they are all mixed up, and they do not know how. It is the power of control of the soul that makes us hold on to one particular personality, which we have developed at the present moment. In fact, our present personality is the resultant of the past ones. They are all blended together to make this one, and this one will make another in the future. So we are all pushed from one into the other. We are going step by step, just as a child goes through the different stages, before it is born. If you study embryology, you will find how the embryo pases from minute protoplasm into the form of a fœtus of a

human body. It goes through the different stages of evolution. First, it appears like a polyp, sea weed, then like a fish, then like a reptile, then like a bird, then like a dog, then like an ape, and afterwards it froms a human body, for a human life. So all those that are past, we are carrying with us. The human body is carrying all this past, and it has taken, perhaps, five hundred thousand years on this earth. So we are not of recent origin. The first man appeared fifty thousand years ago, or perhaps a hundred thousand years ago, in the tertiary period of geological strata. So, we have developed gradually into the present state. We have all this past, and how many personalities we have gone through! Buddha remembered five hundred of his previous incarnations, and described them. At one time, he was a hare; at another he was a deer; in another incarnation he was a bear, and so on. He remembered all of his previous lives. He also passed through different animal forms. He was a bird, an eagle, and so on. All these impressions of the past incarnations were embedded in his subconscious mind. Such is the case with all living beings. Sometimes the impressions remain in a very fine state, and then we can control them, without allowing them to become manifest. The last state is the 'expanded', when the impressions (*samskaras*), having helpful surroundings, have attained to great activity, either as good or evil. Our present state is the expanded form of the desires and impressions with which we are born. We are gathering again some new impressions, and are developing the old ones in a new channel, and that is the way we are progressing. When we understand all these, we know that these are the causes of our life. The first is the undifferentiated consciousness, and then comes the sense of 'I' or egohood, which is blended with matter and material forms and conditions. Then comes our attachment to anything that is agreeable, and that helps us in the struggle for existence, aversion to pain or suffering, disagreeable feelings, and the will-to-live. These are the fundamental conditions of our life. These are the most important things, and upon these will be built the whole structure of psychology. The more we will study this, the more we will study our own mind; we shall find that, if we concentrate our mind upon our true selves. We can eliminate all these and can deny pain and evil as not

belonging to us at all. Then we truly become spiritual. By 'spirituality' I mean the consciousness of our spiritual nature, and not spiritualism. The spiritualists or spiritists do not know any more than you do. They are not conscious of their true self. They might see a phantom or a spirit. They might become the media, through which the forms or personalities of the spirits might appear and manifest certain powers, while they become unconscious. It is just like this. Suppose somebody hypnotizes us, and puts us into hypnotic sleep, and we perform certain acts at the suggestion of the operator, and do not know anything about it. We might read most wonderful things, or might play music, but what is that to us? When we wake up, we do not know anything about it. It does not help us to develop our spiritual knowledge. We have to sacrifice ourselves, and give the use of our instrument for a certain kind of work which does not benefit us in any way. That is a sacrifice. We must know the difference. By becoming a medium, we do not gain anything, but we become the medium for certain spirits trying to manifest, and we give them our instrument as a machine, and we stay out of it, and go to sleep. Knowledge might come to us through spirit writing, in some form, or some kind of speech. But those spirits who know something of the spiritual world do not give us suggestions or messages or anything of the spiritual world. They are too far above us. But those who are earth-bound spirits, try to manifest in gross forms, and give message. They are very ignorant, as they do not know better, and, therefore, they must have seances, and give such trivial messages that do not amount to anything, and they would not satisfy our soul, or answer our questions. I have sat in many seances. I spoke before the spiritualists' Camp Meeting in Indiana, before seven thousand people and all the mediums. That was sometime ago at Lilydale. All the mediums sent me very courteous invitation to investigate, and I have seen most wonderful things. I noticed that whenever any question was asked about the origin of life, or higher spiritual forms, they always referred to me stating that I could answer better than the spirits could. Sometimes they borrowed and stole my thoughts. I could feel that, and they reproduced them through the mouths of the spirit guides. These things will give us an idea that they do not know very much. They

might give us certain suggestions that would satisfy our curiosity only, and perhaps we shall be convinced that there is life after death, and that something of the personality remains. But, as far as the messages are concerned, they do not amount to anything. Rather, we can help them more than they can help us. We have the power, because we have the instrument of the body. They have not got the material bodies. So we can help them, sending good thoughts to our departed relatives and friends by prayer, and they would receive our thoughts. When we become a Yogi, all these spirits would fall at our feet, and worship us. They would admire us, and ask our blessing. And all the sages would come to our door, and be glad to serve us as their masters. That is the ideal that we should hold, that we should transcend them all, and realize the eternal Truth, even in this earthly life.

CHAPTER XI

KNOWLEDGE AND IGNORANCE

In the fifth aphorism (2·5), ignorance (*avidya*) is described as:

अनित्याशुचि-दुःखानात्मसु नित्य-शुचि-सुखात्मख्यातिरविद्या ।

'Ignorance takes that which is non-eternal, impure, painful, and non-self for the eternal, pure, happy, *Atman*'.

I explained that ignorance really means the undifferentiated consciousness (*ajnana* or *avidya*), and that undifferentiated consciousness comes, when we have no clear understanding or knowledge. For instance, we generally take this earth and all the planetary systems as permanent. We do not think for a moment that this earth is going at one time to be destroyed. We think that everything will go on just the same for ever; the sun, the moon, the stars, and the planetary systems will revolve and continue their rotations around their orbits for ever. That kind of knowledge, taking the impermanent as permanent, is called ignorance (*ajnana* or *avidya*.). That is undifferentiated consciousness (*avyakta*). We do not know exactly the primordial nature, but we know only the nature of all material forms of earth and planets. All these material forms, which had a beginning will come to an end; and if we hold to that idea, we cannot consider them as permanent.

Again, that which is impure, we regard as pure. With that idea of impurity we try to understand the various things relating to our conditions of life. For instance, the human body, which requires so much care to be kept up, is often regarded as pure, but flesh and blood should never be considered pure. It is full of imperfection, but we regard the body as our true Self, and take the matter for Spirit. That is another instance of undifferentiated knowledge. We do not know the difference between our spirit and the body. We get them mixed up. If we had a clear conception of the undying nature of the Spirit, which is the true Self, we would consider the body as an instrument, and the Spirit as the ruler of the body. But we do not do that. In our ordinary consciousness

it is all mixed up. We cannot separate the Spirit from the matter. That is an instance of undifferentiated consciousness, which is the cause of false conception or wrong understanding. But as soon as we have right knowledge of the nature of the Spirit and also of the nature of matter, we realize that matter as impermanent, perishable, and unthinking, and it is the form of the body, while the Spirit is just the opposite. The Spirit is permanent, eternal, and imperishable. The body has a beginning and an end, while the Spirit has neither beginning nor end. But we generally regard the material objects as going to last for ever, while that is a mistake. That mistake is caused by this undifferentiated consciousness (*avidya*). The undifferentiated consciousness is ordinarily understood as a kind of delusion. When we have a delusion, we do not differentiate the real thing from the unreal, the right from the wrong, and we mix them up in our mind, i.e. in our consciousness, and thus we make a mistake.

That which gives us pleasure for the time being, is regarded as the source of happiness, and we become attached to it. Then we try to hold on to it. But there we make just a similar mistake. All these different sorts of impressions have one source which is called 'ignorance'. I have already said that ignorance means a state that causes delusion or undifferentiated consciousness. It is neither a positive, nor a negative, nor even a positive-negative state, but is an unspeakable (*anirvachaniya*) state that causes an erroneous effect, which is again sublimated by the right knowledge (*aparokshajnana*). The Self means the pure, effulgent, and ever blissful spirit, while the body is just the opposite. But we take the body as the pure Self, and that is ignorance or our error.

This ignorance can be removed by gaining the correct or right knowledge of the immortal Spirit. Once we know that, and do realize that, we can never again make a mistake like that we are making now while we are in a state of ignorance. In fact, when our consciousness is darkened, as it were, or veiled by the ignorance, we do not know the real nature of our true Self, and also the real conditions of the body, which is impermanent, and has a beginning and an end. Then, out of that state of undifferentiated consciousness, arises a special mental function which is called 'egoism' and known as the sense of 'I',

'me', and 'mine'. If we had a real consciousness of the Spirit (*Atman*), we could not think that 'I' means the particular limited form, but we would refer the 'I' to the real unlimited Self, the self-shining Spirit. And this is the cause of our ordinary knowledge, or feeling of personality. Our feeling of personality is also based upon this sense of 'I'. This sense of 'I', again, is intimately connected with the physical body. We cannot separate our feeling of personality from that particular knowledge of the physical body. Our personality does not make us realize that we are the true immortal Self, but it includes the character, name, and heritage, and relation to the wife, children, father, mother, and all the relatives, and so on. All these things are connected with the personality.

Again the personality is closely connected with the sense of 'I', which refers to the impermanent physical body. And that feeling rises when we have this undifferentiated consciousness (*ajnana* or *avyakta*). It is very difficult to form a clear idea, unless we have a little knowledge of our true immortal Self. But why is it so ? I can only explain this passage as much as it can be explained, but it depends a great ideal upon the direct experience or feeling. If we can once feel that we are not the body, but the Spirit, and the Spirit is the ruler of the body, when the body is only the instrument, then we shall have the correct knowledge. That correct knowledge can be gathered neither by reading books, nor by hearing talks, but by realization of the *Atman*. We should have a feeling that we are not the material bodies, and that feeling does not come very easily, because, at present, we have the opposite feeling very strong, which is the result of a long-standing habit. The root of the long-standing habit is the undifferentiated consciousness. We do not know exactly our true Self. If we could once realize how we shall be after we leave these bodies, how they would be taken care of by our friends and relatives at the time of death, what will become of our bodies, and whether we would still continue to live, then, we shall be different beings altogether. Our personality may remain only as a memory of our personality, our body might be removed, but our sense of 'I', 'me', and 'mine', as we had when we possessed the bodies, will be with us. That feeling cannot be given by anybody. It must be realized. And, for that reason, all these practices that are given

in the Raja Yoga, help us. By withdrawing our minds from the external conditions and the objects of senses, we can go to our innermost Self. It is something like the work of concentrating all the forces as in the state of sleep. In sleep we withdraw all the powers from the senses, and concentrate them on the core of the mind (*antahkarana*). But the innermost Self or *Atman* is quite different from the sleep state or *svapna*. It is even different from the deep sleep state or *sushupti*. So, when we go to the innermost Self, i.e. when we realize or get immediate awareness of the immortal *Atman*, all our senses are withdrawn from the momentary enjoyment of the external objects, and our mind is in perfect tune with the infinite. But still we continue to live in the external world.

Then the sense of *'I'*, *'me'*, and *'mine'* will also remain, and the feeling of personality, which we had once before, may appear at first to be gone again. We may not ordinarily have the memory of it, just as at present we have no memory of what we were in the previous incarnation. We lived before, but we do not have any memory of it. In certain abnormal cases, where there is a manifestation of multiple personality, we have seen some persons who have had double or triple or quadruple personality, and so on. When these different personalities come up on the plane of consciousness, or above the threshold of our conscious plane, the persons begin to act differently. A girl, if she had consciousness of a personality of having lived as a man, would be like a man, and would not be acting like a girl. The physicians will get puzzled why this happens. The old religions would say that it is a kind of obsession, or some kind of devil has taken possession of the soul of this girl. But the real truth is that the girl has remembered one of her previous incarnations, and when that personality would awake, the present personality of the girl is subdued with all its memory and everything, and it goes entirely out of her consciousness. And then that girl behaves like a different person. Her knowledge, her taste and ideas, mode of speech, and mode of work, would be like that of a different being. That is possible. That is one of the proofs of having previous existence, and the present personality reveals itself only for the time being. We have one personality now, but we can develop another personality in this lifetime, by changing our thoughts

and ideas entirely, or by changing our habiits, and living a different kind of life. We know that the mind is the maker of the physical and mental conditions. The mind is a kind of creator, and it has a creative faculty. The mind can create, and if our thoughts are entirely different from what we have now, our thoughts would make us appear even as a different person. If we could change our thoughts, our whole character would be changed. Our expression of the face would also be different, and we would be able to behave differently. That would be the beginning of developing another personality, and that personality might linger for some time, and then it will pass away.

In religious orders, we have read about the different ceremonies through which certain devotees would go in order to become a different personality. That is the second birth, as they call it. In that second or spiritual birth, the old ideas and thoughtforms are all rejected, and new ideals and thoughtforms are created, and then the person begins to think differently and live differently. For that reason, Jesus, the Christ, after he became Christ, when was asked about his mother, he would say: 'Who is my mother; who are my relatives? I am the son of the heavenly Father.' There was the spiritual consciousness in Christ. He did not think for a moment that he had an earthly father. Thot is an ideal. Through spiritual exercises he developed a spiritual personality which was contradictory to his physical personality.

Take another illustration. Buddha lived five hundred years before Christ. We have heard and read about his life that he was the son of a king, was a prince, and had his wife and a child, and then he renounced them all, and went out in the wilderness to gain spiritual knowledge. His aim was to remove misery, sorrow, suffering, disease, and death from this world of phenomena. He wanted the remedy, and struggled for many years. He lived under a tree, eating only a few grains of rice, and sitting in the sunshine, in the rain, and in the cold, without any clothes and covering over his head. He went through all the austerities to harden himself, so that he could face all the conditions and become free and independent of the physical bondage. Then, after six years, he realized the remedy, and after that he preached his doctrines by which the

suffering people could see a ray of hope and gain knowledge, and become free from misery, sorrow, suffering, disease, and death. And he gave the world the idea called *nirvana*. While he was preaching, and going from one place to another with a begging bowl in his hand, he had no home any more. He wore an ochre-coloured robe, and was gathering his disciples, teaching them and showing them the path to absolute happiness. In that state, he went to his own city where he was born, and there he saw the palace of his father. His father was still the king on the throne, and Buddha went with his begging bowl in his hand and knocked at the door. The doorkeeper recognized him as the great Buddha, the enlightened one, and he took the message to the king, and the king came down in a hurry to receive his son and to embrace him. And while he was approaching Buddha, Buddha said: 'I am not thy son, I am the son of previous Buddhas, the enlightened ones; thou art not my father'. In that way he had no attachment to that old personality which he threw away as an old shell, but he developed a new personality. He was the son of the previous Buddhas, the enlightened ones, the incarnations of the Divinity who lived before him. That can give us an idea of how we can develop a personality, a spiritual personality. Christ meant that personality, and that is proved when he said that Christ would be born in you, and that is the second spiritual birth. Unless we are born spiritually, we cannot enter into the kingdom of Heaven. And that was the origin of the twice-born caste of priests (*dvija*) in India. That was the original idea. The first birth gives one personality, which is the physical, i.e., pertaining to the physical body; but, when the spiritual life is awakened, together with the spiritual consciousness, there begins a new life, a new personality, and the old personality drops off like an old cloth. That was the origin of the Buddhist monastic system and the system of the nuns. Buddha was the first who introduced this system. His son Rahula became the first monk in the world, among the Buddhists, five hundred years before Christ, and his wife became the first nun. Each of them developed a new personality. Buddha's wife Gopa came to him, who was no longer his wife, but who became a spiritual helpmate in the work, and that was a different conception altogether. She asked her son Rahula to go and take the

heritage from his father, and the son came and begged of Buddha: 'Thou art my father, what is my heritage?' Buddha gave him a piece of his yellow robe and said: 'This is thy heritage, take this and wear it and follow my path.' And the son became the first monk, and thus he developed a new personality. Of course, this I am giving you as an illustration, how a new personality could be developed, and that had been developed. But one may realize the same idea in one's consciousness without making any external renunciation. For instance, if we have a spiritual teacher, he gives us a new birth by awakening our spiritual consciousness and establishing our relation to the Infinite, which our earthly father has never done. The earthly father and mother have given us only the physical body, but they are not the father and the mother of the immortal soul. The soul is the child of God, and for that reason when we compare earthly father with the spiritual father, we find the difference which is that one is the giver of the physical body, and the other is the giver of the spiritual one, and which is more lasting and more truly eternal. Therefore, the spiritual father is greater than the earthly father. The spiritual birth is greater, because that is eternal and can never be lost. That is the kind of personality which we hope to have, sooner or later. That is our relation to the infinite Spirit. Then the egoism that we have at present, will appear to us as a delusion. Now it is real, because we have nothing else to compare it to. This is the only consciousness we possess, and this is the consciousness of ourselves with the body. But, when we develop our new senses, we have a different consciousness. Then we are no longer conscious of the gross physical body, but of that which is the ruler of the body. That is the soul, the Spirit. That divine relationship we must establish before we pass away. The sooner we accomplish that, the greater will be the result. Then we shall eliminate all our delusions, and along with delusions, all the misery, sorrow, suffering, disease, and death will vanish, because they are all the children of ignorance or undifferentiated consciousness.

Now, you understand clearly why some of the teachers have taken up the idea of this present life, together with misery, sorrow, suffering, disease, and death as illusions, and are denying their existence. We can deny their existence only when we

have the consciousness of our true Self. Then we are free from all these delusions. But a mere verbal denial will not do; we have to feel it, and that feeling is very difficult to gain. Therefore practice (*yoga-sadhana*) is necessary, and for that reason the present mode of the life and living is regarded as an obstruction (*antaraya*). All that we have at present, is diametrically opposed to what we ought to have. But our eyes are not open, we cannot see it, because our consciousness is on the plane of physical form. We may talk about it, but until that feeling comes, we cannot realize the Infinite. We cannot realize what will happen after death; we cannot know whether we existed before or not. All these questions can be solved only through that divine feeling. Then we shall understand why these are called pain-bearing obstructions. So long as we have this kind of consciousness, we will have all sorrow, suffering, disease, and death. We will have to go through those feelings, because they are constantly connected with the phenomenal conditions. We cannot avoid them. In fact, the root of evil would not be eradicated, until that clear understanding of the *Atman* comes.

Now Patanjali describes 'egoism' as,

दृग्दर्शनशक्त्योरेकात्मतेवास्मिता। २।६

That is, egoism, the feeling of personality, is described as 'the identification of the seer with the instrument of seeing'. The seer is the knower, and the instruments of seeing are the instrument of knowledge, viz. our intellect, mind, and sense-powers, and so on. All these are the materials which the seer or knower is using and becoming conscious of the objects. But the seer is always the seer, and he cannot be anything different. The seer is the Self, the *Atman*. It has no imperfection or limitation. All impurity belongs to matter, while all purity is the inherent quality of the true Self. When we realize our true Self, we shall become holy, and that realization will only bring holiness in our life. Holiness does not mean that we have to believe in a certain doctrine or dogma, but it is the consciousness of our spiritual and immortal Self. That is the seer or Self of every man. The *chitta* or the mind-stuff, the *buddhi* or the faculty of judgment, the *indriyas* or the sense-organs, are the instruments. The mind cogitates whether it will do this or do

that. That is one of the faculties of the *antahkarana*, and is called 'mind', the internal organ. That has a kind of cogitation. The other faculty is that which determines and is called the intellect or *buddhi*. For instance, you are sitting here, and you are thinking: 'Shall I go there or shall I not?' There your mind is working. Then the determinative faculty comes, and says: 'Yes, I will go there.' That is settled. Then you go. That is the faculty of judgment. In all our actions, we are using that as the guide, and that is called the *buddhi*. It is the charioteer (*sarathi*). The mind of a person which vacillates as to whether he will go or not, is the reins (*pragraha*), and the senses are the horses (*haya*). These are the instruments for men to see the external world. Without these instruments, the human being cannot experience anything on this mortal plane. That is the reason we have them. The seer must experience this table, and it can experience this table with the help of these different senses. Touch, smell, taste, light, colour, length, breadth, and thickness—all these we can experience with these instruments only and, therefore, we have them. The soul manufactures these in order to gain experiences on this gross physical plane. Take an illustration. You may have a curiosity to find out what is there in the ocean at the bottom, and try to go down there; but you cannot go down, you float and come up. The only way you can go down is to wear a diver's suit, and wear a ton of weight. Your shoes will weigh about five hundred pounds, and your helmet will weigh more than the shoes. All those would weigh more than a ton. Then you would be able to go down, and there you can see what is going on. So, when the soul comes down to this gross physical plane, the latter is like the bottom of the ocean, and the soul has to wear the heavy weight of this gross material body. Otherwise the soul would not be able to know these things. Now you understand why you have a body. Still we may feel that we want to keep this body, just as a man might like to wear that diver's suit all the time and be under the water. But, if he knew better, he would rather fly up in the air than to remain under the pressure of that water. Sixty pounds of pressure to a square foot he would have to carry. He would be better if he would not have that cloggy heavy armour. Now you understand why we have the body. The material

body serves the purpose of an instrument to have the experience of the external physical world. We ordinarily identify the immortal Self with the body, and this identification is the outcome of ignorance or egoism. We say: 'I am the mind, I am the thought, I am angry, or I am happy'. How can we be angry, and how can we hate ? Can we imagine the real spirit ever becoming angry ? How could it be angry ? There must be some kind of a demon that takes possession of us, when we are angry, or we hate, or we have jealousy. Now find out where that demon is, and get rid of it. The Spirit cannot be angry ; it cannot hate anything. It cannot be jealous, and cannot fear anything. How can the Spirit fear something which does not exist there ? Now, by such discrimination, we can eliminate all these imperfections. These imperfections are the impurities of the mind. Jealousy, hatred, fear,—all these are impurities, and they exist for this undifferentiated consciousness, which is ignorance or *avidya*. The moment we have that right knowledge, all these vanish at once. So, what a great blessing it is to get rid of these things. If we can get rid of them, we shall be ourselves, and we shall be divine. Where is the Divinity ? The Divinity is within us. We shall have to realize that Divinity, and when we shall be able to realize this truth, we become divine. At present, we are far away from the Divinity, as ignorance is playing its most important part, and for that reason we have all these impurities.

In fact, our true Self can never change, but this body is constantly changing, the mind is changing, and the ideas and thoughts are changing. You cannot say that you are a thought, could you ? It would be a puzzling thing to say that I am this thought. Suppose a thought is rising, and you are one with the thought, but still that thought is not yourself. If it were yourself, the next thought would be enirely different. The thought of darkness is diametrically opposite to the thought of light. Then you will kill yourself if you would change with the thoughts rising in your mind. That would be absurd. So anger is a feeling. If you are one particular feeling, you would remain that way all the time. But you are not one thing. You are constantly changing, and that which is unchangeable you do not see. That unseen being is your Self, and that is your Spirit. the immortal *Atman*.

That is the reason why Christian Scientists would say that unhappiness is a delusion. But what about happiness? That would be another delusion too. Because you cannot be the happiness. The moment you think of yourself as happiness, you think of something that is not unhappiness. If you leave one, you have to leave both, and, therefore, it is better to understand clearly what you are in reality. If you have gained that permanent blissful state, that would be different. That does not change. But what we ordinarily call happiness changes. That happiness evolves and fades away, and so it is not permanent. It is changing. How many times you have become happy when a certain desire is gratified. But if you hold on to that, you would be miserable, and you would not get any more happiness in it. Because other desires will rise to make you unhappy, and those desires will be diametrically opposite to the ones which you have had before, or which you have gratified. So, you cannot hold on to one particular kind of happiness, and deny the rest. That would be foolish. There are various kinds of happiness. One may enjoy a certain taste and be happy with a certain delicious dish; another is happy by hearing some music; another is happy by looking at a landscape or beautiful painting; and yet another is happy by touching something which is very pleasant. All these are of different kinds. Which one would you accept, and which would you reject?

Now, what could be there in this whole universe that can change your own true Self? Nothing. And that is your birthright. You can never be anything different. In fact, you continue to live when the whole world is destroyed, and everything is taken away from you. If all the things that you cling to and are strongly attached to, are taken away from you, you still live. Sometimes you have noticed in your own life, how you are strongly attached to a certain thing and you feel, if that thing were taken away from you, you could not live. But sure enough, when that thing is taken away, still you live. But you forget this secret. You do not remember that golden truth. So keep a diary, and you will see how many times you make mistakes, and how many times you feel you could not live without this. Jot it down in a book, and afterwards you look back, and you will see, that was only a passing thought, and there

was no truth in it. You can live, if everything is taken away from you. Your own true Self does not depend on anything. But you are not brave enough to face it. You like to be a little weak-minded and a little imperfect. You enjoy it, and hold on to certain things. Although you know those are your weaknesses, still you do not care, and stick to them.

Another thing should be mentioned here. We are talking about the law of *karma* or the law of cause and effect. This law does not bind the spirit, but it binds the ego, or the egoistic soul. The physical body cannot move without being subject to the laws, the mind is working within this law; but the true Self, the *Purusha,* or *Atman* is beyond all laws. Is God subject to any law? Has He made those law for Himself? No, He is above all kinds of phenomenal laws. Because, if He be subject to any law, He would be a slave to the law; He would not be independent, infinite, and all-powerful. So, if you are a child of God, how could you be subject to the law in reality? But still we are subject to the law, so long as we are in this contingent world. When we become really free and pure, we transcend all the laws. What can affect the soul? Nothing in the universe can produce an effect on the pure Self, and yet, through ignorance, we identify ourselves with the mind-stuff, and think we feel pleasure or pain, we suffer, and have sorrow, misery, disease, loss of fortune, and failure in business. How greatly it troubles us? How we become unhappy, if the least thing goes wrong with us. If somebody says a harsh word which touches our heart, we get so angry. All these are our present condition. Which shall we take, that which is unreal and that which is real? That is the point for each of us to decide. Which should we rather have? Some people would rather have which is unreal. Let them have it. But a few, who are struggling and tired of this condition, are longing for something that is real, will gain it. Others will be enjoying things ephemeral until they wake up. There is a chance for them also to get an awakening. Each one will have the chance, and the wise ones who have outgrown those conditions, have campassion and sympathy for them, and they do not curse them and do not find fault with them, but they are waiting to see when they would wake up. For that reason, Christ said: 'Let them hear who have ears to hear; let them see who have eyes to see.'

Because, it is not for everybody to see; it is not for everybody to hear. Others might hear, but they would get disgusted. They would say: 'Oh, what nonsense is this to listen to such a thing'. We cannot change their attitude. Let them have it. But there are a few who would consider that as the most wonderful thing, because they are seeking that. Whatever we long for, we appreciate. Unless there is a longing, we cannot appreciate it. When we are not thirsty, if a glass of water is held near our mouth, we would turn our head; we do not want it. When we would be thirsty and would be longing for it, we would even drink from a pond where there is muddy water. That is the difference. So, where there are hunger and thirst for the spiritual life and also for the realization of the ultimate Truth, there is the appreciation of such teachings which will give enlightenment. But among others there would be no such appreciation, and for that reason it is said:

मनुष्याणां सहस्रेषु कश्चित् यतति सिद्धये।
यततामपि सिद्धानां कश्चिन्मां वेत्ति तत्त्वतः॥

Among thousands there would be only a few who would seek for the highest, and among those who seek for the highest, only a few will attain to it, because the rest will take the byways and remain deluded by the attractions of the objects of senses.

The aspirants for higher knowledge seek some power, but such power is the greatest temptation. We want to possess power, whether it is physical, political or psychic power. To be powerful is the greatest ambition of every mortal, because man wants to rule over someone. But that is a disease. Each politician wants to rule over someone. Even a policeman, if he is a politician, wants to abuse his power. You cannot change them. That is human nature. There are also psychic powers. If a man cannot control somebody by physical or intellectual means, he would try to practise black magic and control one's mind for robbing him of all he possesses. That is the ambition to gain everything. It proceeds from an extreme attachment to selfishness. Otherwise, no one would practise those things. But it should be remembered that the Spirit has no desire or ambition for this sort of power. It is the desire of the lower self which is possessed of an animal mind. It is a

kind of degeneration, disease, and, therefore, all these things are considered as criminal. We should try to avoid them, and seek those that would be glorifying to our character, and that would be glorious to our true Self. When the real knowledge comes, the true Self reigns in its own glory like the divine Being. All this can be realized through concentration. Through regular practice in silence we should study our own mind, and through breathing exercises we should control all the lower emotions and lower tendencies, and through concentration and meditation we should remove all these pain-bearing obstructions, and gradually we shall gain a glimpse of our true Self, and understand our relation with the Infinite. Then we shall have clear consciousness, and shall realize that we are birthtless, deathless, immortal, pure, and perfect. Then we shall come to know that we have no sorrow, no suffering, no disease, and we cannot die. All that suffering is suffering through ignorance or self-delusion. The wise ones are free from all self-delusion, and, therefore, they are happy. They enjoy true happiness, and after death they enter into the abode of eternal bliss, where there is no sorrow, no suffering, no disease, and no death. The attainment of this permanent blissful state is the aim of the the Yoga psychology.

CHAPTER XII

ATTACHMENT AND AVERSION

We have been studying the pain-bearing obstructions, which should be controlled. We have learned the meaning of ignorance. We have also learned the meaning of egoism (*ahamkara*) which is the feeling of personality. Regarding attachment, Patanjali says,

सुखानुशयी रागः । २।७

i.e. 'Attachment (which rises from passion) is that which dwells on pleasure'. Now, when anything is pleasant and agreeable to us, our minds become attached to that. Our minds do not become attached to anything that is not agreeable or pleasant. The next aphorism of the *Yogasutra* is:

दुःखानुशयी द्वेषः । २।८

i.e. 'Aversion is that which dwells on pain'. The opposite feeling is aversion or repulsion. Anything that is disagreeable we do not want, and naturally it is repelling to us. We do not enjoy it, but we get away from it. These two things, attachment and aversion, are parts of our existence of life. We must like some things, and dislike other things. We have the memory of pleasant feelings. Whatever has produced the pleasant feelings, we remember. How can we remember these ? Because, when these feelings pass away, they leave in our subconscious mind pleasing impressions, and those subtle impressions remain dormant in our minds, and when they wake up and rise on the plane of consciousness they are called 'memory'. Memory is the dormant impression, awakened and brought within the domain of our consciousness. It is what we call recollection or remembering. If we did not have the remembrance of a certain feeling that was agreeable to us, we would not seek the enjoyment from the object of pleasure at its very sight. If we look at delicious candy, the very sight of it will remind us of the taste, how pleasant it was, and how we liked it. So, the very sight of it rouses those impressions which are already latent

in our mind. In this way, the very sight of anything, that is disagreeable, and which we do not like, would be abhorrent and repulsive to us, and that produces a very disagreeable feeling, or some kind of odour, or some kind of taste, whatever it may be. So, these two, attachment and repulsion, dwell upon the feeling of pleasure and pain. They depend upon these two mental categories. Then feeling, again, is dependent upon the object of senses. The very sight of it and the very contact with it will produce that feeling.

Now we understand why certain people like certain things, and other people dislike them. Some people will like a certain taste; others will dislike that very taste. In this way, some sounds may be agreeable to us under certain conditions; other sounds will not be agreeable to us. The same thing, which is agreeable to one, may not be agreeable to another. The Chinese would enjoy Chinese music, but to our ears Chinese music would be nothing but so much noise. We would not hear any harmony or enjoy it, but a Chinaman will enjoy it. Now, that depends upon our training of the ears. If our ears are accustomed to a certain kind of music, we cannot appreciate other kinds which are not of the same nature. So with the taste. One might like anything that is very strongly flavoured. Another might dislike it from the very beginning, and so on. So, if we analyse these in this way, we shall find that, when these objects of pleasure come in contact with our senses, they produce agreeable feelings, and, if we have the memory of them, then we enjoy them; otherwise we try to get rid of them.

The last is the will-to-live. The will-to-live is called here 'clinging to life'. In the ninth aphorism, Patanjali says,

स्वरसवाही विदुषोऽपि तथारूढोऽभिनिवेशः । २।९

i.e. 'flowing through its own nature, and established even in the learned, is the clinging to life.'

The clinging to life, in other words, is the will-to-live. We all have it. In connection with this will-to-live is the fear of death. These go together. We desire to live, and we do not like to die. Death is repulsive to us, simply because it produces a disagreeable and painful feeling. And anything that produces a painful feeling is disagreeable, and we try to avoid it. This clinging to life is manifested in every animal. It

is not only with human beings, but also with lower animals. They all have the desire to live. Anything that would cause their death, or that would destroy their bodies, they are afraid of, and they do not like to face it. The least sound frightens them. They remember the pain of death, as if they had died before. They have gone through that state before, and that impression is left in the threshold of the mind. From this the existence or rather pre-existence of the souls can be traced. That is, if the souls did not exist before, and did not leave their bodies before, they could not have the fear of death. It is only the latent impression of a certain pain that the soul must have had in some previous incarnation, and that impression remains dormant in the mind, even that of the child. The child would get frightened at the very sight of anything that is of murderous nature. How is that? The child does not know what death is in this incarnation. You may say that it must have inherited this from its parents. But, how should the parents have it? They might have inherited that from their parents, and so on. That is only putting the question a little further back. It is not answering the question. Where did the first fear of death come from? We do not understand that, and cannot explain it, unless we have that idea very strongly and clearly in our minds that the fear of death is the result of a certain impression that has caused us pain; and as we do not realize that in this life, it must have been realized in some other previous life. Upon this will depend the theory of reincarnation. This idea is very strongly upheld by the Yogis, who follow these teachings. I shall read to you a little of the commentary by Swami Vivekananda in his *Raja Yoga*. He says:

> 'This clinging to life you see manifested in every animal, and upon it many attempts have been made to build the theory of a future life, because men like their lives so much that they desire a future life also.'

Realy we like to live, and if this body goes away, we want another new body to continue to live a new life, and that is the will-to-live. Further Swami Vivekananda says:

> 'Of course, it goes without saying that this argument is without much value, but the most curious part of it is that, in Western countries, the idea that this

cling to life indicates a possibility of a future life applies only to men, but does not include animals. In India this clinging to life has been one of the arguments to prove past experience and existence. For instance, if it be true that all our knowledge has come from experience, then it is sure that that which we never experienced we cannot imagine or understand'.[1]

The mere theory of heredity alone will not explain why another soul, son or grandson, will have certain tendencies. How would it inherit? What force is there that would arouse such a feeling in the child, for instance, the fear of death? The mother cannot transmit it. How can the mother transmit that in the soul of the child? Now, take the instance of lower animals. Even in the lower animal kingdom, in the worms, in chickens, this fear of death exists. Those who have raised chickens, are familiar wtih the fact that young chickens, although they have never had any experience of being killed by a hawk, are frightened as soon as the hawk comes. They all run under shelter, and make a terrible noise. Why is that? They have not experienced death in this life. That idea is given here. As soon as the chickens are hatched, they begin to pick up food. Those, who have raised ducks, are also familiar with that fact, when the duck eggs are hatched by hens; these ducklings, when they are less than a week old, if find a little water, would run to it, and the hens will cry and be frightened that they would be drowned. That is a fact. Why is it that the duckling would have that tendency, that desire for the water, although it is hatched by a hen? The germ of life that has manifested, for instance, in the form of a duckling, must have gone through that

[1] Let us quote, in this connection, the commentary of Vyasa, made on Aphorism 2. 9. He says:

सर्वस्य प्राणिन इयमात्माशीर्नित्या भवति, 'मा न भूवं भूयासमिति'। न चाननुभूत-मरणधर्मकस्यैषा भवत्यात्माशीः, एतया च पूर्वजन्मानुभवः प्रतीयते, स चायमभिनिवेशः क्लेशः स्वरसवाही कृमेरपि जातमात्रस्य प्रत्यक्षानुमानागमैरसंम्भावितो मरणत्रास उच्छेदद्दष्ट्यात्मकः पूर्वजन्मानुभूतं मरणदुःखमनुमापयति। यथाचायमत्यन्तमूढेषु दृश्यते क्लेशस्तथा विदुषोऽपि विज्ञातपूर्वापरान्तस्य रूढः, कस्मात्, समामा हि तयोः कुशला-कुशलयोः मरणदुःखानुभावादियं वासनेति।

experience in a previous life. That memory is there in the form of an impression, and that impression is aroused at the sight of water. At the very sight of the hawk, that fear comes up. And the tendency to eat food and to swim in water—all these are also instinctive. What is the cause of an instinct? Your instinct is just like automatic action of the mind, but all automatic actions of the mind as well as of the physical organism is the result of a conscious effort in the beginning. You may understand how instincts are formed. Just try to play the piano. When you have begun to play, you have made constant efforts to train the muscles, to train your fingers. After a while, this will all become instinctive and automatic. You will form a habit. So, conscious efforts, when they become natural, are called instinctive, and when the same instinct is manifested with reason, it becomes again another conscious effort.

Many times it has been seen, where ducks have been hatched by hens, that, as soon as they came out of the eggs, they flew to water, and the mother thought they would be drowned. Now, we understand this. Then, the fear of death is the result of a previous experience, which is embodied in our souls in the from of a latent impression. From this impression we can trace the cause of that impression, which is a previous experience, and in this way, we infer the existence of the soul, previous to the birth of this body.

But this will-to-live is regarded as an obstruction, because it is a bondage. It is a bondage of the soul. The fear of death is a bondage. We are all frightened, and we cannot explain it. This desire to live on this material plane is also a bondage. We all know that it is so.

Now, the question is how to overcome these obstructions which have been described in the above aphorisms. The first obstruction, as you know, is ignorance, or the undifferentiated consciousness, the lack of differentiation between that which is spirit and that which is not eternal, that which is permanent and that which is not permanent, and so on. Now, these obstructions can be overcome by the opposite thoughts, or raising the opposite modifications of the mind substance. These impressions are called in Sanskrit *samskara,* which mean the 'dormant impressions'. These subconscious activities of the mind come up in the form of waves. One is agreeable, and the

other is disagreeable. One wave comes up in the form of a desire, another of anger, another of hatred, another of jealousy, and other of different thoughts. Some of them are good like love, sympathy, kindness, and forgiveness. These are all mental waves. These mental waves are rising and going down all the time, and if we do not discriminate, i.e. do not pay any attention to the faculty of discrimination (*vichara*), then we become identified with some of these waves. And each time, when the wave of the mind rises in the form of anger or hatred, we become identified with it. We cannot separate ourselves from it, and, consequently, we become angry, or become hateful, or we become full of jealousy; and, at other times, we become full of compassions, full of love, full of friendliness, and kindness, and so on. So these are the mental waves that are rising and going on constantly, and whenever we are identified with these waves, we become limited and are bound; and whenever we are bound and limited, it becomes a source of pain, or suffering. The more we advance towards freedom, the least limitation will appear to us as a terrible chain of bondage. But those who are in bondage do not have any idea of the freedom of the soul, and naturally they do not feel the suffering of a slave, because they are accustomed to their slavery and also to other mental conditions (modifications).

Now in fact, all our knowledge depends upon comparison. If we have a standard of freedom, which a free soul ought to be like, then we can compare ourselves with that standard. But, so long as we have not made a standard, it is very difficult for us to know anything better, and naturally, we consider our present condition as the best. There is nothing that can be higher or greater than this. Just as in a community of slaves, a slave enjoys that slavery, so long as he does not know the freedom of a free man; but the moment he realizes the freedom of a free man, he wants to get it, and then his suffering begins, and his suffering will last until he gets that freedom. Similarly, if we come in contact with a soul who is absolutely free from all kinds of bondage, from all limitations, and all sorrow, suffering, disease, and fear of death, instantly our desire would be to be like him, and naturally, we no longer enjoy our present condition, which is the condition of a slave. Then we begin to suffer, and we cannot enjoy our life any longer. We

want to be free, and that is exactly what happens when we come in contact with a saint, or a saintly character, or when we study the life of a divine incarnation like Christ or Ramakrishna. We feel, how free they were, and where we are ? We are so imperfect, so limited, and so full of faults ! And, as soon as we realize that, we cannot enjoy that condition any more. It would not be a pleasant or desirable thing for us to have that state. That would be the beginning of the awakening of the soul. Then we understand the things in their real nature, that this life, which we are living at present, is a life of bondage, that we are handicapped, that we have no vision about our future, no vision about our past, where we came from, and where we are going to. At present we have no knowledge of it at all. We are simply groping in a dark room. We have no knowledge and no perception. We do not realize our relation to the universe, and are going on performing the duties of our daily life, and remain satisfied, and we have no other ideal. That is the state which the majority of people consider as the ideal state of living. But a few only, who have come to that realization of a standard of higher freedom, cannot enjoy the present conditions, but seek for something better ; and they want to be free. Therefore they are the gainers in the practice of Yoga. They want to overcome all these defects ; they want to eradicate these obstructions to freedom, and their method would be to arouse the opposite feelings, i.e. oppsite modifications of the mind. For instance, when there is a strong feeling of hatred, we should arouse the feeling of love by thoughts or by changing the attitude of our mind. Hatred is the vibration of the mind at a certain degree. In order to overcome that vibration, we have to vibrate either on a higher or a lower degree. If we vibrate on a higher plane, it would cut off that old vibration and will probably manifest love instead of hatred. And that we should practise everyday. Every time that feeling of hatred comes, we should become accustomed to arouse the opposite feeling of love. Every time we are losing our temper, or getting angry, or getting disturbed in our mind, we should arouse the opposite feeling and vibrate in that way. For instance, the mother may be very angry with her husband, and, at that time, if her baby comes, she instantly kisses the baby, and she may forget all about the trouble which she had with her husband.

That is the way the power of love can overpower the other feeling of anger which she had for her husband. That is a good illustration. We can apply that in our life in various ways. So, that will explain to us that these are the mental waves, and these mental waves are not ourselves, but we are enjoyments which are certain states of vibrations of the mind substance, which is like an instrument. Here, in this Yoga psychology, what we ordinarily understand as mind substance is regarded as finer particles of matter in vibration. These particles of matter are finer than atoms and electrons. They are vibrating. Those are vibrations of the same substance. But our true Self, which is called *Purusha* in the Raja Yoga, is entirely distinct from these mental conditions. It is standing outside of them, and it is always pure and perfect. It can never become imperfect. Then you may ask this question: 'Why do we suffer ? Why do we have these feelings of pain and anger ? Who suffers, and who enjoys ?' Well, these sufferings and enjoyments which are certain states of vibrations of the mind substance, are reflected upon the mirror of our true Self. So, there is no conjunction or strong attachment. But, just as the reflection of a flower, held near the crystal, would change the colour of the pure crystal which is colourless, so the pure Self is affected, when it comes in contact with the suffering and enjoyment of the mind. As, in reality, the crystal is not changed, but it remains just the same, although it appears as fused with the colour of the flower, so with the pure Self. But the ignorant child, who has not seen the crystal separate from the contact of the flower, will consider that the crystal is of the same colour, red or pink or yellow, which the flower has. The child would not be able to understand that it is the reflection of the flower that changes the colour of the crystal. Similarly, ignorant persons, who have not realized their true Self, which is pure and perfect under all conditions, cannot realize the difference ; but the moment they are able to control their mind and hold themselves separate from these mental changes, they will see that their true Self is always happy and divine, without being identified with and affected by all the categories of the mind substance. Both pleasant and unpleasant feelings are coming and going all the time. Why do we identify ourselves with them ? Because, we do not know

the difference, and that is the cause of all our troubles, sufferings, and sorrows. But, if we can eradicate that cause of sorrow, we can remain pure under all conditions, no matter what kind of waves rise in our minds. But, if we understand that they are not producing any change in our true Self, then we can overcome them, and by overcoming them, we can become positive again, and arouse the kind of feelings which would be agreeable and beneficial, not only to us, but also to others. So we live a positive life, and remove all sorrows of evil, and cut off all the roots of sorrow, suffering, disease, and fear of death. That is the idea. We can easily live that way. We can easily enjoy our life, eradicating the roots of troubles. If we can do that, we are blest. And then we know that our true Self is free from all these imperfections and disharmonies. That is what true religion teaches. Christianity started with that idea. It has given the method of devotion and prayer, and Christ was the example. He showed how we can rise above all these imperfections, which are called sin, and become sinless. But the whole ideal has been changed during these two thousand years by different minds, who have given different interpretations, according to their understanding, and thus making mess of doctrines and dogmas. We do not know which one was taught by Christ, and which one was not. It is very difficult to differentiate them. Christ's religion was a religion of the heart. It was very simple; it was the simplest religion. Now we see how complex the religion of the Church is. It is filled with so many doctrines and dogmas—all grafted one after the other as the accumulation of ideas of centuries. But simplify this whole thing, and you will find that Christ's religion was just like this. The path that was advocated was the path of faith and love, devotion and prayer. All these are taken in the Raja Yoga, which gives a scientific and rational explanation of the cause of evil, sin, disease, and death, without believing in some extracosmic creator of evil. That is the grandeur and beauty of it. We can easily understand why the creator of evil was manufactured by those thinkers, who tried to explain the cause of evil. Because they did not have the philosophy; because they did not have a rational idea. They took it for granted that what was handed down by the social tradition, originated, perhaps, amongst the Zoroastrians, and afterwards

was accepted by the ancient Jews. When the ancient Jews were conquered by the Persians in 586 B.C., they came in contact with a nation which had developed this belief. Under the dominion of the Persians, whose rule began with the capture of Babylon, and lasted from 586 to 536 B.C., the Jews were greatly influenced by the Persian religion. And then the idea of the creator of evil was handed down to the Christians.

We can trace the origin of the evil, step by step, in historical stages, and it gradually came down to the modern Satan. However, that is a digression. The Raja Yoga helps us to understand the cause of evil, and the cause of the fear of death, in a rational way, and it gives us the remedy at every step, without calling it religion. It is a rational method, which is meant by Yoga. We may call it a religion, because all religions teach nothing but a method. It is a path, and all paths lead to the same goal. Religion does not mean anything else. Christianity is a path. So is Buddhism. So are other religions. But, though they are different paths, yet they lead to the realization of the same truth. The Yoga psychology also recognizes these paths, and describes them in a rational way, as philosophy does. This has that much value which we may utilize. Take it as a psychology, and the psychological side of it would be explained and understood. And then, the ideal of freedom is also there. We may call it salvation. The ideal of freedom is called salvation from sin in any religion. In the Vedanta it is called *moksha*. *Moksha* means freedom, i.e. liberation of the soul from all bondage, such as sin, fear, suffering, and death. So is *nirvana* of the Buddhist. *Nirvana* or *moksha* does not mean any place, but it is a state where there is cessation of sorrows, sufferings and fear of death as well as the attainment of perfect peace, perfect knowledge, and infinite freedom. If that be the highest end and aim of life, we may not have any other different ideal, whether we are engaged in business, or in any particular line of work, or whether we are living in a family of several children, married or unmarried. Our ideal of life must be the same. It could not be anything different from that which had been taught by all the religions of the world. If we take that ideal, and try to gain that, what shall we have to do? We shall have to go on in a scientific and rational way. So we should not go in a blind way, because

by blind faith man does not gain any right knowledge. By blind faith, simply we shut our eyes to reason, and become superstitious, and all fears come to us, which are absolutely unnecessary. Therefore we should simplify our whole idea of religion, our whole idea of spiritual life, and communion with God, and there we should gain knowledge and satisfaction at every step.

Patanjali says:

ते प्रतिप्रसवहेयाः सूक्ष्माः ॥२।१०

i.e. 'by raising opposite waves, we can conquer those which we want to reject.' So, if we want anything to reject, we have the power to do so. Now the question will come, how are we going to do it? The answer is very simple. By raising opposite waves in our thought plane, we can counteract those which we want to reject. We should hold the opposite thought in our mind. If anyone injure us physically, or mentally, or in words, which will rouse a feeling of anger or an unpleasant feeling, we may send just the opposite thought, a current of forgiveness or love, and we may repeat to ourselves that no one would be injured by us, in thought, word, or deed. We may repeat that a few times to ourselves, and the repetition of that idea would arouse that feeling. Our vibration would be entirely changed. Then, what would happen unto us? If our natural tendency were to take revenge, instead of taking revenge, we send a current of thought of love or forgiveness, and then our mind will be peaceful. We have saved that energy which would have gone out in the form of a revengeful feeling. That would have been a waste of energy. We would have wasted so much of our good energy in that way. Now we have utilized that good energy, by sending a current of good thought, and in return, what do we get? We get lovely and beautiful thoughts. Thoughts of love bring, in return, thoughts of love from the universe. Any good thought that we send out, or any good deed that we perform, brings a result that is beneficial to us. That is the law. Then we cannot violate that law, if we are conscious of it. That is the simple ideal of spiritual living.

Then there is another ideal that is given here, and that is very important. Patanjali says in the eleventh aphorism:

ध्यानहेयास्तद्वृत्तयः ॥२।११

i.e., 'by meditation, their modifications are to be rejected.' In fact, by meditation all kinds of modifications (*vrittis*) of the mind are to be conquered. So meditation is necessary. We have learned the meaning of meditation as is already explained. First, we should learn to concentrate our mind, and hold the mind to be concentrated for a certain length of time, upon a particular subject, and then, when our mind or thought flows in an unbroken current towards that particular object, we have meditation. That meditation is desirable in every phase of life. By practising that, we shall be able to conquer all the waves that are rising in our minds. First, there rise the big waves, then the bubbles, and then the finer impressions that are in the bed of the subconscious mind. They are the finer or subtle impressions, and they can be overcome by practice. When the big waves have been conquered by practising meditation, i.e. by holding the opposite current of thought in meditation, the finer or subtle waves are also controlled and conquered. It has been also said that a habit can be conquered by a counter habit. The commentator Vyasa also says:

'क्लेशानां या वृत्तयः स्थूलास्ताः क्रियायोगेन तनूकृताः सत्यः प्रसंख्यानेन ध्यानेन हातव्याः यावत् सूक्ष्मीकृता यावत् दग्धबीजकल्पा इति। यथाच वस्त्राणां स्थूलो मलः पूर्वं निर्धूयते, पश्चात् सूक्ष्मो यत्नेनोपायेनापनीयते तथा स्वल्पप्रतिपक्षाः स्थूलावृत्तयः क्लेशानां सूक्ष्मास्तु महाप्रतिपक्षा इति।

Swami Vivekananda describes it in a different way in his *Raja Yoga*. He has said,

> 'Meditation is one of the great means of controlling the rising of these big waves. By meditation you can make the mind subdue these waves, and, if you go on practising meditation for days, and months, and years, until it has become a habit, until it will come in spite of yourself, hatred and anger will be controlled and checked.'

That would be a great blessing. By practising meditation, we can conquer all these different forms of waves that arise on the surface of our mind. But what shall we meditate upon ? We can meditate upon any ideal we like. There are different ideals given in the first chapter of the Raja Yoga. If we study the aphorisms, beginning with the thirty-sixth, in the first chapter, we shall find out what ideal will suit us. Patanjali says:

विशोका वा ज्योतिष्मती ॥१।३६

—'Or, by meditation on the effulgent one which is beyond all sorrow.'

That is a subject for meditation. Patanjali has further said,

वीतरागविषयं वा चित्तम् ॥१।३७

—'Or, by meditation on the pure heart that has given up all attachment to sense objects'. From this teaching of the Raja Yoga, Christianity has taken the idea of the heart of Christ. This had been given centuries before Christ was born. This is one of the methods of meditation.

Then again Patanjali says:

स्वप्ननिद्राज्ञानालम्बनं वा ॥१।३८

—'Or, by meditating on the knowledge that comes in sleep.' That is, if you gain some knowledge in sleep, or in the form of a vivid dream, if it has any reference to any spiritual ideal, or if it answers some of your questions which arise and disturb your mind, then you can meditate on that. That will bring certain knowledge.

Patanjali says in the next aphorism:

यथाभिमतध्यानात् वा ॥१।३९

—'Or, by the meditation on anything that appeals to one as good.' There can be different objects of meditation. But we should hold on to one particular object for the time, and meditate upon it for gaining a certain result.

Next, Patanjali says:

परमाणुपरममहत्त्वान्तोऽस्य वशीकारः ॥१।४०

—'The Yogi's mind, thus meditating, becomes undisturbed from the atomic to the Infinite'. That is the effect of medita-

tion. Thus our mind becomes free and undisturbed from the atomic (*anu*) to the Infinite (*mahat*). Nothing in the universe will be able to disturb our mind. We shall create such a good vibration within ourselves that it would go into the universe with tremendous force, and there is no power in the universe that can obstruct or interfere with that vibration which we send out. That is the vibration of a perfected mind or pure heart. And that is what we want to accomplish—to become pure in heart. Then what would be the result? The result would be that we shall live like masters and not like slaves. Then we shall begin to taste a little of that freedom which has been held as the ideal of all religions.

Now, we should remember that passage where Christ said: 'You shall know the Truth and the Truth shall make you free.' The knowledge of the Truth will bring freedom to the soul. That knowledge of the Truth does not mean that Christ was the only begotten Son of God. The Truth means eternal or absolute Truth. That is in you already. You are born of the Truth, you live in the Truth, and enter into the Truth. The Truth is inseparable from our being, and freedom is our nature by birthright. So, we are already free, but at present we are deluding ourselves by thinking that we are not free. That freedom means the freedom from all sin, from all bondage and fear, and then the soul may live on this earth as a freed soul, or may pass out of this body as free. If it has any particular tendency or desire to come down to this plane, or to go to some other plane to help other souls, by setting an example by its presence, it is free to do that. In truth, we have no bondage. But, at present, as we are not in that freedom, we are bound to come back to this plane. We shall gravitate here by the law of *karma*, or the law of cause and sequence, and go through all the suffering, sorrow, disease, and trouble, and remain in ignorance. So there would be no end of suffering in the present condition, as we are now. But, if we are freed, we have outgrown all suffering; we have no more fear of death, no more sorrow, no more disease.

In this way, we shall notice that these obstructions, which I have already explained, are very necessary to be understood clearly, and by that we can trace the cause of all our troubles, beginning with our egoism, the cause of the feeling of per-

sonality, and ending with the desire to live. Our whole relative existence hangs between these two points, the feeling of personality and the desire to live. Between these two, we have our earthly existence, and the causes of these two we have already learned. These are universal causes. It is not only in us, but in all the lower animals. Wherever there is a germ of life, there is that evolution, passing from lower to higher stages. It is the evolution of the mind which produces this desire to live, then come experiences upon which it is trying to feed. It is attached to the objects of senses which produce agreeable feelings, and then it has the desire to live and the fear of death, because it has experienced the sufferings of death in a previous existence. These are the causes that we have to eliminate through meditation, practice, proper discrimination, and then, attain to absolute freedom.

There are different methods, which will be helpful, and which we shall find as we go on with our studies. The more we study this, the more clearly we shall be able to understand the Truth. Now, we understand the philosophy and the psychology of this system. The most important thing is to practise. We should practise at home every day. We should set apart a certain portion of our time, say half an hour, whenever it is convenient, and be regular with it, and sit in the silence. We should set apart a room, if we can, or a corner of our room where we can sit whenever our mind is disturbed. We must have pleasant surroundings, beautiful flowers, and nice pictures of landscape, or of such persons who arouse the spiritual ideals in our souls. We must sit there, and meditate, and practise it. Then we shall find that it will bring all peace and happiness that we desire. All the problems of life and death will be solved. Our mind will be restful, our body will be peaceful, and we shall rise above all the vibrations of evil. We shall be able to train our children to do the same. So gradually, through this kind of method, the kingdom of heaven will be brought upon this earth, and we shall be the partakers of that eternal spiritual being.

CHAPTER XIII

BONDAGE AND FREEDOM

We have learned what are ignorance, egoism, attachment, aversion, and the will-to-live, or, as it is called, the clinging to life. These are regarded as obstructions. We have learned also the meaning of undifferentiated consciousness. We have learned of the significance of egoism, or the sense of 'I, me, and mine', and the feeling of personality arising in us. We have also studied the cause of attachment to the objects of pleasure. Patanjali says: सुखानुशयी रागः, i.e. 'attachment is that which dwells on pleasure.' We find pleasure in certain things, and the mind, like a current flows towards them. Following the centre of pleasure is known as 'attachment.' The opposite of attachment is aversion. We have already discussed the aphorism: दुःखानुशयी द्वेषः, which means, 'aversion is that which dwells on pain'. This is a natural tendency, as we all know that our mind runs after things which are agreeable or produce pleasant sensations. Anything that is disagreeable, or anything that produces unpleasant sensations, we try to avoid. It is not only in us, but in all human beings and lower animals. You see a dog takes something that is agreeable, and avoids what is disagreeable. He instinctively knows what food to take, and if any disagreeable thing is offered, he would sniff at it and would not eat it. In the same way, you will find this in every animal, from the minutest to the highest man. These feelings are universal. From this we learn that there is similarity between the human beings and the lower animals. We also find that little insects, a protoplasm or an amoeba, when thrown where there is food, would know, as it were, that particular kind of food which would be good for its life, and so on. Anything that is disagreeable, it would try to avoid. However weak may be its efforts, there is that tendency. This is a universal tendency to be attached to agreeable things, and to try to avoid disagreeable things. Then, as soon as we find an agreeable object of pleasure, naturally our mind runs towadrs it,

agreeable sensation, immediately our memory is aroused. We remember that by coming in contact with that particular object of pleasure, and naturally our mind runs towards it, and we long for it. There is a desire, which must be gratified, and we try to gratify that desire too, then the gratification of the desire brings the pleasure. As soon as there is an object which would produce a disagreeable sensation or unpleasant feeling which we remember from our past experience and which we do not want, naturally we try to avoid. And that is the psychology. If we study our own mind, we shall find that these two tendencies are very predominant and natural. Whatever we like, we become attached to, and whatever we dislike, we hate, and we do not want it. Our feeling of aversion or repulsion is aroused. So, there are two things: one is attraction, and the other is repulsion. We also notice that objects of pleasure attract us, and objects of pain, which produce painful and destructive feeling, repel us. In this way, we are living in this world of duality. Certain things will attract certain individuals, and those very things, which would be attractive to one, may be repelling to another. We know how some people like a certain kind of highly seasoned food, and others avoid that, they do not care for it. Some will take food, for instance, cheese, or something like that, which is very odorous. That would be agreeable to certain persons, and other persons would run away when they would smell the odour. This shows that tastes will vary. That which is agreeable to one, may be disagreeable to another. We have already discussed that certain kinds of music which we are very fond of, another person of another part of the world may not like at all. A Çhinaman may like his music, but to our ears Chinese music would be just like so much noise, without any harmony. Because our ears are trained in a different way, we cannot appreciate Chinese music, but the Chinaman would not appreciate that music which we like and which would cause the greatest joy and would be uplifting to us. That shows there is a great deal of training necessary. We have to train our ears, our eyes, and other senses, In that way, we develop the powers of appreciation, and after we have developed those powers, we become attached to those things, which produce agreeable sensations, and we hate those things, which produce disagree-

able feelings. Therefore, if we are seeking pleasure, and trying to avoid the painful or disagreeable sensations, then we are no longer free, but are in bondage. Our scope is very narrow, and becomes limited, and for that reason, that attachment is regarded as an obstruction. A free soul would not be attached to anything or any particular kind of sensation. By coming in contact with the objects of senses, we are obliged to receive those impressions, and if we do not become attached to them, we do not become unhappy. For that reason it is called a source of bondage or an obstruction.

The next obstruction is the will-to-live, or clinging to life and it has already been discussed. Patanjali says: **विदुषोऽपि स्वरसवाही तथारूढोऽभिनिवेशः** (२।९) i.e. 'flowing through its own nature, and established even in the learned, is the clinging to life.' In all human beings, and in all animals, we notice one thing, that is the desire to live. That is most powerful. We cling to life. We do not wish to have our life cut off suddenly. And this clinging to life produces a fear of death, and that fear of death is inherent in all human beings, however learned they might be, or however ignorant they might be. Even in the lower animals there is this fear of death. Because fear of death proceeds from a strong attachment, or clinging to life. The clinging to life is the strong feeling of desire to live, or to continue in life and not to be cut off by sudden death. If we do not have that desire to live, we shall not be afraid of death, and, however strongly we may try to control or overcome this fear of death, it comes up again and again in our minds. Although we may believe that we are going to live and cannot die, we are, in reality, immortal, and are souls beyond death, still, at certain moments, in spite of all that knowledge, we shall have the fear of death. It has already been said that fear of death is a great bondage or an obstruction, and we should try to eliminate it.

First of all, we should understand that it is a condition that makes us live on this plane of phenomena. We have come in this world with the desire to live, or as the manifestation of that desire. It has not come all of a sudden, but it is a continuation of that desire which we had in our past lives. If it be true that we have come out gradually through the process

of evolution, then this desire to live has run through all the various manifestations in that process, i.e. from the lowest protoplasm to the highest man. So it is a continuous desire to live, or a continuity of will-to-live. And noticing that this desire to live exists, we can trace that it has not come out all of a sudden, but it was in the past incarnations which we have already gone through, or, in other words, it can be said that we have fear of death, because we have experienced before the pain of death and how disagreeable it was, and, so we have that fear. In lower animals, we also find that the germs of life have gone through different stages, and in different forms they experienced death, which was very disagreeable and painful, and, therefore, they have that fear. We also notice fear in lower animals, for instance, young chickens will have fear of the hawk, and as soon as the hawk flies overhead, the chickens will run under shelter, and they will scream, and make a terrible noise. Those, who have raised chickens, are familiar with that. That shows that the chickens are frightened. But they have no experience of that kind of fright in this incarnation. They must have had that experience somewhere in the past, and it has become a kind of instinct with them. It is instinctive, and that is the only explanation the scientists can give, that it is an instinct.

But the term 'instinct' does not explain the problem. We may call it instinct, and we shall find that all instincts began with conscious efforts or experience. Just as we all know that music or playing a musical instrument will become instinctive after conscious efforts. As for example, when we try to play any musical instrument, we shall have to train at first our muscles and fingers, and control the nerve centres, and then with tremendous efforts we succeed, and when we do succeed, it becomes automatic. When it becomes automatic, we do not make any conscious efforts, but our subconscious mind takes care of it. With our conscious mind, we might be thinking of something else, or talking to somebody sitting or standing near-by, and our hands would be playing upon the keys of the piano or any other instrument. Then it becomes instinctive. That instinctive or automatic action is the result of the previous conscious efforts, which we have experienced before, during this life or in any other life. If that is the mean-

ing of instinct, then we can understand that the germ of life which appears in the form of a chicken, might have gone through similar experiences before, and for that reason they are instinctively frightened at the very sight of the hawk or any other object of danger.

There is another instance that has been given before. This instance proves the pre-existence of the life of a particular manifestation. For instance, though the duckling might have been hatched by a hen immediately after its birth, it will begin to swim as soon as it would find water, and the mother hen will be frightened lest it should meet with death. It would scream, and think that the duckling was going to be drowned. The mother hen does not know that it is not a chicken, but it is a duckling. Many people have experienced that it is absolutely true. Why this duckling, although it has been hatched under a hen, should have that tendency to float on the surface of water as soon as it sees water ? It has not gained that experience in this life. That shows that it was born with that particular kind of tendency just instinctively. That instinctive knowledge, as I have already explained, can be understood as the conscious efforts of a previous existence. And upon this depends the grand theory of reincarnation. This is one of the great proofs that has been given as the principal evidence from our own experience of a previous existence in some form or other. So, the fear of death presupposes an experience that one has gone through in another life. But that experience is not desirable, rather it is painful. So we do not want it, and try to avoid it.

Again we have noticed that the child, within a few months after its birth, would become frightened at the sight of anything that might bring some unpleasant feeling, or a kind of murderous feeling, that would arise in his mind. Why is the child instinctively afraid of anything that would produce or create the fear of death ? Because the past experience of pain is there in the child's subconscious mind.

Even in the most learned men, who know that this body will go, we find the clinging to life. And so long as this clinging to life remains, we shall have all these different kinds of experiences. Therefore, it is regarded as a source of bondage. It is an obstruction. We must learn to overcome this, and

learn to overcome the fear of death. How can that be done? That can be done by gaining right knowledge, i.e. right knowledge of the true nature of the soul (*jivatman*). If we are sure that we can never die, and death means only a change of form, then that fear of death will gradually vanish. We have explained already that these various experiences produce impressions upon our minds, and these impressions become dormant, and remain latent in the bed of the subconscious mind.

That is also the source of the instinctive knowledge. The experience that remains latent in the form of an impression in the bed of the subconscious mind, may be known as instinctive knowledge. Fear of death is one of them. But the desire to live remains through all stages of the process of evolution.

Now, how can that be controlled? We also notice that different feelings arise in our minds like anger and hatred, and they remain dormant in our subconscious mind for the time being, and afterwards, they become aroused by certain conditions which would produce provocation of some kind. For instance, if somebody says unkind words, instantly we fly into rage, and want to take revenge. That is the natural tendency of the human mind. At first that feeling of anger rises very slowly, and then it produces a wave in the mind substance. That wave again overpowers us and we lose the sight of our conditions and relations. We lose memory and become violent. All these things happen. First of all, they rise in a slow minute form, in the form of bubbles, and then gradually take the form of these waves. All these different feelings are described as the waves of the mental ocean. They are all sources of bondage and sufferings in the end. It has been said before that when any disagreeable feeling like hatred, jealousy, anger, or any other passion arises, we can overcome it by holding opposite mental modifications, or by rousing opposite feelings. For instance, if there be a very powerful feeling of hatred in our mind, we can overcome that by rousing the opposite feeling of love. As for example, when a mother has a disagreement with her husband, she gets much excited and very angry, but when her baby comes suddenly near her, she forgets about it at the very sight of her baby, and all the disagreement which she had with her husband, goes away, and she takes the baby up in her arms, and kisses it, and all her

anger is also gone. The feeling of love is aroused at that moment, and it has drowned that opposite feeling of anger which was creeping up in her mind. That will give us an idea how an opposite current of thought will drown the disagreeable one, which we want to control and conquer.

Every time we have a feeling of hatred, jealousy, or unkind feeling, or anger, or any other passion, which we do not want to indulge in, and if we want to control and conquer them, we can easily do so by arousing the opposite feelings. At first it may be a very difficult task to arouse the opposite feeling or the opposite waves of the mind substance, but through practice we can easily do that. For that reason, the method is given here as to how we can overcome these different disagreeable feelings, passions, and obstructions, which keep us in bondage, and make us like slaves. For instance, when a big wave of anger has come into the mind, think of love, because love is the opposite of anger. If a feeling of revenge comes, think of forgiveness. If a feeling of hatred comes, think of love. In this way, when we have subdued all our obstructions, we become free from all limitations, and then we are ready to approach the Infinite. Unless we have overcome all these limitations, we cannot approach the Infinite, because we are then finite beings. Finite beings can only approach the Infinite when the limitations are gone or overcome. By shaking off the limitations (*avidya*), we get a self-effulgent glimpse of the Infinite, and eventually we become one with the Infinite, and we entirely lose our separateness.

It has already been said that meditation is another method. If, by meditation we can develop the power within us, we can easily overcome all these disagreeable feelings and obstructions which will not come to our minds and disturb us.

Meditation is the continuation of the power of concentration. First of all, we shall have to develop the power of concentration (*dharana*), and then we can meditate (*dhyana*). Meditation means concentration upon one object, or holding of the mind on one subject, which would last for a certain length of time without any disturbance, and the current of thought will flow towards that object in an unbroken manner, just as the flow of oil when poured from one vessel to another is in a stream without any break. When our mind or thought

current flows towards the object in an unbroken manner for a certain length of time, it is called meditation. Meditation may be upon different subjects. But what would be our subjects for meditation ? We have already discussed it in the previous chapter.

At first a little imagination is required, because we cannot think of the Absolute all of a sudden. Our mind will not be able to grasp the immaterial substance, which is the source of consciousness. Patanjali prescribes meditation on the self-effulgent light. Here the light is considered as one of the symbols of spiritual light. At first, we may think of our earthly light, something like phosphorescent light, which illumines something like moonlight, which is soft, and, at the same time, illuminating. The light of the Spirit is something similar to it. It illuminates, but, at the same time, has not the disagreeable feeling of any earthly light that we know. We cannot think of that, because we have not experienced it. The Yogis instruct to imagine some kind of an earthly light at first. Then that would be just like a symbol (*pratika*), and gradually that earthly light will disappear, and the real light of the Spirit will take its place through the course of our meditation.

This method was given centuries before Christ. These aphorisms of Patanjali, regarding the means to meditation, were written centuries before Christ, and so it is certain that the Christian meditation, upon the heart of Christ, is only an imitation of this idea as advocated by Patanjali. It is, therefore, one of the methods, and it was understood long before the time of Jesus the Christ. The Buddhists, who lived five hundred years before Christ, also meditated upon the heart of Buddha, because their Lord's heart was pure and free from all attachment and sorrow. If we can think of and meditate upon such a pure heart, we can develop that purity in ourselves. The power of thought is tremendous. What we think, we become after a while. The idealistic thoughts are consequently transformed into realities. So, if we think of the purity of heart of any great saint or saviour, we become pure and eliminate all our impurities, and gradually our character becomes saintly. That is the ideal.

It has been discussed before that sometimes wonderful knowledge comes in sleep in the form of a dream. If that

knowledge is of a spiritual nature, you can meditate upon that. Even if some saintly character appears to us in our sleep and gives us any instruction, we can take that instruction as the guide and meditate upon it, and our mind will be concentrated. And, when our mind is concentrated, we shall be able to work out all the obstructions. Anything which any one would feel as the best, or the highest, or the most spiritual, uplifting, and beneficial, not only to ourselves but also to humanity, if we meditate upon that and hold that thought in our mind, we can rise above all limitations. No matter what we meditate upon, but gradually we rise from the ordinary plane of consciousness to a higher plane, and that higher plane again leads us to a still higher one and so on. Thus we rise from the lower to the higher until we reach absolute perfection.

How broad and universal it is! The Yoga psychology gives different methods to attain absolute perfection. One method may appeal to a certain class of persons, and another method will appeal to others. Therefore, one method cannot be prescribed for all. All the teachings of the Yogis of ancient India are very broad. They will not advocate one particular kind of belief or one particular kind of faith for everyone. We must learn this truth that, as two faces are not alike, so two minds are not on the same plane. In the process of evolution, we are standing at present on the different rungs of the ladder of evolution. One may be on a little higher plane, and another on a little power plane. That which is good for the one on the higher plane, may be too strong for one that is on the lower plane. Therefore, we must give a helping hand to all people, wherever they are standing, and whatever stage in the process of evolution they occupy. That is the ideal of a universal philosophy, which would be given for everyone. And Raja Yoga is one of those universal philosophies which try to help everybody. It does not dogmatize. It gives us different methods to reach one and the some ultimate goal. But, how are you going to choose which one is the best for you, and not to try one after the other? If you have an experienced teacher, you can take his instructions. Follow him, and gradually, as you follow the instructions and practise everyday, little by little, you will see that you are gaining and controlling your feelings and desires and tendencies, and thus overcoming all the obstructions. The

highest ideal of all this is the attainment of perfection. How should you try to do all these things ? If you study the Raja Yoga, there you will find the ideal method for the attainment of perfection.

Now, what do you know by perfection ? Perfection is that state where there is no sorrow, no suffering, no disease, and no fear of death. We can reach that blissful state where we have the knowledge of all the laws of nature, knowledge of absolute Truth, knowledge of absolute Love, and love for all. We become bigger and bigger until we become almost infinite, not only in our feelings, but also in our realization. That state is far away from us now. We cannot conceive of that state of perfection at the present time, because we are too imperfect or limited just now. But, if we can remove some of the limitations, and make our minds pure, and our hearts clear, then we get a clear glimpse of that state of perfection. It is vague at present. We cannot think of it. Even the life of a saintly character has limitations. Perfection, in its truest form, cannot be manifested within these conditions or limitations of time, space, and causation, because these conditions limit the highest and purest faculties that can be developed only where there is no limitation. Perfection may be compared to rain water, just a few drops from the clouds, without any impurity. But as soon as it falls on the roofs of the houses, it is mixed with impurity, and is no longer the same rain water. And, when it falls from the roof to the gutter, it is not the same thing. This infinite Truth, which is beyond all limitations, is as pure as the rain drops, and as soon as it becomes filtered through the the rain drops, it becomes defiled, imperfect, and limited. Therefore the absolute Truth cannot be explained by words. We cannot think of it. The moment we get a glimpse of it, or can hold a thought about it, it becomes imperfect. It is said in the *Upanishad*:

नैव वाचा न मनसा प्राप्तुं शक्यो न चक्षुषा ।
अस्तीति ब्रुवतोऽन्यत्र कथं तदुपलभ्यते ॥[1]

The eternal or absolute Truth is that, which words fail to describe, from where the mind recedes, the thoughts shrink

[1] Vide *Katha Upanishad*, III, 3. 12.

back, and which the eyes fail to appreciate. The enlightened souls can only realize it.

एष सर्वेषु भूतेषु गूढोऽत्मा न प्रकाशते ।
दृश्यते त्वग्र्या बुद्धया सूक्ष्मया सूक्ष्मदर्शिभिः ॥[2]

The absolute Truth hides itself in the secret cave of the hearts of all living beings.[2] It is only appreciated, i.e. realized by those who possess sharp intellect or discriminating faculty, and keen intuitive perception. Words have limitations, and so they fail to describe the unlimited essence. Words are nothing but the vehicles of thoughts, and thoughts are the expressions of the material mind, and, so, the words and even the thoughts have limitations. They cannot express and conceive of the transcending *Atman*. We may try to express the *Atman* by words, or to think of it, but we cannot. Only when the intellect is shining, the *Atman* is as if reflected on the mirror of the intellect. This reflection is figuratively known as the appreciation of the *Atman*. Now, when the clean intellect appreciates the *Atman*, it no longer remains as an intellect, but it is instantaneously transformed into pure consciousness by which the knowledge of the *Atman* is apperceived, i.e. realized.

We may try to think of the infinite space. Normally our idea of space is limited within the horizon. When we stand on the mountain top, we see all around us, and that is our circle. We think that space is there only within the circle. But there is space beyond the circle also. That is the only conception of the Infinite we can get. Under the present conditions, the mind is limited, but when purified, it becomes finer and gets a deeper glimpse or has a realization of the Infinite in a better way, which at present we cannot have, because our minds are incapable of grasping those higher subjects. Therefore, it is necessary for us to overcome all the limitations, remove

[1] Ibid., I, 3. 12.

[2] The *Katha Upanishad* (I, 2. 12) states.

तं दुर्दर्शं गूढमनुप्रविष्टं गुहाहितं गह्वरेष्ठं पुराणम् ।
अध्यात्मयोगाधिगमेन देवं मत्वा धीरो हर्ष-शोकौ जहाति ॥

all the obstacles, and gain freedom,—freedom from the bondage of nature.

What else will come to us when we have realized the results of meditations? Then we know our true nature, the soul, which is the thinker, doer, and performer of all actions. The soul, that lived in the past, will live in the future, and that can remain on this plane and manipulate this physical body as an instrument, can yet remain outside of it. That is the most wonderful instance of the power of the Spirit. How can the Spirit manifest through matter and govern matter, and yet remain unattached all the time? It can, and that is our true nature. We are already that, even at the present moment. When we know this secret, all our doubts and questionings in our mind will cease for ever. They will be all answered. At present doubts and questionings rise in our mind and disturb its peace, but we cannot get the answers. The answers do not come in that state. Then where the answers will come from? The answers will come from the bottom of our heart, from the *Atman*. So we have to ascend, we have to rise gradually, and when we have risen to that state, the fulfilment of all desires comes. We have no more desire to live, as we are one with the eternal life. We have the desire to live, because at present we are separated from the divine life principle. The life principle has no desire to live in itself, but as we are separated from that, we have the clinging to life. At present we hold on to it, as if we are something separate or different. That is caused by the undifferentiated consciousness (*avyakta* or *ajnana*). We are, in reality, one with the *Atman*. So we should not have the will-to-live, because the will-to-live is only possible for one who thinks that he is not going to live, or who could not live. But, if we are one with the eternal life, how can we die? Life never becomes non-life. Life is eternal. Life has no desire to live, because it could not be anything else. Now you see the point where we have made the mistake. The moment we are clinging to life, we are trying to hold on to this body, which is subject to death and can never live indefinitely. We are identifying ourselves with this gross physical body which is surely going to die. We are trying to keep it, and there is the mistake. We should wake up. If we turn our attention to our real spiritual Self, which is one with life, then

there is no longer this clinging to life, no longer any attachment to life, and no longer the will-to-live, because it is one with life; it could not do anything else but live. Therefore, we should become one with the eternal life, and rise above this desire to live. We may not be able to grasp the real meaning, at first, of what is life and what is non-life. Non-life can never live, and it is dying constantly, just as our body is dying constantly. We cannot hold on to that. If we try to keep it in one state, that would be stagnation. We could not live. That would be just like a stone. There would be no evolution. It is this constant change that the molecules and the atoms of the body are going through. In this constant change there is the manifestation of life. And yet we have the fear of death, although we are dying every minute. We cannot stop it, and yet we cling to longing. It is a very miserable state. If we are one with the eternal life, we can never be different and, therefore, naturally our life will continue. But at present we are under this hazy kind of ideal, not properly differentiated, and, therefore, we have all kinds of vain hallucinations, trying to satisfy certain desires and failing every moment, and forgetting at the present time that we ever failed. That is why we are living. This is what is called life on the material plane. We cannot do anything different. Yet there is a way out of it. If we are enjoying it, it is all right. Nothing can stop us from enjoying it. But, if we are sick and tired of it, then we do not find anything attractive in it. We are longing for something more permanent and more real, and that longing must be gratified; otherwise, we cannot have peace and happiness in our souls, so long as there is that longing, which remains unsatisfied. Therefore, all this study of philosophy and the higher truths will appeal only to those who are sick and tired of their present conditions. Others will not appreciate it. Just as we know that if a person is not thirsty and we hold a glass of water before that person, he would not touch it; but if he is thirsty, he will be glad to get it. That is the truth. We must be hungry and thirsty for the highest realization first, and then we shall make efforts to know the the real truth, and follow those methods, which will eventually bring the particular result, and perfection will be ours. What are all the religions doing? They are teaching the same thing, only in a different language,

i.e. in the language of doctrines, dogmas, faith, belief, scriptural texts, and all kinds of things mentioned in the catechism, that we must have this and we must have that. The origin of all these priestcraft, paraphernalia of the ceremony and ritual, and everything began with that fundamental principle, which I am teaching you now. That one idea is at the bottom of Christ's religion, Buddha s religion, and all the religions of the world. They all had that foundation, but the spirit is now gone, the meaning is forgotten, and they do not know what they are talking about. If I ask, 'Why should we believe in certain doctrines and dogmas ?' we cannot answer this question, because the real spirit is forgotten. The more we shall study Jesus's life, in connection with the instructions that we are receiving, the clearer understanding we shall get, and we shall know the fundamental principles of all religions. Call it by any name you like, but there is only one which is nameless and formless. It is the essence of the soul. The soul is longing for the Infinite. If we call the Infinite the heavenly Father, or Jehovah, or Allah, it does not make any difference. Names do not make any difference. A glass of water may be called by different names in different languages, but all these different names refer to the same thing. So we may call it Jehovah, Allah, God, Father in Heaven, or divine Mother ; they all refer to one substance though it appears as different, in different places. under different conditions. And that is the goal, and that goal is universal. It cannot be monopolized by any particular sect, or a certain class of people, or certain scriptures or books. It is the universal Truth. We should realize that the infinite Being who is manifesting through all and each one of us, and we are, in reality, part and parcel of that Infinite. For instance, in the Bible, there is a passage: 'We live and move and have our being in God.' But what is God ? How are we going to understand it, and how is it that we live and move and have our being in Him ? Again there is another passage: 'Lo, the kingdom of Heaven is within.' How shall we understand it ? This will explain to us how the kingdom of Heaven is within, and we shall feel it. So, by studying it, we are not only studying psychology, but are also studying the grandest philosophy of life, and the highest religion, which is the religion of the soul. So, psychology, philosophy, and religion—all these are

united. They all are one. You cannot separate one from the other. Only special religions, dogmas and doctrines are afraid of science, philosophy and psychology, because they deal with a particular scheme of salvation. If it were based upon Truth, then Truth is the aim of all branches of knowledge. So where is the difference? But we find that there is a difference, and therefore, there must be some wrong somewhere. But, in fact, we find that Truth is our own soul, and the practice of concentration and meditation is just like worship of that Truth. I shall try to explain gradually how meditation means the highest form of devotion and the highest kind of love. We should love God in spirit, and worship Him in spirit, and by spirit. How can that be done? We should study that, and then we shall be eating religion, drinking religion, and walking religion. Every moment of life will be an act of worship. Our whole life will be a series of actions, which would be leading to the one goal of the realization of the Infinite. It is a regular progress. Nothing is lost. That is better than to remain in darkness and have a blind faith, upon something which will never be realized as Truth. For this reason the Yogis give the various ideals. They take in all the psychology, philosophy, religion, and science, and urge every individual seeker after Truth to study and practise it, and attain to the goal which is perfection. And it says that this can be done in this life. We do not have to wait until we pass through the grave into another life; this can be realized now. And then we enjoy the eternal blessings of life.

CHAPTER XIV

KARMA AND MEDITATION

We have learned the pain-bearing obstructions. They are the feelings of personality or egoism, attachment, the will-to-live, etc. We have learned that these are obstructions, and they can overcome or be conquered by the practice of meditation.

The question generally would rise in our mind, 'what is the object of practising meditation, what is the object of removing all these obstructions, what is the aim?' In answering these questions, the twelfth aphorism of the second chapter of the Raja Yoga is given:

क्लेशमूलः कर्माशयो दृष्टादृष्टजन्मवेदनीयः ॥२।१२

—'The receptacle of works has its roots in these pain-bearing obstructions, and their experience in this visible life, or in the unseen life.'

The meaning of the aphorism is rather obscure. So, in order to understand it clearly, we shall have to learn what this receptacle of works is. It literally means 'the latent deposit of *karma*'. *Karma* means all the actions, or works. The latent deposit of *karma* has its root in these pain-bearing obstructions, and may be experienced in this visible life, or in the life unseen, i.e. either in this present life or in any future life. 'The latent deposit of works' means all the impressions that are left in our subconscious mind, after the actions are performed. Every time we perform any action, physical or mental, it leaves an impression in the subconscious mind. There are two states: the one is the impression state, which is called *samskara,* or subliminal impression, and the other is called the attenuated state, which means the subconscious impressions. These impressions pile up. All the thoughts that we have thought out, all the desires that we have gratified, all the pleasures that we have enjoyed, all the pains that we have suffered,—every thing is alive in the form of impressions in our subconscious mind. So, the subconscious mind is the storehouse of all the impressions. Nothing is lost. And these pile up, impression after

impression. The impressions of the whole lifetime will be like a stack, and they create a natural tendency of the individual.

When a child is born, you may think that his mind is blank like a sheet of paper, and that all the child has to do is to learn from this world. That is the conception of the materialist, who does not believe in the pre-existence of the soul, and in the soul as an entity. But that is an exploded theory. The best thinkers of the world have advanced the other theory, which is more acceptaable and more rational.[1] It is said that the child is the father of the man. The child is born with a certain tendency, and that tendency is the resultant of the impressions that the soul received in a previous life. The present impressions that we are gathering now, will be the cause of our future life. So by judging the present, we can trace its cause. Because nothing happens accidentally, and we do not inherit anything that we have not the predisposition to inherit. Or, that would be an inclination. Our mind must be inclined to inherit certain things from the parents, otherwise there would be no heredity. So, that inclination or tendency is the result of these impressions, that are stored up in the threshold of the subconscious mind.

These pain-bearing obstructions have been the cause of all the activities of the body, senses, and mind; and these activities of various kinds, which are called *karmas,* produce similar activities in the future. For instance, we have a desire to eat a certain thing. We never ate it before. We taste it and it tastes nice; and after a few days we want that again, and want to enjoy the same taste. Therefore, our desire, which was gratified, remains latent or dormant, and reappears in the form of another desire of a similar kind. So, there is a continuity of this desire as well as its gratification.

Our activities of the mind will produce certain results in the form of sensations, and those sensations or feelings will remain latent in the subconscious mind. They will be reproduced again in the future, either in this life or in any other life. If our present life is the resultant of the sum total of all the impressions that we gathered in previous lives, then in the present life, whatever we are doing or making, we are creating

[1] A recent work on the subject is *Reincarnation: an Anthology* by Joseph Head and S. L. Cranston.

our future by that. Consciously or unconsciously, we are doing works, and the results will mould the future. The future again depends upon our present. What we shall be in future, we are making now. What we shall be after death, that also we are making now. Therefore, if we understand this law of *karma,* and how actions remain dormant and persist in the nature of the soul, then we know that these future conditions will produce pleasure and pain, just the same as they are doing now. No matter where we go, so long as we are within the realm of phenomena, constituted out of time, space, and causation, we cannot get away from this universal law, and therefore, we have to enjoy or suffer.

According to the Yogis all enjoyments are more or less connected with some kind of pain or suffering. If we analyse our desires, we find that desire means wanting, and wanting connotes the idea of lacking in something, and lacking in something means suffering. That is the natural course. So, whenever we are desiring anything, we have not got that and, therefore, we want it; and because we want it, we are in lack of that thing, and, therefore, there is a kind of suffering. The gratification of the desire means to remove that suffering for the time being. Then that desire will come up again, and we gratify it again. It is just like hunger and thirst, and all the cravings of the senses. They are gratified or appeased for the time being, and they rise up again. You cannot stop them. And this process continues from cycle to cycle, for every individual. Even after death we cannot get rid of it. We carry that with us, and if we be in the spirit land, or go to heaven, there we take all our impressions (*samskaras*) with us, and there we may enjoy for a while and then we go on in the future into other conditions.

There is no limit to man's desires. He goes on desiring, and when he comes to a point where desire cannot be fulfilled, and the result is pain. Therefore, the Yogis regard the sum total of the impressions, good or evil, as pain-bearing obstructions, which obstruct the way to freedom of the soul. It is the same with the *samskaras,* as they are the causes which will again bring effects, either in this life, or in the lives to come, just as we find in cases of criminal acts, an act of murder, or any kind of terrible crime brings the result in this life. Some works do

not produce their results immediately, but they produce them slowly and after a while. Sometimes, we may not receive the results of our acts for many years, and suddenly they come. We do not know why these results have come in the form of sickness, disease, and terrible misfortune, as if the whole thing is going against us. But they all have causes, and the causes are the impressions of the works or actions (*karmas*) that we have committed. So the law is working underneath the surface, where we cannot see. Our vision is only on the surface, and so we cannot unlock the mystery of work (*karma*).

For instance, if we pray for a certain thing, our prayer may be fulfilled after ten years, and after ten years we may not want that thing to be fulfilled. What we want now, we may not want after ten years. But we are praying now for that thing. We may not get it right away. We may get it after ten years, and then we shall be sorry. So, we should be careful about what we desire. The law works underneath, and our minds are not concentrated enough to see the course of this law of *karma*. We are so ambitious that we want to get the result quick, and if it does not come immediately, we doubt the existence of the law, and we give it up. But the law is very subtle.

The idea of these Yogis is to gain the freedom of the soul, and that freedom of the soul means that all the obstructions, which stand in the way of the attainment of that freedom, must be removed. The Yogis trace the cause of our present life. And if we know that in the life to come, we are to go through all the painful experiences, we do not want that. Then we must try to stop them. And that is the reason why all these instructions are given for meditation, for contemplation, for discrimination. We must prepare ourselves to overcome these obstructions, and when these obstructions are overcome, we remain free.

The meditations, of course, require some preparations, and those preparations may come in the form of concentration, and the eight steps of the Raja Yoga, including the breathing exercises, right living, and right thinking. All these are necessary.

We will notice that the cause of our present life, the cause of evil, and the cause of weakness, all these causes are given not

as a sudden whimsical action of a supernatural entity, but everything is the result of a natural law. The natural law is working either on the physical plane, or on the mental plane, or on the spiritual plane. Nature includes all the planes, physical, mental, and spiritual. It does not mean that physical one alone is natural, and the rest is supernatural. Here, according to the Yogis, *prakriti* means the creative energy, and that creative energy is the producer of the mind, the senses, and the external world. And everything that is mental, intellectual, and so-called spiritual or pertaining to the ego, is the result of nature. These laws are producing the various manifestations of the individual, the birth and the rebirth. That is as certain as that we are sitting here. We can never be annihilated. We are immortal. The causes that have brought us to this incarnation, will cause us to be born again. But ordinary minds do not see those causes, and, therefore, they cannot reach the conclusions. First of all, we have to purify our minds, so that out vision would be clear, and we would be able to see things finer, that are working under the surface. These great master minds developed their power by which they could see, through the veil of the phenomenal appearances, the subtle laws, and, therefore, they are known as the Yogis. These master minds, whose minds were purified, understood these finer laws and finer forces of the nature, and they have unanimously given this idea that the cause of our future birth is already here, and we must remove it. What is the use of coming here again and again, and going through all the pains, sufferings, sorrows, and imperfections? If we can attain to freedom of the soul from nature, we have gained the highest ideal of life. Therefore, they advocate all these different exercises.

Here we shall notice that another thing is mentioned, that a man is the creator of his body, and of everything that he possesses. We are the creators of our physical form. But, in what way are we creating? We are creating not something out of nothing, but we are manufacturing. We are creating in the sense of manufacturing, and that means we are manufacturing new blood, new brain cells, new nervous energy, from the food and drink, and all the air and water and sunshine, and so forth, from all the environments. We are doing this *ourselves*. No-

body else is doing this for us. Each individual is going on, doing the particular kind of work, according to the tendency and knowledge that the individual soul has gained. A child, who has more knowledge about these finer forces of nature, will do things differently from a child, who is born in ignorance and has no clear understanding. In this way, if we differentiate various manifestations, we shall find that the latest deposit of our actions (*karmas*), which is called here the 'receptacle of works', is the cause of the manifestations in different incarnations in different lives.

Sometimes it is said that, if the intensity of these impressions be very strong, sudden changes can take place during the lifetime, which means that before we pass out of the body, the molecules of the body can be entirely changed and renewed. Now we are doing it unconsciously, but the Yogi says that, if we do it consciously, we gain more power. We are manufacturing new particles of matter every day in our bodies. That is true. It is a scientific fact. But we are not doing it consciously. The moment we do it consciously, we shall gain tremendous strength and power. Then we can rejuvenate the body. Instead of throwing away the body that is sickly and diseased, we can rejuvenate it. The Yogis, who live a long life without showing any signs of old age, conserve their energy. They understand this law, and rejuvenate their bodies. It is one of the powers of the Yogis that they can live as long as they wish, and when they get tired of the bodies and conditions, they give them up, just as we throw away our old worn-out garments consciously. There is a possibility of that. If we reason correctly, we find, why it should be possible. If we are manufacturing the particles of matter and drawing them unconsciously from the environments, we can also draw consciously such particles of matter which would help us in regaining our strength and all the results that we wish to get. It is possible that, by the power of thought, one can change the whole condition. Thoughts are things, and they are realities.

We should remember that these ideas were given out fourteen hundred years before Christ. These laws of the practical Yoga psychology and the power of thought were known in ancient India among the Yogis, and they came out and made a science of them. And now most of these ideas

are accepted truths and facts in the civilized world. There have been a great many other laws, which are not yet known to the civilized world, but they have been mentioned in the Raja Yoga, and anyone can demonstrate these things by practising, according to the instructions, if they wish to.

All the bodies in the universe are made up of *tanmatras*, and it is only in the arrangement of them that there comes a difference. *Tanmatra* means the finest particles of matter, something like electrons, finer than atoms. *Tanmatra* is that which exists of its own kind. This indivisible unit is no longer the atom or the molecule, but now we know it as the electron.[1] If these electrons form the foundation of our physical body, then by our thought force, which are like electric currents, we can generate electricity in our system. By concentrating our thoughts, all the atoms and molecules of the body can be electrified, and if they are electrified, they would produce changes which may be desirable or undesirable. If we can produce the changes consciously, then such changes, which are desirable, bring unto us the best results.

It is said that, if you are the arranger, you can arrange the body in one way or another. By 'you' I mean the 'soul'.[2] The mind is the master of the body, and it is the originator of molecules and particles of matter. And the soul is the master of the mind. But we do not know who we are. We are creating our nerves, making the blood and the brain cells, but we do not know our own selves. We are the manufacturers of the body. That baby body, with which we were born, is dead and gone. It is regulated neither by the parents, nor by God, nor by the devil. Then who is doing it? It is that power in us which is the animating, or the thinking principle, or the soul, that regulates our whole organism, all the functions, and co-ordinates everything. It is just as the oyster and the shell. As the shell of the oyster is not different from the oyster, but is only a portion of its substance which goes to the making of the shell, so a portion of our being goes towards manufacturing this gross physical body, with all its organism. There are not two worlds or two sets of forces, but it is the one world or one set of forces that is vibrating in everything, from the finest to

[1] But *tanmatras* are finer than electrons.
[2] That is, *jivatman*.

the grossest, and the grossest manifestation appears in the physical body. The finest vibrations appear in the form of intellect and mind.

We can understand that we are just little worlds by ourselves. We do not have to study the stars and planets. Let us study our own self first, because, unless we study our own self, we cannot know anything outside. But how can we know it ? We may know the movement of certain bodies just sitting down here ; we see automobiles passing around us. We look at the heaven, and see things moving. But we do not see the motion, we only see that they are going in opposite directions. That is all. We may measure the time too. But what would we gain by it ? Nothing at all. We may watch a certain phenomenon, like the passing of an aeroplane from one part of space to another, but we do not watch what is going on within us, though it is the most wonderful study. The study of one's own self is better than any other study.

Our subconscious self is wiser than the conscious one, because consciously we cannot manufacture anything, but subconsciously nature is doing it. That subconscious process can also be brought up on the conscious plane. It was conscious at one time, and the Yogi asks: What is the use of living in a degenerate way ? Let us dive deep into the bottom of the ocean, and bring out the truths, understand the laws, overcome the difficulties, and reach the goal which is freedom of the soul ? A free soul can manufacture anything at its will. That is the freedom. At present we have lost it, but we have to regain it. The ideal is to regain it, and to be masters of it, and not to live as its slaves. We can manufacture any quantity of bodies, can change the environments, and show our power of thought, or power of the spirit. But mere talking would not do. We shall have to demonstrate for ourselves, and prove that there is such a thing as spirit, which is more powerful than the material forces. Material forces are only the gross manifestations of the same energy.

We are the creators, and we have to regulate the creation, and as soon as we can do that, we shall be able to manufacture just as we like, and then we shall have neither birth nor death, nor disease, nor any such thing. That is the idea. Now, why should we practise concentration and meditation ? Why should

we practise breathing exercises? Why should we study these things, and for what? These questions may rush in our mind too. They should be answered. But, before that, we should think why should we try to remember all these obstructions. Because, these obstructions are in the way, and they hinder the attainment of the freedom of the soul, and so we want to regain our consciousness of things, which are finer, and are in their causal states, by understanding the law. By doing this we can reach perfection. Perfection is the one word which includes the highest kind of knowledge, freedom, and mastery. By perfection all these things are meant. When Christ said: 'We shall be perfect as the Father in Heaven is perfect', that perfection meant that as God is the creator, the highest, the omnipotent and ominiscient, so we shall have all that when we become perfect. In fact, we shall become one with God. That is the ideal. But at present we are not one with God. How far are we away from Him! We have no way of measuring that distance. The moment we begin to think of ourselves and our relation to the universal Spirit which is perfect, we find that we are far behind. God is infinitely large, and we are infinitely small. But, at the same time, each one of us contains a spark of the same life and intelligence, which God has. The difference is only in degree, and not in kind. If the Creator of the universe can gather all the materials, and manufacture the sun, the moon, and the stars, we can also gather all the materials from the environments, and manufacture our bodies. The Creator does not create matter out of nothing, but matter is co-existent with God. Matter and spirit exist simultaneously, and God takes the matter and manipulates it, and produces these different spheres, just as the carpenter is doing. The carpenter takes pieces of wood, puts them together and forms a chair or a table. And then he may be known as a creator. But we are better creators than the carpenter, because we are making this wonderful mechanism of our bodies and keeping them going. It is a self-regulating, self-adjusting, and self-reproducing machine. It is the most wonderful instrument. There is nothing finer or greater than the human body. By studying it, we can learn all the laws that are to be learned in this whole world. The Yogis do learn, and, therefore, they not only have long life, but also a free life. They do not enjoy in the same

way as we do, because our enjoyment seems pain to them. They rather suffer, because they divide suffering into various parts, and if there be the minutest touchstone of suffering in any kind of enjoyment, that enjoyment is not acceptable to the Yogi. He says, 'What is the use, if we cannot get pure enjoyment, pure pleasure, and pure happiness? So we would not accept it, and let it all go.' Therefore, they reject all kinds of pleasures which ordinary mortals are dying for.

Then Patanjali says:

सतिमूले तद्विपाको जात्यायुर्भोगाः २।१३

'The root being there, the fruition comes in the form of species, life, and experience of pleasure and pain.'

The root being there (in the deposit of action or *karma*),[1] the different species are formed. The origin of the species is at the root of the dormant or latent deposit of actions (*karma*). The different races and different angelic forms, animal forms, human forms, savage bodies, and civilized bodies—all are formed out of that latent deposit of work (*karma*). All these are, in reality, the effects of works (*karma*), and the length of time and life are also determined by it. Some children are born and pass away within a short time. They have not had the time to gain any experience before they pass away. That is determined by works (*karma*). Others live long lives. Some will find pleasure wherever they go; even in the woods, pleasure follows them. Others may go to a palace, and sufferings and misery follow at their heels. So, all these are the effects of works (*karma*). There is no other destiny and no other creator. They are the makers of all those things themselves. But they do not know it. Everything that we have gained, whether it is pleasure or pain, enjoyment or suffering, we have brought it upon ourselves by our past actions (*karma*). Action does not mean anything individual, but it is the sum-total of the impressions of the works that we have done during a period of lifetime, and that remains and bears fruit. It bears fruit in the form of results or effects, or reactions of the causes. If I strike a blow on the table, the table will strike me back. If I strike it hard, the table will strike me hard; if I strike milder,

[1] The *Karma-samaskara*.

I will receive a milder blow. That is the reaction. It is bound to come back in the form of happiness or unhappiness. That is the law. So, whatever thoughts we send our will come back. If we send out thoughts of hatred, they bounce back and make us more hateful. If we send thoughts of love, they come back and make us more loving. We must try that, and we shall find it is so. Every time we send out an evil thought, we become more inclined to evil. It gets stronger. One act of wickedness will bring a result of similar nature, and the person who is wicked, will become worse. Look at the professional murderers. They may go to jail or to prison, and when they come out, they cannot do anything different. They go back again. They grow worse. It is the natural law of action and reaction.

So we see how wonderfully the Raja Yoga explains everything. There is no theory of predestination here. We would not find that. It is all explained in a scientific manner. You know why some one is born in a certain way. We may find all the physiological causes, but why do those physiological causes exist in one case, and not in another? The materialist does not know that. He says the deformity was produced by this physiological cause. We all know that. But why was that physiological cause produced? Who did it? Ordinarily we do not know it, and that is why it seems to us as a mystery. But the Yogis do not leave anything as mysterious. They trace it further back and show the origin of it, and, therefore, their ideas are grand and wonderful. The impressions (*samskaras*) become the cause of future actions, and then we go on.

There are different effects in human life: one man lives fifty years, another a hundred, and another dies in two or three years, and never attains maturity. Why is all this? Patanjali says that the root is there. It is the latent deposit of actions (*karma*) that makes it. And it is also found that one man is born to enjoy pleasure, and another, pain; if one buries himself in a deserted place, pleasure will follow him there, and another, wherever he goes, pain follows him, and everything becomes painful. Whatever he touches, goes wrong. He might get married. The wife may be very beautiful and devoted, but as soon as they are together, their troubles begin. Then their whole life is nothing but a chain of sorrow, suffering, misery, disease, and death or suicide. Why is that? Why does that

disaster happen ? Who is the cause of it ? The Yoga psychology states that it is the work (*karma*), which is the cause of it. It is the work (*karma*) that determines the destiny of the couple, the destiny of man, and of all animals.

Therefore, we should be careful of this work (*karma*). Let us remember it, regulate it, master it, and do it consciously, so that we would not have any further trouble in the future. We must lay the foundation in such a way that nothing wrong will come. We can do that only by understanding the law, and in no other way. We should always exercise the power of discrimination. First of all, we should understand what is right and what is wrong, and then should discriminate, and should do the things that are not only beneficial to ourselves, but to others also. We should never do an injury, either in thought, word, or deed to anybody, because it will come back to us, but we should always send out good things, good thoughts, and good ideas. And that standard of good must be found first. And then, we should not be seeking pleasure all the time, but should seek something different. The true happiness we should seek, not mere pleasure, because it is transitory. Any sensation, which is apparently pleasant, leads into all kinds of unpleasant effects. So we should seek true happiness. Let us find out when we have ever been happy in our lifetime, when we did not have a stain of suffering, nor sorrow, nor regret, nor disappointment. If we have had once a glimpse of it, then we should try to seek that true happiness. True happiness is in our own nature of the Spirit. God is always happy, and He is never unhappy. So long as we are unhappy, we are away from God, we are something different from Him. Therefore, we should hold that ideal of true happiness, and not of pleasure. We might find that, at present, we may not be able to live without seeking pleasure, because we have got into a habit. But discrimination will cure that habit. Anything that makes us truly happy and never produces any evil effect, is good. But it is very difficult to get that in this material world. Another thing we notice is that true happiness must be unconditioned. Unconditioned happiness means that we are always happy even when everything is taken away from us, still we are happy. We can never lose that happiness. Even if our body is taken away from us, we are still happy. That is true happiness ; that is

divine and spiritual. That is the ideal. True happiness comes simultaneously with the freedom of the soul. As soon as we have that unconditioned happiness, we do not care a rap for the world. The world does not mean anything to us. Whether the world lives or dies, it does not affect us at all. That is rising above the mundane plane of existence. It is not indifference. We should not be afraid. Indifference is something else. We should have a clear understanding of this state first. We must rise above all the dual conditions of pleasure and pain, birth and death, light and darkness, heat and cold; we must transcend both. We should rise above them and enjoy the eternal sunshine. That is true happiness. And that is the ideal of the Yogi.

It is not a very easy thing to gain. One life is not enough to spend in search after it. We should spend thousands of such lives, millions of them to get it, because nothing is greater than that. Anything else we can get without much cost, just with a little desire. So we must search that which is the highest; we live for it, and even if we die in our search after it, we shall begin that search again in our next incarnation; and we shall not stop until the goal is reached. Therefore it is said in Vedanta: 'Arise, awake, find a teacher, who can help you in showing the path, and, by following his instructions, you will reach the goal, and do not stop until the goal is reached.' Because this path is as difficult as to walk upon the sharp edge of a razor. The *Upanishad* states:

उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान् निबोधत ।
क्षुरस्य धारा निशिता दुरत्यया
दुर्गम पथस्तत् कवयो वदन्ति ॥[1]

Therefore you must be very careful. Without an experienced teacher, without a master, we cannot get it. Any and everybody cannot show the way. Therefore, we need someone, who has gone along that path, to come and tell us how it is, and how one can get there, and where are the pitfalls and dangers in the path. All the saviours and great teachers have advocated this one ideal in all religions, and the Raja Yoga tells the same truth, only in a different language.

[1] Vide *Katha Upanishad*, I, 3. 14.

CHAPTER XV

ATTAINMENT OF THE SUPERCONSCIOUSNESS

We have learned the methods by which we can overcome the obstructions to the path of the Yoga practice through concentration and meditation. The breathing exercises are also helpful in quieting the modifications of the minds and also the nerve centres. Concentration leads to meditation, and when meditation is deep, it is called *samadhi* or the superconscious state. When the mind becomes absolutely quiet, the Spirit reigns supreme in its own glory. That state is very difficult to get, because the mind is like a dancing girl, dancing around and throwing its powers all the time, and hiding behind the Spirit, which is our true Self. So we cannot see it. Just as on the stage the dancing girl shows her body and clothes and manners and gestures, so does the mind. The manners and customs of the dancing girl can be compared to the different modifications of the mind substance, which is constantly active, and playing its freaks. Sometimes it is happy, and sometimes unhappy; sometimes it enjoys, and sometimes it suffers, and performs all kinds of actions. The mind has manifold desires. It rushes the body towards the fulfilment of desires; gaining certain experiences, and those experiences go down in the mind and remain there in the subconscious plane in seed form. Then the mind goes to sleep. It wakes up again and performs the same things. In this way, it is dancing around from one incarnation to another. There is no cessation. It does not stop for a moment. If we try to stop it, we shall find it very difficult. Our will power is not strong enough to control it. But there are cases where the will power has been developed to such an extent that it can command the mind to stop, and the mind obeys the command. And those persons are called Yogis. They are already concentrated. They are masters. We may call them adepts. They have absolute power over their minds. They can not only control their minds, but also their physical organic functions. They can stop the pulse, the heart-beat, and the lungs. I have seen it done. I have seen that the

heart-beat and the pulse are absolutely under the control of the Yogis. If a Yogi wills them to stop, they stop. He does not have to go into the state of trance to do it. Of course, in cases of suspended animation, the pulse, heart-beats, and lungs stop. But it can be brought under our power, and the Yogis have done that. There are some persons yet living in India who can do those things. Others develop other powers. There are a great many psychic powers: the power of healing, power of clairvoyance, power of clairaudience, and telepathy. All these are described in the Raja Yoga. What modern scientists are discovering now are described in the Raja Yoga. If we study it carefully, we shall find all the powers are narrated in the third chapter. There is a power described, that one can project one's self and appear at a distance, and project one's astral body. The Yogis can do that. They can double, treble, and multiply their forms. They can appear in two or three places at a time, and can be seen, and talked to. Others would be able to see them. Such cases are described. There are other powers which we shall come to later on.

We have often heard that there are teachers, who tell us to make our minds vacant, and to stop all the thoughts and desires suddenly, to reach the highest. By that method one can achieve it, if he has the will-power very strong. They can stop the consciousness from going into different states, assuming different forms, but the seeds of desires and tendencies and all the ideas and thoughts remain in the mind. They are not destroyed. If anyone can make the mind like a vacuum for a while, the subconscious mind will retain all those forces in seed form. They will wake up in the course of time, and when they wake up, they will begin to be active. It is just as in our deep sleep state (*sushupti*). The deep sleep state resembles that state. Then we do not dream, but the mind is covered with a veil of darkness, as it were. In that state, the *tamas* quality of nature, which is inertia, or darkness, or dullness, overpowers all the conscious activities, as it does in the sleep state. If one remains in that state for any length of time, he would not be conscious of anything. But, as we wake up from deep sleep, all our desires wake up with us. So, no matter how long the person or the soul would remain in that state, it would retain all these desires and tendencies in a seed form. The soul may

remain in that state for a thousand years after the death of the body, or perhaps during the period of a complete cycle. It may be millions of years, but it will remain in that sleep. The desires and tendencies would be absorbed, as it were, in Nature or *Prakriti*. This state is known as *prakritilaya*. There are two kinds of the state of *prakritilaya*. One is when after struggling to become perfect, the devotees have fallen short of perfection, but have reached the state nearest to perfection. They could not go beyond that limit on account of their own limitations, and could not become perfect, but they become masters over their own mind and matter to a great extent. They would remain in that state, absorbed in nature for the period of a cycle. Then after that, when they wake up, they become rulers of a certain sphere like heaven. They are regarded as higher than angels. They have more power and knowledge, but yet they are not perfect. They have some imperfection, and some desires left. Perhaps their ideal was to become rulers like an emperor on this earth. Their desire remains, with them, and after a while they become rulers and govern the spirit world. It is possible. Then they are regarded as gods.

There are others who are absorbed in Nature, but have not reached perfection, and have gone to sleep, as it were. After the end of the cycle, when the period of evolution begins, they wake up. Then they are born again. They go on developing, and through the process of evolution, they are born again as human beings, and gratify their desires, go on higher and higher, until they become perfect. They are called the *prakritilaya purushas*. *Prakriti* means the Nature or the creative primordial Energy of the universe. In fact, they become absorbed in Nature. They are known as individuals, because their individuality is not lost, and they are absorbed' means they are sleeping. But where would they sleep? They sleep in their causal state. There are three bodies in us: gross or physical, subtle, and causal. The subtle body (*sukshma-sharira*) may be called the spiritual or ethereal body. Besides, there is the causal body (*karana-sharira*), the cause that produces both subtle and gross bodies. The causal state is like a seed form. The *purushas* remain absorbed in that causal state, being unconscious of these effects. For instance, when we go to the

cause of the universe, in the form of undifferentiated energy, we are not conscious of the effects, just as in a seed form, the seed is not conscious of the tree. Even if we suppose that the seed has a kind of consciousness, it is not conscious of that form of a tree or what it will produce. It is subconscious, just as a child. The child is not conscious of what it is going to become, whether a president, or a great artist, or a musician. It does not know yet, what it is going to become, but this is latent in the child in a seed form. It has not manifested yet. It has not developed like the tree remaining in the seed. So the mind of the president, or a musician, or an artist, or any great man, or a genius is sleeping there in the child. So the child does not know, being in the causal state. When the soul enters into the form of energy and sleeps there, it does not know the effects, or manifestations, or phenomena. So, these two states, subtle and causal are not the highest, according to the Raja Yoga. The Yogis consider these two states as less than perfection. Neither gods nor those who are absorbed in Nature or drawn into the causal state, are perfect. They have reached that state only by controlling their mind; they have gone into that state, having the desire to master the body and Nature, but they have not succeeded in reaching the final goal.

But there is another method, by which the highest freedom can be attained, without going into those two states, and that is described in the aphorisms 19 and 20 of the first chapter of the Raja Yoga.

भवप्रत्ययो विदेहप्रकृतिलयानाम् ॥१।१९

'This *samadhi,* when not followed by extreme non-attachment, becomes the cause of the re-manifestation of the gods, and of those that become merged in Nature.'

Ordinarily, you would not be able to understand what it means, to merge in nature, and becoming gods. The commentator Vyasa makes it explicit, when he says:

स खल्वयं द्विविधः उपायप्रत्ययः भवप्रत्ययश्च, तत्र उपायप्रत्ययो योगिनां भवति। विदेहानां देवानां भवप्रत्ययः, ते हि संस्कारमात्रोपयोगेन चित्तेण कैवल्यपदमिवानुभवन्तः स्वसंस्कारविपाकं तथा जातीयकं अतिवाहयन्ति तथा प्रकृतिलयाः साधिकारे

चेतसि प्रकृतिलीने कैवल्यपदमिवानुभवन्ति. यावन्न पुनरावर्तते अधिकारवशात् चित्तमिति। [1]

That is all the commentary. So you remember what I have said, as is involved in the meaning of that aphorism. Aphorisms are nothing but headlines of the chapter. So, under those headlines, we have to remember all that meaning. This method was adopted long before the art of writing was known. They had to remember the whole book, and they used to remember the headlines of the chapters, and all the commentary they knew by heart. They did not write them down. In that way, all this has been handed down through generations. Think of the power of memory they had in those days. They could remember every word of a million verses. I knew a Brahmin lady in India, who could remember and recite one hundred thousand verses of the *Mahabharata,* word for word. They were put in verses, so that there would be a flow and no break, and the metre is so attractive that, when we remember one word, the others follow in a trail. It is very interesting.

[1] Regarding the real status of the *prakritilaya Purushas,* Vachaspati Mishra says:

अव्यक्तमहदहङ्कार-पञ्चतन्मात्रेष्वन्यतदात्मत्वेन
प्रतिपन्नास्तदुपासनया तद्वासनावासितान्तःकरणाः
पिण्डपातान्तरमव्यक्तादीनामन्यतमास्मिल्लीनाः।

That is, those who remain in any of these elements like *prakriti, mahat, ahamkara,* and *tanmatras* after the dissolution of their mortal frames, are known as the *prakritilaya Purushas.* And those who attain the *samprajnata-yoga* in any of the greater elements (*mahabhuta*), or subtlest senses (*sukshma-indriyas*), and remain absorbed in them, even after the dissolution of their material bodies, are called the *videhalaya Purushas.* The Buddha Siddhacharyas (Yogis) can also retain their entities in the *prakriti* for ten thousand years. Those who meditate upon the *avyakta,* can live in the *Prakriti* for full one hundred years. But these are according to the non-dualistic Vedanta, impermanent, Vachaspati Mishra also condemns these relative states, when he says:

* * 'बौद्धा दशसहस्राणि तिष्ठन्ति. विगतज्वराः। पूर्णं शतसहस्रं तु तिष्ठन्त्यव्यक्त-चिन्तकाः। निर्गुणं पुरुषं प्राप्य कालसंख्या न विद्यते इति। तदस्य पुनर्भवहेतुतया हेयत्वं सिद्धम्।'

The next aphorism is this:

श्रद्धावीर्यस्मृतिसमाधिप्रज्ञापूर्वक इतरेसाम ॥१।२०

'To others this *samadhi* comes through faith, energy, memory, concentration, and discrimination of the real'.

Here the Sanskrit word for 'faith' is *shraddha*. This *shraddha* means 'belief', or a mental approval. Before we concentrate our mind upon the highest, our mind must approve of it as the ideal. If we want to know it, or to get it, or if we get that state of freedom, or perfection, or whatever it may be, our mind will approve of it as the best or the highest. When our mind has that approval, there would be a delight in doing it. So it would be a pleasure. If we do not take a delight, we would not enjoy it. We take a delight in the method which would bring the object of our desire, the approval and the delight are the aids to concentration. First of all, our mind will have mental approval, and then delight. We shall feel happy in doing it. And after that there would be intense desire and longing to get the result. Our power will be strengthened by that. All this is included in the word *'faith'*. *Faith* is a vague term, and it is called in Sanskrit *shraddha*. As soon as that comes, there would be tremendous mental energy. We shall be strong enough through concentration. and, through that mental approval, the strength will come, so that nothing will shake us and nothing can stop us. We want this, and take delight in it and long for it, and, therefore there is the strength. And that strength comes naturally in that psychological moment.

Then there is the next stage. The word *smriti* or memory is mentioned here. But memory is not the right word to be used here. It should be mindfulness and contemplation as, when we have the energy, we try to contemplate upon that ideal, and we shall like to think about it. Then, when our mind is in that attitude, the next stage is concentration, i.e. then, our mind will naturally become focused, instead of going into different directions. Then all the energy we shall converge towards the object or ideal. Then we shall be able to discriminate the real from the unreal. If our mind is distracted by something, we shall discriminate, and put it aside by reasoning. We reason out in our own self, that this is the real, and we do

not want the unreal. The other things do not appeal to us. We want perfection, or freedom, or the highest wisdom, or knowledge, or divine love, whatever we may have as an ideal. We may think that out. These are the different steps described here for the other kind of concentration, and the other path leads to liberation or freedom. These are for those who do not want the position of gods, or even of rulers of cycles. They attain to liberation. So, even if we have a desire to become the ruler of the heavens, we are in bondage. That desire binds us. A soul that is free can go anywhere, but the soul, that is bound by any kind of desire, remains there and cannot get away. For instance, if we have a strong desire to remain in one particular place, we create a home there, and like it. We are not free souls if we cannot go at random to any place where we choose. We have limitations, and those limitations will hold us down. That is natural. That is the effect of the desire which brings the bondage. The moment we desire to get a thing, until we get that thing and are associated with the thing, we cannot get away from that. We hold on to that particular object, and that binds us naturally. So every desire has a seed of bondage or limitation in it, and therefore, the Yogis discriminate so minutely, and they state that even to have a desire to be the ruler of the spirit-world, is not the highest. That is not freedom, but is a bondage. It may be a golden chain, but a golden chain will bind us just as strongly as an iron chain.

So, spiritual practice and renunciation are necessary for attaining perfect freedom. Now, what is practice ? It is a kind of sincere and continual effort. Patanjali says:

अभ्यासवैराग्याभ्यां तन्निरोधः ॥१।१२

तत्र स्थितौ यत्नोऽभ्यासः ॥१।१३

स तु दीर्घकालनैरन्तर्यसत्कारासेवितो दृढभूमिः ॥१।१४

दृष्टानुश्रविकविषयवितृष्णस्य वशीकारसंज्ञा वैराग्यम् ॥१।१५

The right kind of renunciation comes with the detachment from desires for enjoyment here and hereafter (इहामुत्रार्थभोगविरागः) The commentator Vyasa says, in connection with the aphorism, I. 20:

श्रद्धा चेतसः सम्प्रसादः. सा हि जननीव कल्याणी योगिनं पाति. तस्य श्रद्दधानस्य विवेकार्थिनः वीर्यं उपजायते. समुपजात-वीर्यस्य स्मृतिः उपतिष्ठते, स्मृत्युपस्थाने च चित्तं

अनाकुलं समाधीयते, समाहितचित्तस्य प्रज्ञाविवेकः उपावर्तते, येन यथावत् वस्तु जानाति, तदभ्यासात्, तद्विषयाच्च वैराग्यात् असम्प्रज्ञातः समाधिर्भवति।

The success comes in spiritual life with the attainment of superconsciousness or *samadhi.* Patanjali says:

तीव्रसंवेगानामासन्नः ॥१।२१

'Success is speedy for the extremely energetic.' Those, who are extremely energetic in their search after Truth, will have success more quickly. Those, who lag behind and are not so energetic, will have success slowly. Each one will get the result, but it depends upon the intensity. That intensity will decide how soon one gets the result. It is according to that intensity of desire.

The different aspirants are also described in the Raja Yoga. Patanjali says:

मृदुमध्याधिमात्रत्वात् ततोऽपि विशेषः ॥१।२२

'They again differ according as the means are mild, medium, or supreme'.

One may have a very mild desire, and he is slow. Another has it of a medium strength, and he is energetic in a medium way. Another is extremely energetic. These three are subdivided again, that is, each of the three may be subdivided, as mild mild, medium mild, and supreme mild. Dividing each of these three into three others, they get nine different kinds of aspirants.[1] One may have a little mild effort, another medium mild, and so on. So, we cannot tell how soon the result will come to anybody. It depends entirely upon the individual effort which may be mild, or medium, or very strong, and the result will be according to the strength of the effort. In that way, they subdivide all human beings and classify them according to their tendency and qualifications.

[1] Yogis are again divided into $3 \times 3 = 9$ classes. The commentator Vyasa says:

ते खलु नव योगिनः मृदुमध्याधिमात्रोपाया भवन्ति। तत् यथा, मृदुपायः, मध्योपायः, अधिमात्रोपायः इति। तत्र मृदुपायोऽपि त्रिविधः मृदुसंवेगः, मध्यसवेगः, तीव्रसंवेगः इति। तथा मध्योपायः तथाधिमात्रेपायः इति। तत्राधिमात्रोपायानाम्।

That is one method. There is another method described:

ईश्वरप्रणिधानात् वा ॥१।२३

'Or by devotion to *Ishvara.*'

Ishvara is a personal God. Through devotion to the personal God, one can attain to the highest liberation very quickly. Now, here the personal God is called *Ishvara,* or the Ruler of the universe. And what is *Ishvara* is described in the next aphorism, the 24th one:

क्लेशकर्मविपाकाशयैरपरामृष्टः पुरुषविशेष ईश्वरः ॥१।२८

'*Isvara* (the supreme Ruler) is a special *Purusha,* untouched by misery, the results of actions, or desires.'

It is a special soul, untouched by all those painbearing obstructions that I have already described while dealing with aphorism 3 of the second chapter of the *Yoga-darshana* of Patanjali. The pain-bearing obstructions are ignorance, egoism, attachment to personality, attachment to pleasure, aversion, and clinging to life. All these are the obstructions, or pains, and those pains are meant here by misery. It is called in Sanskrit *klesha.* The word *klesha* means those pain-bearing obstructions. God is free from all those. He has no egoism like ours. He has no passion. He has no aversion, and no hatred. He has no particular love of any kind, as we mortals have. He has no desire to live, because He is one with life. He is omniscient. We have partial knowledge. We have undifferentiated consciousness. But, in God, there is no such undifferentiated consciousness (*avyakta* or *ajnana*). He has all knowledge at once. We cannot have any idea of that. We cannot conceive of it. Now, what is omniscience? What is going on inside of the earth, or inside of the mountains, or underneath the ocean, we cannot conceive all at once, but we know, everything is happening in this room. It is very difficult to understand what happens throughout the universe all at once. All our knowledge depends upon comparison. If we cannot compare, we cannot know anything. Under these conditions, what is at the bottom of the ocean; we do not know. Take, for instance, a fish, like a flounder, which crawls at the bottom of the sea. Its world is very small, and it

[1] According to Sankara, *maya* coexists with God or *Ishvara,* and *avidya* remains with the individual soul or *Jiva.*

does not know anything about us, and what we are doing on the surface. It cannot know. Our knowledge is similarly imperfect and limited. We do not know anything higher, or beyond our plane. For instance, we do not know anything about what is happening after death in the spirit world. We are like those flounders at the bottom of the ocean. Our world is also very small. We do not know anything beyond. There might be beings who know more. Just as we know more than those fish in the sea, so there are beings who know more than that we do. But suppose, God knows our state as well as that of the fish, all at once. That would be omniscience. One can reach that state. A man can become conscious of what is going on in the lower regions by reaching the state of *samadhi.*

Now, plants have souls and they have feelings. They feel the change of the atmosphere and climate. When a cloud passes over a tree, the tree knows it and feels it. They are more sensitive than we are. In wireless telegraphy, when the current passes through the tree, the tree feels it. All this has been discovered by a great scientist, Sir J. C. Bose. His discovery has revolutionized the modern scientific world. He has invented an instrument, by which we can know how quickly the trees are growing. It can measure 1/1,00,000th of an inch in every second. That can be measured and recorded. A tree can be chloroformed. Anaesthetics would be given, and the change can be discovered just in the same way as in a human being. These are all scientific facts today. So, the trees have souls. There is no such thing as absolutely inanimate matter. A hard metal can be chloroformed and intoxicated, and will give the same response under an electric shock as a living being. These are all facts, and no exaggeration. They can be demonstrated in any laboratory. Now, under these conditions, we know that life is universal. There is mind everywhere, and we know very little of the secret. But our aim is to gain more knowledge, and that is the point. The source of knowledge is beyond our mental conditions. It is in our true or spiritual Self. When we quiet the dynamic nature of our mind, and converge all the energy into our spiritual centre of knowledge, we get glimpses of the Self. And that is what is meant by *samadhi.* The superconscious state means the drawing of knowledge from the fountainhead of all knowledge. We cannot get it from the table

or from the external world. It must come from that one source of knowledge, and God is that source. It is a special *Purusha* or Soul, who is not like any ordinary soul, who has reached perfection from a state of bondage, as the Yogi or adept, or a human being would do, because they had bondage in a previous state. *Isvara,* on the other hand, had no bondage at any time. And those, who are in the *prakrtilaya* state or in the state of the ruler of the realms, will come into bondage after they wake up from their sleep state. They are absorbed in Nature, and when they wake up from that, they will be in bondage. That is their future bondage. So *Ishvara* is distinct from these two classes of souls. He is eternally free. He was never in bondage. He never had any desire, because every desire is a bondage. He will never have any bondage in the future. That is the kind of special Soul, which is described here as God.

We notice that God is not described in the Raja Yoga as the creator. On the contrary, the Raja Yoga states that as God is a perfect being, He cannot create. If He does create, He is a slave of His desires. Again, should God have desires if He is perfect? Because every desire means imperfection, wanting something, and suffering. So, if God has a desire to create, He will be a slave of that desire, and, therefore, He cannot be free and perfect. And, if He were an imperfect being, then we do not regard Him as God. Then what is the use of having adoration for Him, or loving Him, when our ideal is the perfect one every time ? But then we may ask the question, what about this creation? But creation does not bother us. It is the process of evolution. There is no such thing as creation of something out of nothing. Matter can never be created, and energy can never be created. It is all eternal, only it goes back to its causal state, and comes out again, and reproduces the phenomena, just as the seed will reproduce a tree, and goes back into the seed form. That seed might remain in that unmanifested state for thousands of years, but still it has the cause in it. By the law of causation, everything can be explained. All creation is evolution. In this way, God is regarded as not a creator, but He is a perfect Being and the source of infinite knowledge.

God is the Teacher of all teachers. He is omnipotent and omniscient. He cannot be the creator, because He does not want to create. If He wanted it, as I have already said, He

would be imperfect. So the Yogis avoid any idea about God as the creator.

But from your childhood you have learned that God is the creator, and He created this world out of nothing. He said: 'let there be light', and there was light. He said: 'I am alone and I shall be the manifold', and so He manifested himself as the manifold world. But, in India, we never thought about it, how He did it, and how He created matter out of nothing. That question was never asked, and we were not to ask, because there was nobody in the churches to answer us, we cannot ask that question to your pastors. They do not know. They say: 'Oh, those are the mysteries of God ; do not ask such questions, they are beyond the human mind to grasp.' But here comes science today, and verifies all those ideas. What are we going to do now ? Would not it be better to put aside that idea of creation and think of evolution, as did the Yogis in those ancient times? They discovered the method by which they could explain the existence of God, without calling Him the creator, and explained the universe through the process of evolution. That is the most wonderful thing, how they learned the Truth in such an age, when there was no development of science, no experimental science, and no scientific instruments. But they reached the conclusion just the same. That shows the power of mind. Instruments are helpful in making experiments by the human mind. It is the human mind that invents instruments and discovers things. But why should the human mind be so circumscribed and limited as to see only through certain instruments? Why should it not go to the Truth direct? That is what is called direct perception, and that is what Yogis develop. They see the cause without having any instrument. So, let us also go to the causal state. It is the mind that invents the instruments. Therefore we should develop the power of the mind, and go directly to the cause. Because we have the germ of all knowingness in us. In fact, each soul is omnipotent, and omniscient, and all knowledge is there. Whether it comes out through a microscope or telescope or any other instrument, it is there. We cannot get it from space, or from the stars. It is there already. The external world gives only certain suggestions, and those suggestions come like blows to our sense of knowledge, and the soul begins to react. In reaction, we know

everything of the world. That is the source of our knowledge. Therefore, it is better to go direct to the cause of things, and discover the truth. If the Creator cannot create anything out of nothing, then why should we have that idea at all. We know that the Creator, who created this world according to the *Genesis,* could not create this earth first and then create the sun afterwards. That would be an absurd idea from a scientific viewpoint. But still this idea has been upheld for so many thousands of years in the Christian world. But now it is finished.

We should advance a better theory, and satisfy our mind, and should try to love God without thinking of Him as Creator. Leave creation on one side, and let the scientists decide it. Still we have God, and we are much better off. God is, in truth, always free from actions. He does not perform any act, as we do. We perform acts, being bound by the force of nature, being subject to the laws of action and reaction. But the perfect Being is above all kinds of laws. He is not subject to any conditions, and naturally, He does not reap the results of actions, as we do. He is distinct from us, and He is free from all desires, as I have already explained. So, these are the conditions under which the Yogi would accept a personal God. A personal God, according to these Yogis, is not like the one we have in the conception of a personal God with a human form and human limitations. He is not possessed of a human personality with love, hatred, fear, anger, jealousy, revenge and all that kind of things. Those are all limitations. That human personality is very imperfect. We project our own personality, and magnify it in the space, and think of a being, and call him God, and get frightened. That is the creation of the human mind. It is called the anthropomorphic conception of God. That God may not exist at all, except in the minds of those, who have manufactured that, or have learned it from their childhood. Therefore the common idea of personality could not be given to God.

He must be impersonally personal. His personality is a perfect one, which we cannot think of. All the limitations of personality should be removed from Him, and He should be thought of as impersonally personal. We have to talk in terms of contradiction. Otherwise we make Him limited. First, we say He is personal, and yet He is not personal. In other words,

He is personal, but beyond our conception of personality. That would be fair, and that is the only way we can describe God. Otherwise we would make Him a limited being, worse than ourselves. Who would worship a God who is taking revenge and massacaring women and children and who takes delight in commanding? That must be a terrible God, worse than a human being, worse than a tyrant. Then who would worship Him? But, if you think of a personal God, and eliminate all the imperfections that we have, that are manifested on this plane, then that would come nearer to the idea. So the Yogis call God impersonally personal. We should have a certain idea of God, that He is not sitting alone above the clouds, but He is everywhere at the same time. We may think of Him in any form, because all forms proceed from Him. He can assume a human form, or any other form. For that reason, how are we going to describe God ? If we give Him only the human form, with two hands, sitting on a throne, that would be a very limited idea, and a very limited conception of God.[3] We could not worship a God like that. But that was regarded as the grandest idea. Here the impersonally personal idea is better, and, therefore, He is not limited by our personality, and He is free. • If He is sitting above the clouds and yet be omnipresent, that would be a contradiction again. But our idea is just as of a human being and so we cannot think of anything different. That is our limitation. But in God we shall find something entirely different. He might be in the heavens, yet, at the same time, upon the earth. His personality is all-embracing. Therefore, impersonally personal God would appeal more to our common sense, and to our reasoning faculty, and we would rather have such an idea of God than the limited personality, which is nothing but the anthropomorphic conception of the human mind.

This impersonally personal God pervades the universe. He is absolutely free of limitations. One can worship such a God, because worship means adoration, and remembering Him as He is. A constant remembrance of the ideal is the real devotion. We would hold that ideal that God is free, and He is free from

[3] As we notice in Michael Angelo's painting in the Cistine Chapel in Rome, God creating the world out of nothing and separating the light from the darkness, with a long beard, like Moses.

all misery and action, desires, and all limitations or imperfections. In fact, He is eternally free, He is omniscient, and He dwells everywhere. He is also personal. He can hear our prayers, and yet our prayers cannot force Him and limit Him. He is all-loving, but love in the sense of the opposite of hatred, should not be ascribed to Him. Our conception of love is the opposite of hatred. We cannot ascribe that kind of limited love to God. He is all-loving and, at the same time, there is no place of hatred in Him. But there comes another contradiction. How can He be all-loving, without being opposed to all-hating? We cannot think of it. So all our mental conception about the absolute Being becomes imperfect, and, therefore, we have first to describe Him as such and such, and He is not the opposite of anything.

Ishvara means the supreme ruler, i.e. *Ishvara* is the ruler of the universe, the master Mind, and all our minds are like little eddies; all our little intelligences are little whirlpools in the eternal current of the cosmic Intellect, or cosmic Mind. We cannot get away from it. We make up just so many atoms in His whole being; yet we have our individuality and personality. We retain that for a long time, almost indefinitely, and yet we are not created by Him, but are parts of Him. It is a grand conception, and very comforting. We never die, and can reach perfection. We may not be God, but we can be one with Him and by being one with Him we become perfect. That is what Christ meant when He said: 'I and my Father are one.' But he never said that he was one in any other way. He was not the Father, but he was the son. Christ never preached the old Judaic religion. His idea of all this was taken from India. Probably he came to India, when he was young, and learned all these truths, because, in his teachings, we find the Aryan conception of God, instead of the Hebraic conception. That idea of the loving Father is very different from the old conception.

The more we study this, the more we shall harmonize our ideals of religion and spirituality with science and the teachings of Christ. In truth, there is no disharmony. The fundamental principles are the same, and only the other systems do not give us any reason. They are not rationalistic systems, because they are all built upon blind faith and tradition. Even the modern cults, that are coming, are built upon tradition. They cannot

get away from the pages of that book, the Holy Scripture. That is a limitation. The human mind is born to be free, and that knowledge will come to us, if we are sincere and earnest seekers after the absolute Truth. That knowledge will destroy all our superstitions, doctrines, and dogmas, and all limitations, and make us see the Truth in its own light. That is the reason why we should understand this, and think upon it. We should meditate upon this conception of God, and leave aside that idea of a creator, because that is confusing. We would never be able to harmonize the theory of creation of something out of nothing, with the theory of evolution, which is a proven fact today. Therefore, take that conception of God, Who is absolutely free, and our minds will be concentrated by devotion to Him. We shall be able to reach the ideal through faith. Then we shall have energy, we shall have contemplation and concentration, we shall discriminate and reason and find out the real and the unreal. We should hold our mind upon that ideal, and meditate on it, until we reach that supreme consciousness, which is the ideal of all religions. Then that perfection will be reached in this life. We must struggle all the time, no matter what we do. If we go to business and do our duties, that is all right. But that is not all, there is something else. We must devote a special time to this other, otherwise we shall neglect the great opportunity that we have now, when we have a human body. It is the best body, nature can produce under the present conditions. So we should make the best use of it, by understanding the Truth, and building our future, so that we would not be worse than we are now. But, on the contrary, we shall progress higher and higher in our consciousness, and in our knowledge, and gradually attain the highest goal of all religions, which was beautifully described in that noted passage: 'Ye shall know the Truth, and the Truth shall make you free'.

CHAPTER XVI

MYSTIC WORD AND GODCONSCIOUSNESS

We have explained the nature of the supreme Spirit, the Lord of the universe, and the supreme ruler, Who is omniscient, the source of all knowledge, and the Teacher of all teachers. In the twenty-seventh aphorism of the first chapter of the *Patanjala-sutra* we read:

तस्य वाचकः प्रणवः ॥१।२७

'His manifesting word is *Om*.'

This is the sacred mystic syllable, which has been in existence from time immemorial. That represents the supreme Spirit, the source of all knowledge. Just as we have a name for everything, so the name for *Ishvara* or the supreme ruler of the universe is that mystic syllable, which is represented by two letters, *O* and *M*: 'वाच्यः इश्वरः प्रणवस्य'। It requires a great deal of understanding and explanation in order to form a clear idea of how and why these two letters represent the infinite Spirit. If you have read the commentary on this aphorism, you must have noticed already that there is a relation between word and thought. All words that we utter have meaning, and those meaning refer to the ideas or thoughts.[1] Of course, the words in different languages may vary in sound, but they vary in sound only. The words represent the ideas or the thoughts that are in the mind. For instance, a table. The sound of the word may vary in other languages, but the thought of the table is represented by each word which is used for that purpose. For instance, water. The word 'water' refers to that substance which

[1] Vyasa says in his commentary:

किमस्य सङ्केतकृतं वाच्यवाचकत्वं अथ प्रदीपप्रकाशवदस्थितमिति। स्थितोऽस्य वाच्यस्य वाचकेन सह सम्बन्धः, सङ्केतस्तु ईश्वरस्य स्थितमेवार्थमभिनयति**। सर्गान्तरेष्वपि वाच्यवाचकशक्तयपेक्षस्तथैव सङ्केतः क्रियते. सम्प्रतिपत्तिनित्यतया नित्यः शब्दार्थसम्बन्धः इत्यागमिनः प्रतिजानिते।

we call *water*. In French it is not called water, it is called *eau*. In German it is called *vasser*, in Latin or Italian *aqua*; and in other languages there are other words which vary in their sound, but refer to the same substance. Now, the sounds have nothing to do with the thoughts or the ideas that are in our minds. If we remember this relation between the word (*sabda or vak*) and the thought (*artha*), that the word is nothing but the outward manifestation of the thought, which is in the mind, and if we understand this, we can understand a great deal of the meaning that is involved in the Biblical passage, which is in the Fourth Gospel. The writer of the Fourth Gospel begins by saying: 'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God and the Word was God'.

What is that word? What does that word mean? What does it refer to? There is a long history in connection with that phrase. Probably some of you are familiar with it. Very few of the Christian theologians have been able to understand that phrase. How has the word become flesh? What does it mean? In order to understand that, we shall have to go back to the history, to the origin of this idea. This idea that the word was the beginning of creation, existed in ancient India during the vedic period. Presently I shall read the quotation from the Vedas, but before we do that, let us understand how this idea was understood by the Greek philosophers. Heraclitus, who lived in the fifth century before Christ, was the first to conceive that idea of a *Logos*. *Logos* means originally a 'word', and from 'word' it goes back to the 'thought', 'idea', and 'reason'. I shall explain to you how in the cosmic mind the thoughts existed before the words came out, or before the creation of the world began. You have read in the *Genesis*: 'The Lord said: " Let there be light", and there was light'. Before He said, 'Let there be light', He had in His mind the thought of light, the idea of light. So the idea of light was expressed in the form of the words, 'let there be light', and as soon as it was expressed there was light. You will find that in the spiritual realm thoughts are realities. Every thought has its form, as it were. Every idea is real. You do not need any material projection. The projection of the thought on the material plane, you do not need. The cosmic mind contains all the ideas or concepts of the various things that have come into existence since crea-

tion. For instance, a horse. The horse is a manifestation of the thought of the horse which existed in the cosmic mind before creation, and that is like a pattern. That pattern exists in the cosmic mind throughout eternity, and whenever an occasion arises, through the process of evolution, that concept or idea of a horse becomes real on the material plane, and then it is a horse. If all the horses died out on this plane, still the type or pattern of the horse will remain in the cosmic mind, and again, when the earth or any other planet will be inhabited by living creatures, through the process of natural evolution of the animal nature, will appear the horse. That type or pattern or idea of a horse, which is in the cosmic mind, is perfect. It is a perfect horse. But we have not seen a perfect horse. We have seen a red horse, a white, a black horse, or a brown one, but we have not seen a perfect horse. The perfect horse is in the cosmic mind, as an ideal or a pattern. Similar is the case with other animals, and the sun, the moon, and the stars. If this earth is destroyed in a collision with some other planet, this earth will be resolved into its elementary conditions, a nebulous mass, but the pattern of this earth, which is in the cosmic mind, will produce another earth out of the same matter, another planet in another part of the universe, and then again, the same process will go on. All the animals will be produced, and each one of them will follow the pattern. Therefore, it is said in the Vedas that at the beginning of creation the first-born Lord of the universe produced the sun, the moon, and the stars, as they existed in the previous cycle, according to the pattern of those planets, which eternally exist in the cosmic mind. Similarly, the pattern of a man is also in the cosmic mind, and that is a perfect man. And that perfect man cannot be manifested on this material plane. On account of the limitation of time, space, and causation, there must be some imperfection. But the type is there, and this type of man, which is in the cosmic mind, is the *Logos*.

Now, that *Logos* was described by the Neo-Platonists as the only begotten Son of God. Because the cosmic mind is like the Father, and this idea is like the Son. This is the pattern of the perfect man, because it is the product or result of the thinking principle of the cosmic mind, and therefore it is the Son. Plato and the Stoic philosophers also conceived that idea.

It was afterwards taken up by Philo Judeas, who lived in Alexandria between 20 B.C. and A.D. 60. In his writings we find that he described this *Logos* as the only begotten Son of God, the perfect man of the cosmic mind. He describes this in a poetic manner, and tries to bring this idea to form a bridge, covering over that gap which is created by Judaism, by the conception of Jehovah, who was made extra-cosmic, so far away from the world that no one could approach Him. There was a vast gulf of separation between man and Jehovah. He was too far away, too grand, and too glorious, and we were all His creatures. We could not approach Him. We could not be one with Him. The same idea prevails in Mohammedanism today, because Mohammedanism is an offshoot of Judaism. If you go to a Mohammedan, and ask him about oneness with God, or Allah, he would not comprehend that, and would regard it as blasphemous, just as it was amongst the ancient Jews. It was an insult to think of approaching Jehovah in Judaism. But that gulf must be bridged, and Philo Judeas's mind was very keen about it. He wanted to bring God nearer to us, and he conceived this idea of the only begotten Son, or the *Logos,* as the bridge. He became a mediator between Jehovah and His creation, the man. In that sense he expresses this idea of the *Logos* as the only begotten Son of God, who was like a bridge between Jehovah and us. And through the *Logos,* we are also the sons of God, because we are imperfect manifestations of the perfect type of man, which is in the cosmic mind, the *Prakriti.*

The writer of the Fourth Gospal was a follower of Philo, and was also a believer in the divinity of Christ. He believed Christ as the perfect man. He did not mention Jesus of Nazareth, who was the son of Mary. He did not regard him as the Word of God, but he took him as Christos or Christ. The perfect type of man in the cosmic mind, according to him, was made in the flesh, in the form of Christ, and Christ did represent that perfect type. So he identified Philo's idea of the only begotten Son, the *Logos,* which was the 'word' in the beginning with God, and which was God, and which was one with cosmic mind or *Prakriti* at one time, and that became manifested in Christ as the incarnation. So, that idea was understood by the follower of Philo, who was a believer in Christ, and so he mixed

up the two ideas, and began with that verse. But it refers to that one idea of the *Logos* in the universal cosmic mind. All the thoughts that exist, all the ideas of creation or created objects that exist, are included in that term *Logos,* the Word ; and the 'word' refers to the manifestation of the thoughts and ideas and concepts of the cosmic mind on the material plane.

This idea we also find in the Vedas more clearly expressed. If you go through my lectures on the *Word and the Cross in Ancient India,* you will know fully this particular idea of the origin of the 'Word'. I have also dealt with this topic on the 'Son of God', in my book: *The Divine Heritage of Man.* However, I will read to you a passage that is in one of the sacred writings of India. Even during the earliest times of the vedic period, the vedic sages maintained such ideas of the *Logos.* Here is the quotation: 'He who exists by Himself, let first stream forth the Word, the Eternal, without beginning or end,' the divine Word which is read in the Vedas, whence proceeded the evolution of the world. That is, the evolution of the world, the beginning of creation of all the planetary systems, and all the animal kingdom, vegetable kingdom, everything that came later, are nothing but the projection of the ideas of the cosmic mind or *Prakriti.* Everything was there. We are imperfect immortals, but we are trying to approach that perfect type of man, which is in the cosmic mind, and that is the utility of religion. Why should we become spiritual? Because, we are here misrepresenting the perfect type of man which we ought to represent in our daily life. We are not doing that. To know how that perfect type of man can be understood and manifested, is the beginning of all religions, whether people explain it that way or not. Every human mind is trying to reach that perfect type, consciously or unconsciously. That is the goal, that is the goal of reaching that perfect type of man, which is in the cosmic mind. You may call it Christ ; you may call it Buddha ; you may call it by any name you like, but it is the central idea that is to be understood first.

Now we understand the meaning of 'Word'. 'In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God, and the Word was God', says the Bible. That is the *Logos ;* that eternal word is the *Logos.* The *Logos* was represented in the

form of Christ, and we are trying to become Christ. *Christos* means one, who has reached nearest approach to the ideal man. In the cosmic mind there are all these ideas. All words that represent anything, or any thought, or any idea, must refer to the portion of the *Logos* in the cosmic mind. That does not include or exhaust the whole of the cosmic mind. No word can represent the whole of the cosmic mind, because all sounds must be included. The word 'God', for instance, which we use to represent the supreme Spirit or cosmic mind, is incomplete. It simply refers to goodness. So you will have to make God omniscient. You give or ascribe all the attributes to God. There may be thousands of words, which would refer to different attributes to the infinite Being, but none of these words would be complete. You would say 'God is personal or impersonal', but that is not complete. When you use the word 'God', what do you mean by God? Do you mean that God is personal or impersonal, or an absolute Being? You may qualify, but cannot attribute Him as a whole. So, God does not mean anything particular. It simply gives a vague idea of a being who is always good. But we want to find out the word that would be the basic word for all other words. And this basic word came to the ancient seers of truth, as a revelation, and they discovered this mystic syllable OM. It consists of three sounds, *A* sound, *U* sound, and *M* sound. There are three letters. When coalesced, they sound like two letters. The first basic sound is represented by the position of the mouth, when it is wide open. What kind of sound can you produce just by opening your mouth? The gutteral sound *A*. That is the first sound. The last sound is produced when you close your mouth completely. The *M* sound is produced by the lips, and the *A* sound by the throat. The larynx and the palate must be kept all wide open. Then between these two sounds we get the whole gamut of sounds. All sounds that can be produced by the mouth are included between the first *A* sound and the last *M* sound. All sounds of all animals or birds can be represented within the range of these two sounds, *A* and *M*. Now, the middle sound is half way, when the mouth is half closed. What sound is that? That would be *U*. Thus together *A-U-M* are the three sounds, and these three sounds include all words that can be uttered by the human

mouth. And naturally it includes all thoughts and ideas, which are represented by all such words. It is, therefore, all-inclusive, and this syllable is used to represent the cosmic mind, which has infinite thoughts and ideas. How grand and beautiful it is to understand the foundation of the sounding-board. The whole range of sounds is to be understood, when we utter this word. That means that all the words that we have learned in our language, are only combinations of these three sounds and the intermediary sounds that are between these three. We may take them all in. So, God must be represented by all words, all sounds, all thoughts, and all ideas. And this is a symbol of that all-inclusive whole. As every word is a symbol of the thought, or idea, or concept, that is in our mind, so this word is a symbol of all objects, all words, and all sounds, that can be uttered by human beings, or by any animal. Therefore, it is all-pervasive and complete. When we learn this and every time we utter this mystic syllable *OM*, we feel the vibrations. It will change the whole structure and attitude of the mind, and the molecules of the body will begin to vibrate in a different way. Because, just as when we use the words 'John' and 'James', we refer to some beings, who are represented by those names. So this is the name of the cosmic Being, and every time we utter it, we are lifted up, and we approach the infinite or cosmic mind. Because, it can not mean anything limited or anything finite. It includes all sounds, all words, all thoughts, and all ideas, and, therefore, it is complete. Every time we utter this, we shall feel the presence of that highest, the omniscient cosmic mind, and that universal words are *'OM, OM'*.

Now, that is the meaning of the aphorism 'तस्य वाचकः प्रणवः' that is given here. We shall have to study it very carefully, and understand the real meaning of it. No other word, that has been used in any other language, is as complete as this is. They are all seeking for the word, the lost word. Even the Freemasons have not found the word. In the Cabala, you will notice, they are looking for that word. But that does not refer to the same complete idea as this word does.

The next aphorism is:

तज्जपस्तदर्थभावनम् ।२८

'The repetition of this *OM* and meditating on its meaning, is the way.'

After understanding this, you have to repeat this word *'OM'* verbally, and think of its meaning. The commentators have made it very clear.[1] Now, there comes the psychological effect, which is the practical effect of psychology. It is the repetition of the word. By repeating the word and thinking of its meaning, we approach the cosmic mind very easily. But, why is the repetition necessary? Because we cannot think of an object without words. Words are necessary to have the thought in our mind, nay, words are the vehicle of the thoughts or ideas. We cannot think of a table unless we repeat the word 'table' in our mind. We may try to think of a flower, a rose. We think of rose, rose, rose, a few times, and then we have a concept, and after that we would be able to hold our mind upon that concept. But, in the beginning, we cannot do that. How can we think of the absolute Being, or the comic mind, without any medium? The word God, does not

[1] The commentator Vyasa says:

प्रणवस्य जपः, प्रणवाभिधेयस्य च ईश्वरस्य भावना। तदस्य योगिनः प्रणवं जपतः प्रणवार्थश्च भावयतश्चित्तम् एकाग्रं पद्यते। तथाचोक्तम्—

'स्वाध्ययात् योगमासीत योगात् स्वाध्यायमामनेत्।
स्वाध्याययोगसम्पत्त्या परमात्मा प्रकाशते॥' इति।

The commentator Vachaspati Mishra is also of opinion:

भावनम्—पुनः पुनश्चेतसि निवेशनम्। * * एकाग्रं संपद्यते एकस्मिन् भगवत्यारमति चित्तम्। * * ततः ईश्वरः समाधित्फलल्लाभेन तमनुगृह्णाति।

That is, the contention of Vyasa is that, the vedic teachers hold that the relation of a word and its meaning are eternal, inasmuch as one co-exists with the other. The Yogi who has come to know well the relation between the word and its meaning, must constantly repeat it, and habituate the mind to the manifestation therein of its meaning. The constant repetition is to be of the *Pranava* (AUM) and the habitual mental manifestation is to be of what it signifies, *Ishvara*. The mind of the Yogi, who constantly repeats the *Pranava*, and habituates the mind to the constant manifestation of the ideas it carries, becomes one-pointed. And so it has been said: 'Let the Yoga be practised through study, and let study be effected through Yoga. By Yoga and study together, the highest Self shines'.

The contention of Vachaspati Mishra is that 'repeated thinking or understanding' (*bhavana*) means making it enter the mind over and over, until it becomes the very substance of the mental existence. * * The mind feels bliss in the one Lord alone. * * And so it has been said: 'Lord then becomes gracious to him up to his attaining the faculty of trance (*samadhi*) and its fruit'.

represent any particular concept, except the idea of goodness, as I have explained. But the cosmic mind is not only good, but omniscient and omnipotent. Everything that exists in the universe is in the cosmic mind. How are we going to represent that by any other word? It would be absolutely impossible. We may think that in repeating the word, we can get the real concept of the thing, or the object, but a mere repetition would not do. We have to hold our mind steady upon the ideal, upon the thought of a mind that includes everything, or that is all in all, embracing all forms of matter and all thoughts and ideas. By repeating the one idea, we create a mental habit, and that habit is necessary. If we have formed that habit we gain concentration of the mind. Whenever we are in distress or in a disturbed condition of our mind, or whenever anything unpleasant or any misfortune comes, and we do not find any comfort anywhere, if we repeat a few times that mystic syllable *'OM'*, the whole vibration will be changed, and we shall be uplifted. Our mind will be concentrated, and we shall come in direct communion with the cosmic Being. All the revealations and inspirations will come, and we get the most wonderful results by the repetition of the syllable. Therefore, we have the counting of the rosary, which the Roman Catholics have exploited. These ideas had originated in India long before the Roman Catholics adopted them, and travelled through the Buddhist priests or missionaries, who went to Palestine two hundred years before Christ, and introduced all these ideas, and now you do not know the origin of these ideas. Why do we count the rosary and repeat the formula? The idea is already here. The repetition of any sacred letter or *mantram* is necessary to have a mental habit, and it is an aid to mental concentration. The priests would not explain it to us, because many of them do not know the origin of these things. They would give us stones instead of bread, because its meaning is secret, and they keep it for themselves. Again, some of them who do know, keep it as secret, because they think that it is for themselves, and not for the masses. The masses will follow the idea, and therefore, they will go on practising. But, here in the Yoga psychology, we find that everything should be understood and everything should be clearly explained first, and then we shall follow intelligently, and not through ignorance.

Because, if we worship God through ignorance, it does not do us any good. And that is not the right way of worship, but is only mere form. That worship which is in spirit and by spirit is wonderful, and it produces wonderful result at once. Every being can do that as it is not a secret to anyone. Those who are in earnest, and are trying to reach the highest by spirit, shall achieve success.

The Raja Yoga helps us to understand the fundamental principles of all symbols and ceremonies and rituals that are very common to all the religions of the world. It is also a psychological study. The Raja Yoga is the best and the most wonderful psychology of all religions. Because, when we study this Raja Yoga, we are studying the fundamentals of all the religions of the world, whether they are old or modern. Modern religions cannot produce anything new. They will make a hash of the old ideas. That is what they are doing, just as Christian Science and Theosophy are doing today. They are not producing anything new. But, when we study the Yoga psychology, we have the fundamental ideas that underlie all religions of the world, all sects, all philosophies, and all systems.

However, by repeating the mystic syllable, *OM*, or any other sacred *mantram*, we create a habit, and then, in time of need, this habit will predominate. It may be asked, why should we repeat and why should we form that habit? Because, we read in the *Bhagavad Gita*: 'Whatever idea is most predominant at the time of death, that determines our future.'[2] What we shall be after death, that depends on our thought and ideal. If we think of God, the supreme Being, the highest Spirit, and hold that thought at the time of death, and pass away with it, we do not remain earthbound, but we are enlightened. We see the light, and we proceed on higher planes of consciousness, and we are no longer subject to rebirth. But, if we think of mortal or material things, those perishable things will hold us down. It is the thoughts of our minds that determine our

यं यं वापि स्मरन् भावं त्यजत्यन्ते कलेवरम्।
तं तमेवैति कौन्तेय सदा तद्भावभावितः॥

—*Bhagavad Gita*, VIII. 6

actions and existence. Therefore, they are very important. Now, if we do not create a habit in time of distress, we shall not be able to think of abstruse subjects; we shall not be able to think of God or the supreme Spirit. But, when we are in good health, and our minds are able to think, we should form the habit, and then, in time of weakness, we shall fall into that habit automatically, and when we pass away, we shall pass away with true thoughts in our mind. That is very important. Therefore, we should practise it. Nobody can tell when any accident might come to anybody, and we would pass away suddenly,[3] while we are driving automobiles, or moving in railway trains, or doing something like that. Who can tell what will happen? So, it is always necessary to be prepared for the last moment, so that our minds would follow the right path. If we hold the idea that religion means to determine our future by good thoughts and deeds, then we shall observe them in a right way, and make our future bright. The theologians of different religions do not give any answer to all our questions. They frighten us and say that it will be eternal damnation, if we do not observe the prescribed doctrine and dogmas, and so on. But those sayings or ideas are childish. No rigid dogma or prescribed doctrine is necessary. There is a better sense and more rational idea which would be acceptable to most people in a different way, just as I have been explaining now, just as we understand what Christos is, and what word is, and what is their relation, and how the word becomes flesh. The word never becomes flesh. It is the projection of the thought of the cosmic mind. The perfect type of man has been manifested. Ordinary beings are far away from the perfect type, and there must be someone who would approach closer than the rest. In that way, we can gather the spiritual meaning of these passages. Repetition of the mystic

[3] In the *Yogavashishtha,* Vashishthadeva says, while instructing Ramachandra:

युवैव धर्मशीलः स्यात् अनित्यं खलु जीवितम्।
को हि जानाति कस्याद्य मृत्युकाल भविष्यति॥

'Oh Rama, men should be religious in their temperament even in their young age, because, who knows when they will draw their last breath? Death may happen today, or tomorrow, or any day.'

syllable or *mantram* produces a mental vibration. Our brain cells will also begin to vibrate in that spiritual line of thought, and that is what we need. That would be just like good company. Good company is always very helpful. The association of ideas, and the association with saintly characters help us in rising above all the weaknesses, defects and imperfections, because all the saintly characters radiate goodness and spirituality, and in their presence we receive it. Wherever they live, that place becomes like a temple, because they radiate that spiritual thought and the spiritual aura, from their own personality, and, therefore, in their company, the wicked ones become virtuous, and they catch a little glimpse of the Truth by remaining in their presence. Just as, if we put near the fire a piece of wet wood, the wetness will gradually dry out, and eventually that piece of wood will catch fire too. Therefore, one who is in bad company, if tries to associate with the saintly character, at first he may not like it, but, if he continues, in course of time he will absorb the spiritual ideals, which are radiating from the saintly character and eventually that person of wicked mind will become a saint. That is the process.

So, when we do not find saintly characters to associate with, what shall we do? We should make an ideal by repeating these mystic words. We should create an atmosphere within us, and around us. If we have a small corner in our own home, where we can sit quiet and meditate and think these beautiful thoughts, whenever we are in distress, if we go and sit there, the vibrations will be changed, and we shall feel uplifted. Have such pictures and flowers and incense as would be all symbols of higher spiritual thoughts and would arouse spiritual feelings and divine ideals. Those are all helpful. In ancient times, men used to have little chapels like that in their homes. Even today in India, in all the Hindu homes we shall find a little chapel like that. They do not go to a mass meeting like people here do. Temples are not like churches, where sermons are given, or anything like that. Temples are built by wealthy persons, as a meritorious act of charity, where the poor people would go and receive alms. In connection with all temples, there are alms houses, where the poor people are fed in hundreds in every day. Charity is

the most important thing in all religions, except in Christian Science. Because the Christian Scientists do not believe in poverty, they rather deny it, and naturally they try to be rich. However, we shall notice that in all other religions, charity is regarded as the most virtuous deed. In the ancient religions, the idea was that every man would use a certain portion of his income towards charitable works. And that is a very good idea. That is, whatever our income is, we should use one-tenth, for instance, for good and charitable works, and also for spiritual purposes. Sometimes, as I explained once before, when anyone passes away, to help them in the spirit world, those friends and relatives, who lived with him, would perform good works in the name of the relative, or the departed friend, and with the idea that all the goodness or merit, that will come from these good acts, will go to him, and he will be helped. That is the best kind of prayer. We should pray for our departed friends and relatives, and our prayer helps them. That releases them from the earthbound conditions. That is to be understood.

People are beginning, through spiritualism, to become conscious of these truths, which have been practised in India for ages. The Hindus had been civilized long before any other nation was, and had reached the highest climax of their spiritual realization in an age, when other nations were groping in the darkness of material things, and, therefore, they have given to the world wonderful ideas, and most of those ideas are becoming common now. This shows that people are progressing, and they are beginning to understand the higher truths, which were revealed in ancient India.

It is said that a moment of good company, or a moment of association with a saintly character, makes a man cross the ocean of death. That is a beautiful idea. The association with the saintly character is like a boat, which saves the individual from all the material attachment and imperfections on the mundane plane; and, by crossing the ocean of death, we reach that shore, where there is eternal sunlight, eternal wisdom, and perfect beauty of peace and tranquillity. The soul's ideal is to reach omniscience, and how to gain that omniscience is the point. Each one will have to solve that. All these instructions are like suggestions that are given to you, and you take

those suggestions which appeal to you most. Different instructions and ideals are given. Some will appeal to some, and others will appeal to others. You take that, which appeals to you, and practise it, and understand why you are practising. Study your own mind, and know the process by which you will be able to reach the highest goal. The Raja Yoga gives us different methods, devotion to *Ishvara,* whose name is this mystic syllable *OM,* is one of the methods. The repetition of this sacred name and thinking of its meaning, are the aids to concentration.

These three letters that I have described, *A, U,* and *M,* not only include all thoughts in the waking state (*jagrat*), but these include also thoughts that are in the dream state (*svapna*), and that are in the causal state or dreamless sleep state (*sushupti*).[4] The *'A'* sound represents everything in the waking state, and the *'U'* sound represents everything in the dream state. In the dream state, ideas are real. They are the occasions, when all the thoughts become real, for the time being. In dreamless sleep state (*sushupti*), there are realizations, which are included in the sound *'M'*. As in the individual, so in the cosmic sense. If we can imagine that the waking state of all beings is taken collectively, that would be represented by the sound *'A'*. Then all the minds that are dreaming, taken collectively, would be represented by the *'U'* sound, and the *'M'* sound will represent all that is to be realized in the dreamless sleep state. So, these three sounds include everything, and the more we think of the meaning, the higher we rise in meditation, and eventually we enter into the state of super-consciousness or Godconsciousness. That Godconsciousness is the state, when we commune with the infinite Spirit.[5] The more we

[4] In the *Mandukya-Upanishad,* it has been said:

बहिष्प्रज्ञो विभुर्विश्वो ह्यन्तः प्रज्ञास्तु तैजसः।
घनप्रज्ञस्तथा प्राज्ञ एक एव त्रिधा स्मृतः ॥१

[5] This *communion* is possible, says Patanjali, only in the highest state of the *nirvikalpa samadhi,* which is commonly believed to be akin to the immediate divine awareness of the Brahman or *aparokshanubhuti* of the Advaita Vedanta. Though it is a fact that Sankara and the later Advaitins have adopted the method of the Yoga in their systems of philosophy for the clarification of the highest state of the God-realization, yet they do not admit any kind of ecstacy or *samadhi* in the strict sense. The Advaita Vedantists admit the intellectual or rather spiritual processes of *shravana,*

commune with the infinite Spirit, the higher we rise from the finite plane, and we become more and more infinite. We never lose our individuality, but our individuality becomes bigger. At present we think of ourselves as limited within the narrow limitations of this physical body, but when we throw away this physical body, and do not become conscious of this physical body, then we think of ourselves as expanded. It is the expansion of the self (*jivatman*), that is to be attained, and through that expansion one would become gradually closer to the infinite Self (*Paramatman*). Then one would be able to realize that the same Spirit, which is dwelling in the sun, the moon, and the stars, is dwelling within us, or, in other words, he is one with the Spirit of the sun, the moon, the stars, the planets, and everything. He is not only one with the supreme Spirit, Brahman, but is one with all manifestations in a spiritual sense[6], and he is no longer limited by any personality. He has attained to that freedom, which is the ideal of all religions, and then he would be able to say, as Jesus said: 'I and my Father are one.' Then, in the ocean of oneness, he loses his individual entity.

manana, and *nididhyasana*, which mean, the hearing of the sacred *mahavakyas*, together with the thinking of their true meanings, and the meditating upon Brahman, and these are conveyed by the *mahavakyas*. In the *Brihadaranyaka-Upanishad*, we find that Yajnavalkya says: 'आत्मा वा अरे द्रष्टव्यः श्रोतव्यः मन्तव्यः निदिध्यासितव्यः' i.e. the Self or *Atman* is 'to be seen, to be heard, to be thought and contemplated. So, Advaita Vedantists hold the view that the above-mentioned means or processes can only lead men to the direct apperception of the transcendental Absolute (*aparokshanubhuti*). The *Vivarana* school of Padmapada admits that only *shravana*, which means *'vichara'* or 'right thinking and understanding' leads men to the deep contemplation and immediate awareness or realization of the all-knowledge Brahman.

[6] The Vedanta teaches that, when one attains to Brahman knowledge, he realizes Brahman first in an individual way, as 'I am Brahman' (अहं ब्रह्मोऽस्मि) and then, realizes Brahman in an universal way, as 'the whole phenomenal universe is one with Brahman' (सर्वं खल्विदं ब्रह्म). In truth, both the realizations happen simultaneously.

APPENDIX

EGO AND EGOISM

According to psychology, all our actions, both physical and mental, are based on the sense of 'I.' This sense of 'I' is common to all living creatures. As, through the sense of 'I', we move our bodies, perceive external objects, seek pleasure, and avoid pain, so the lower animals do these acts directed by the same sense of 'I'. If we go down in the animal kingdom to the lowest form of an amoeba, even there we shall find the faint expression of the sense of 'I'. If you put an amoeba under a powerful microscope, and make experiments by throwing a ray of light on it, or touching its body very gently with a soft feather, then you will notice that it will move, and in order to avoid that sensation it will run away from that place. But, if you continue to touch it gently without hurting it, it will not move. It has no distinct mouth, but it eats animal or vegetable particles, through any point of its surface. It moves by sending out protuberances and then dragging its body behind. This kind of experiment will show that even an amoeba has the feeling of sensation, and, as all feelings of sensation presuppose the sense of 'I', we shall have to admit that even in an amoeba there is the presence of that feeling or awareness which we call the sense of 'I'.

In every particle of living matter, there is a germ of psychic life. Wherever there is the expression of vitality, there we find powers of directing, or moving, or governing, rearranging material particles, powers of analysis, powers of preparing, and providing for further developments. Do they not show that there is a psychical factor behind them? This elementary form of the feeling or awareness or the sense of 'I' or *ahamkara*, as it is called in Sanskrit, which we find in the amoeba, gradually develops and appears as identified with the various forms and stages, through which the amoeba passes in the course of evolution. In each amoeba, there is an innate tendency to evolve and to appear in various forms. Actuated by that tendency, it divides and subdivides itself into cells, and unites them

together, and builds up its own body, produces organisms of different kinds, according to the desires in different stages, and ultimately, creates the most complicated organism of the human body. If there be no sense of 'I' at the back, my body will not move, my senses will not act, my nervous system will stop, and all the organs will lose their activity and life. I am the mover and worker in this body, I am the manufacturer of the brain, nerves, muscles, bones, and so forth. This sense of 'I' is the conscious ego in us. The moment this sense of 'I' arises, it limits the ego by the opposite idea of 'not-I'. When the ego is conscious of itself, it knows that there is something which is non-ego. The consciousness of this distinction between 'I' and 'not-I' is what we call 'egoism'. Therefore egoism depends upon the relation between 'I' and 'not-I', or 'ego' and 'non-ego'. The true nature of the ego is diametrically opposite to that of non-ego. If the one be light, the other will be darkness. If the one be sentient, the other will be insentient; if the one be the illuminator, the other must be the object illuminated. But, at present, our ego and non-ego are so blended together that we cannot separate the one from the other.• The true nature of the ego is the Spirit or *Atman*, which, like a witness (*sakshi*), beholds *buddhi* or the instrument of understanding, which is the first manifested phenomenon of the non-ego, and being reflected on it, becomes identified with it, as it were. Consequently, the apparent ego (*jivatman*), or I myself am a phenomenon on the one hand, and the real Spirit on the other. As a phenomenon, it is apparently combined with the understanding (*buddhi*), and it is the real Spirit, when separated from the understanding. When I am a phenomenon, or combined with the understanding, I appear as identified with the changes of the understanding (*buddhi*). This identification of the seer (*drashta*) or *Atman* with the understanding or *buddhi*, is the true nature and meaning of egoism or 'I-hood'.

This understanding manifests itself as time, space, and causality. First of all, it ranges the sensation in succession, that is, in time; secondly, it takes each sensation as an effect; and thirdly, it projects the same in space, where it appears as a material object. If we observe closely, we shall find that we cannot know the objects of the external world *per se*. We can

know the changes or modifications of our mind. Mind can know its own changes. After a little more contemplation, we find that the idea of causation we do not learn from outside, but from within. The mental changes, when projected outside, become the causes. The evidence of physical causation is, in fact, the evidence of mental changes. Let us take an illustration. When we see a flower, we think that the colour of the flower is in the flower, independent of its relation to ourselves, or to the percipient mind. We ordinarily accept it as a fact. But a physiologist will tell us that it is not so. The colour does not exist as such in the flower, but there is a certain kind of vibration in the flower which, when coming in contact with a percipient mind through the optic nerve, takes the form of that sensation which we call colour. Such being the case, how can we say that the colour of the flower is the cause of such a sensation? Perception of an object is neither purely subjective, nor purely objective, but it is the blending of the subjective and objective elements. The moment we take the sensation or mental modification as an effect, we project another set of mental changes in space, and call it the cause. We cannot know matter or motion outside of our mind. There is an element of the subject, and of the object, in our mind. The knower within us is the subject, and the changes or the modifications that we know, are the objects of our knowledge. When those changes are projected outside, they appear as external objects. But, in fact, they are the representations of the mental changes in space.

The nature of the knower again is the blending of the understanding and the pure consciousness, which is equal to the conscious ego. But the *Atman* is beyond understanding, and consequently, independent of time, space, and causality. The ego is changeable, while the *Atman* is unchangeable. The ego is phenomenal, while the *Atman* is absolute. When viewed through the glass of understanding, my real nature appears in a phenomenal form as my body, extended in space, existing in time, and subject to all the changes of the sense organs and the mental functions, which evolve out of the same substance that produces understanding. Birth, growth, decay, and death are the changes of the body in time by causality; consequently, when I become identified with those changes of the

body, I think that I am born, I grow, I decay, I shall die. If the body is fat, I think, I am fat; if it is thin, I think, I am thin; if the colour be fair, I think, I am fair; and likewise, I am blind, deaf, and so forth. Similarly, I think that I am one with the mental changes, such as I am intelligent or stupid, I am a thinker, I am angry, I am jealous, I am happy, and so forth. In the same manner, we impose the immortal nature of the spirit upon the perishable body and senses, and think that we shall not die. This identification is the effect of the imperfect understanding or ignorance of the true nature of the Spirit, and it is the cause of egoism. The only thing that is nearest to me, is my ego. It is accessible to me in two ways. First, from outside representation as a body; and secondly, from within, i.e. as a soul.

As I do not doubt my inward consciousness, so I do not doubt that all human beings are conscious of themselves. In the same manner, I do not doubt that the lower animals are conscious of themselves. The difference between the lower animals and man is the difference in the organization of the instrument of understanding. Although there are innumerable stages in the animal kingdom, as regards their external appearance, they are identical as regards their conscious state, or the sense of 'I' in them. In the vegetable and the inorganic world, this consciousness is not manifest. But, in the vegetable kingdom, are manifested nourishment, propagation, the digestive organs in the roots, the respiratory organs in the leaves, and so forth. The activity in the organism of a plant is like the subconscious activity in our body. Science cannot draw a sharp line of distinction between the organic forces and the inorganic forces, manifested variously in the physical and chemical nature. They differ in degree, not in kind. Even the inorganic bodies have a kind of egoism, and that is cosmic egoism. The very existence even of a non-ego depends upon the distinction between ego and non-ego. Every motion in the universe is the product of the activity of the cosmic ego; and that which resists that motion, is the non-ego. This distinction between ego and non-ego, along with individual consciousness, we find equally in lower animals and in man. But the lower animals cannot know egoism objectively, they can know it only subjectively.

From egoism proceeds will. Willing is desiring, and desiring involves not-having, and consequently, it is a wanting, and, therefore, it is a suffering. If there be intense willing, there will be intense egoism at the back, which produces all sorts of evil thoughts, ill-feeling, envy, malice, jealousy, hatred, and so forth. The more we are attached to our egoism, the more miserable we are. This strong attachment is what is called selfishness. When we are selfish, we do not recognize another's egoism, and we become blind to his rights and sufferings, our sole aim becomes centred in that lower ego, and we want to enrich our ego by wealth, name, and fame, either by injuring others, or by depriving them of their rights. Two principal cravings of that egoism are nourishment and propagation. These two, when attended with strong egoism, are the causes of gluttony unchastity, avarice, and other vices.

As every ego has a double character of being such-and-such and, in addition, of being mind, so each ego commands a certain sphere, or circle of egoism. The inorganic bodies possess the space which they occupy. That is their sphere of egoism. Similarly the egoism of plants and trees occupy a certain sphere of space. Lower animals gradually manifest their egoism from the narrowest to the widest range. But, when we come to man, we find in him the highest development of egoism, which forces him to deny the rights and possessions of all other living creatures, and makes him think that they have been created for his use, and ultimately he denies the rights of his fellow brethren. Such is the tendency of human egoism. If there were no such tendency in the human heart, this world would have been a heaven. There would have been no necessity of government, police regulations, law courts, and social laws. What is the object of all these but to check this tendency ? The tendency of denying others' rights and possessions, and of enriching oneself with all that one can get hold of, is the cause of all discord, disharmony, quarrel, war, theft, murder, and so forth. When this thirst for enriching oneself becomes tremendously powerful in a nation, that nation wants to take possession of all the land that is on the earth, that nation wants to conquer the whole world by inventing machines which will kill thousands at a time, and then, after conquest, to hold it, looting the conquered nations, robbing them of their property, wealth, and so forth,

and treating them as slaves, and, at the same time, thinking that it is acting according to the will of God, who, as it were, told it to do so.

Men have divided the whole earth. They would have divided the moon,[1] if they could reach it. Thus this strong attachment to egoism is the root of all wickedness, vice, misery, and suffering. There are three ranges of egoism in an individual. First, what he is; secondly, what he has; and thirdly, what he represents. The first is his body and his life. The second range consists in wealth, property, and so forth. The third is honour, rank, name, fame, and so forth, which depend upon others' opinion about him. The invasion of these three territories of an individual is what we call wrong, a wicked deed, or a sinful act. Therefore, a wrong or wicked deed is of three kinds; first, wrong to the body, i.e. murder, injury, slavery, etc.; secondly, wrong to what one possesses, such as theft etc.; thirdly, wrong to honour etc., such as insult etc. All these are rooted in the cause of egoism that originates from the sense of the limited 'I'. Limitation is a category of nescience or *maya*. The universal consciousness is limited by the adjunct of nescience. The Yoga psychology teaches that when the sense of limitation is removed by the recognition of the limitless divine consciousness, man is raised above the level of nescience (*maya*), and enjoys everlasting bliss and freedom.

[1] After forty-five years, we are seriously thinking how to avoid it.

YOGA, ITS THEORY AND PRACTICE

PREFACE

Yoga, Its Theory and Practice is a new and unpublished book, containing nine illuminating lectures on Yoga, delivered sometimes between 1901 and 1915, in America. Three books of the Swami on Yoga, dealing with psychology, science and philosophy, were published before under the titles of *How to be a Yogi, Yoga Psychology* and *True Psychology.*

The present book, *Yoga, Its Theory and Practice* has been dealt with a very systematic way, showing their utility and importance in the practical life of men. The Swami is of opinion that until and unless science, or philosophy, or psychology, or any other subject of knowledge, is applied in the practical life, they are useless. So Yoga must be studied, learnt, and practised for the practical purpose of the human life.

The first chapter of this book deals with the aphorisms of the Raja Yoga and their importance. The aphorisms explain the constitution and nature of the mind, the modifications of the mind as well as the scientific methods of controlling them. In Sanskrit, mind is known as the *manas,* and Swami Abhedananda has compared it with an ocean with a vast sheet of water. When it remains calm, it is known as the mind, and when it is agitated by the wind of desires and passions, it takes the form of different modifications (*vrittis*). The modifications are also known as the modal consciousness, as they import some kinds of partial knowledge about something. In Vedanta, the tranquil, calm, and balanced state of the mind is known as the *Antahkarana* or the internal organ, though some of the Vedantists do not admit it as an organ (*indriya*). Vedanta says that when the *Antahkarana* is tinged with different objects, it takes the forms of them. The same *Antahkarana* again functions in four different ways of doubting or thinking discriminating or determining, reflecting or remembering, and self-conceiting in the forms of *manas, chitta, buddhi,* and *ahamkara,* as the same primordial energy or *Prakriti* manifests as the qualities of *sattva, rajas* and *tamas.* It is commonly or rather erroneously believed that the four *vrittis,* or the modal forms, constitute the stuff of the *Antahkarana* (in the Western psycho-

logy and philosophy, the *Antahkarana* is commonly known by the word, mind), but, in reality, those psychic forms are the manifestations of the same *Antahkarana*. The desires and passions are the cause of the disturbance of the mind ocean. The desires and passions disturb the balance, or the state of equilibrium, of the mind substance, and create sorrows and sufferings in the life. The practice of Yoga controls the mind, and brings balance in the mind, and causes the mind to be concentrated upon some desired thing and thus prepares the ground of meditation as well as of the attainment of the superconscious state or *samadhi*, in which the individual soul finds its permanent consolation and peace, and attains to the God-consciousness.

The Raja Yoga, or the *Yogasutra* of Patanjali, explains and describes many things about the mind and its functions, and teaches us the means and methods of supressing (*nirodha*) the modifications of the mind, the ways of bringing the mind to its simplest form, or to its causal state, and to transform it into its real form which is no other than the self-shining consciousness (*chit*). So the function of Yoga is very important and useful. Swami Abhedananda says that there are different kinds of method of practising Yoga, and mainly they are known as the Raja Yoga, the Bhakti Yoga, the Karma Yoga and the Jnana Yoga. These are regarded as different paths towards the same goal which is no other than the realization of the *Atman*, and different Sadhakas sellect them and practise them according to their tastes and likings. As different rivers, coming down from the same snowy mountain, run in different ways, and fall at last in the same ocean, so different practices of Yoga lead the different Sadhakas towards one and the same goal, and enable them to reach the same universal ocean of the Absolute.

Swami Abhedananda says that the Raja Yoga is regarded as the 'royal road', or the best and highest method. It teaches the methodical or systematic practices of Yoga which lead to the ultimate goal of the human beings. It teaches the gradual methods in practice, by which a Sadhaka reaches to the state of concentration through the *pranayama*, or the controlling of the breath or *prana*, and from concentration he reaches to meditation, and from meditation to the superconscious state or *samadhi*, the ultimate goal of the yogic *sadhana*. The Swami

says that by the practices of the Raja Yoga when a Sadhaka dives deep into the ocean of meditation, his mind is absorbed in that ocean like the salt-doll, and is transformed into the pure consciousness and becomes one with the *Atman* in the *samadhi.*

The second chapter deals with the practice of Yoga. Swami Abhedananda says that those who practise the Raja Yoga with its proper knowledge of science and theory as well as of psychology and philosophy, gain the sound health and the perfect mind along with the living inspiration of entering into the states of concentration and meditation which prepare the ground of entering into the superconscious state. It has been explained that there happens the divine communion of the *jivatman* with the *Paramatman,* where a Sadhaka realizes the oneness with the *Atman,* or the Brahman. But Sankara has criticised this yogic idea of oneness, and has said that in the yogic idea of oneness there remains a duality in a causal form, whereas in the advaita vedantic *sadhana,* a Sadhaka realizes the *Atman* as one without the second, and there remains no duality which is no other than the nescience or *maya,* and for that reason Sankara has called the followers of the *Sankhya* and the *Nyaya* as the dualist (cf. the commentaries on the *Vedanta-sutras, Yukti* or *tarka-pada*). But viewing from the standpoint of Yoga or the yogic *sadhana,* one should reduce his mind to its simplest form, and should concentrate it on the *Atman,* and then through meditation, he will attain ultimately to the state of *samadhi,* and will reach the perfection.

In the third chapter, Swami Abhedananda has explained the importance and value of the correct breathing. Here controlling the breath means to conserve the vital energy or the life-force, which enable one to enter into the supreme state of *samadhi* and to realize the *Atman.* In the fourth chapter, the Swami deals with the culture and knowledge of the healing power of the breath or *prana.* When the *prana* is controlled or balanced, he acquires some psychic powers (*siddhis*) which bring success in the material plane. Swami Abhedananda says that Patanjali has regarded these powers as the obstacles. These obstacles obstruct the path of the spiritual illumination, and entangle men in the den of delusion. So the Swami warns all the followers of Yoga and also all the seekers after the highest

Truth not to run after the trivial psychic powers which delude and always mislead, but to dive deep into the blissful state of the superconsciousness, where the Sadhaka attains to the *Atmajnana.*

In the sixth chapter, the Swami has described about different methods of *pranayama.* The word, *pranayama* connotes the idea of controlling (*ayama*) the breath (*prana,* or the vital energy). When a Sadhaka sufficiently conserves his energy or the vital-force in him, he is fit to gain the power of concentration, and concentration gradually brings unto him the state of meditation and *samadhi,* where he finds the real value of his life, and realizes the supreme Soul. It should be mentioned in this connection that the practice of the *pranayama* is not indispensible in the advaita vedantic *sadhana,* which advocates the practices of *shravana, manana* and *nididhyasana.* This *shravana* is not merely the hearing of the *mahavakyas,* but it is accompanied with, or supported by, the acts of discrimination (*viveka*) and ratiocination (*vichara*). The supporters of the Vivarana School advocate *shravana* alone for realizing the absolute Brahman, because, according to them, this *shravana* goes along with the act of rationcination or the *Brahma-vichara,* and so *manana* and *nididhyana* are not necessary there ; and it is a fact, say the Advaita Vedantists, that in the practices of *shravana, manana* and *nididhyasana,* or by the practice of *shravana* alone, the mind is automatically controlled and balanced, and is concentrated upon the cherished object, the *Atman,* is purified, and is transformed into pure consciousness. Besides the vedantic *sadhana,* the mind is controlled and concentrated in the yogic *sadhana* too without the help of the *pranayama,* as the function of controlling the breath or *pranayama* is automatically goes on at that time. So it will not be correct to think that concentration and meditation are the result, or the product, of the act of the *pranayama,* because if anyone practises concentration and meditation without taking any help of the *pranayama,* his breath or *prana* is also suspended or controlled and well-balanced. It is a law of nature that as the mind is distructed and divergent when the breath or respiration is rapid and irregular, so when the mind remains very active, or is engaged in different objects, the breath or the respiration is also rapid and irregular, because the activities of

both the mind and the breath are inter-connected together. So Swami Abhedananda says that those who are inclined to practise Yoga for attaining to the perfection, follow the process of the *pranayama,* and when their mind is sufficiently controlled and balanced and silenced, they enter into the state of cencentration (*dharana*), and when their concentration is ripe and deep, they enter into the state of meditation (*dhyana*), and when their meditation is well-accomplished, they attain to the state of the superconsciousness (*samadhi*), which is the ultimate goal of the yogic *sadhana.* It has been said before that in the superconsciousness state, the individual soul (*jivatman*) communes with the cosmic Soul (*Paramatman*).

In the seventh chapter, Swami Abhedananda has beautifully discussed about the meaning of the universal word or sound, Pranava, which is commonly known as OM. The Swami says that the word or sound, OM is constituted out of the three unifying letters, A-U-M, that represent the states of *jagrat* (waking), *svapna* (sleep) and *sushupti* (deep sleep) as well as the stages, gross (*sthula*), subtle (*sukshma*) and causal (*karana*). The *Mundaka* and the *Mandukya Upanishads* have beautifully explained these states. The *Atman,* or the Brahman, is beyond these four states and also of these three stages. The universal word or sound, OM includes all the words, letters, and sounds of the universe, and it is the pointer, indicator, or discloser, of the indeterminate (*nirguna*) Brahman: *"tasya vachakah pranavah",* and so Vedanta calls this sacred universal sound, OM as the determinate (*saguna*) Brahman, as it determines the indeterminate Brahman, which cannot be expressed by word, deed and thought. It is also a fact that the Sadhakas aim at the absolute Brahman, yet they begin their vedantic and yogic *sadhanas* from the determinate Brahman, or through some mediums, because the determinate Brahman, or the symbol, or the medium, can be thought of, can be mediated upon, and can be taken as a means to an end. The Grammarians and the musicologists call this 'OM' as the Shabda-brahman, or the Sphota, from which all the letters, words and thoughts and that mean every thing phenomenal world evolved. The Tantrikas call it the *mundamala,* composed of fifty heads or letters. However, the *Yogashastra* calls this OM (Pranava) as the sign or symbol (*pratika*) as it indicates, directs or determines the

absolute Brahman, which is beyond thought, speech, and words. The intention of the *Yogashastra* is that the Sadhakas shall reach the formlessness through the medium of the form.

Swami Abhedananda has elsewhere said: "So long as the devotee thinks of God with a form and believes that He is outside of the soul and of the universe, he can make a mental picture of Him and worship the divine Ideal through the form; or he may keep before him some symbolic figure like the cross which remind him of the Ideal at the time of devotion.** Gradually as the *bhakta* approaches God, he will rise above such dualistic conceptions and realize that his Beloved is not only transcendent, but also immanent in nature, that nature is His body, and that He dwells everywhere.** The *bhakta,* then, reaches that state which is called qualified non-dualism". And from the state of qualified non-dualism the *bhakta* gradually reaches the state of non-dualism or Advaita (cf. Swami Abhedananda: *How to be a Yogi,* the Bhakti Yoga). Patanjali has prescribed the symbol (*vachaka,* Pranava as a means to reach the end, the transcendental *Atman.* So Swami Abhedananda has said to scientifically study and mediate upon the sacred word or sound, OM.

In the eighth chapter i.e. in the chapter on concentration, Swami Abhedananda's discussions are remarkable and unique. There the Swami says that when our mind is controlled and concentrated upon a cherished object, we withdraw our mind i.e. the divergent modifications of the mind from the organs of the senses. The different organs of the senses have different portions in the brain, where they view certain sensations. There is a self-conscious entity which is known as 'personality', and that entity really translates every molicular changes that happen in the brain in the form of vibrations. The modern scientists have described these changes as the states of consciousness. This consciousness is recognized as the light that illumines all objects in this universe. But if we try to know what consciousness is, we cannot do it, because consciousness cannot be an object of knowledge; or if we try to know consciousness, we all know it by the help of consciousness. Again existence is inseparable from consciousness, as we exist and our existence depends upon our consciousness. Further it is also a fact that there is no other second consciousness by which we can under-

stand the nature of our own consciousness. Therefore consciousness is unique and one, and this one consciousness manifests as sensations, conceptions, emotions, feelings, and knowledge. In other words, the expansion of the range of consciousness discloses all kinds of knowledge, sensation, and experience.

Now, from this it is understood that there is a common principle, of which consciousness and existence are the two inseparable manifestations or phases, and this common principle is the *Atman,* or the Soul. The Western philosophers like Kant, Hegel, Schelling, Fichte, Nietzsche and others have admitted the inseparability of consciousness and existence, but they have missed to discover the fountain-head of them. The Vedanta philosophy and the Yoga psychology of India have been able to find out that missing link of the Western philosophers, and have said that the all-knowledge and all-intelligence *Atman* is the source of consciousness as well as of existence. So the Vedanta philosophy and the Yoga psychology have instructed all the seekers after truth to concentrate and mediate upon the *Atman,* and when he mind loses its separate existence and dissolves into the ocean of the *Atman*-knowledge, all things in this universe are known to the realized souls: "*yasmin vijnate sarva-vijnanam bhavati*". For that reason, the Yoga psychology have specially given stress upon the practices of concentration and meditation, and has said that through the practice of Yoga one can control and calm down his mind, and can transform the mind into the pure consciousness, and can realize the *Atman* as non-different from his own being.

The ninth or the last chapter has been devoted to the discussion on the superconscious state and its obstacles. Swami Abhedananda says that *samadhi* means the tranquil state of the mind, where the conscious mind is in abeyance, and the *Atman* is beyond the conscious plane, but manifests its own glorious nature (*svarupa*). *Samadhi* has been divided by Patanjali into two broad divisions, *sabija* and *nirbija, savitarka* and *nirvitarka, savichara* and *nirvichara, savikalpa* and *nirvikalpa* and *samprajnata* and *asamprajnata.* The *savitarka* and *nirvitarka* as well as the *savichara* and *nirvichara samadhis* are accomplished with the gross (*sthula*) and the subtle (*sukshma*) objects and are included in the category of the *sabija* or *samprajnata samadhi*

(*"ta eva sabijah samadhih"* 9. 1. 46). The commentator, Vyasa says: "ता श्वतस्रः समापत्तयो वहिर्वस्तुवीजा इति समाधिरपि सवीजः, तत्र स्थूलेऽर्थे सवितर्क निर्वितर्कः सूक्ष्मेऽर्थे सविचारः निर्विचारः इति चतुर्धा उपसंख्यातः समाधिरिति।" ४६ .....

and when the *nirvitarka* or the *nirvichara samadhi* is ripe and matured, then the *asamprajnata-samadhi* is accomplished: "निर्विचारवैशारद्योऽध्यात्मप्रसादः" * * (1.47). Then there arises the *ritambhara-prajna* (1.48), by which the Sadhaka determines the real nature of the *Atman*. The *asamprajnata-samadhi* is really the *nirbija-samadhi*, where there remains no *bija* or *samskara* (impressions of any kind), and it is called the *mukti* or freedom, according to Yoga. Patanjali says: 'तस्यापि निरोधे सर्वनिरोधात् निर्बीजः समाधिः' * * * (1.51), and Vyasa comments upon this 1.51 *sutra* as: "* * निरोधजः संस्कारः समाधिजान् संस्कारान् बाधते इति। * * संस्कारैश्चित्तं विनिवर्तते तस्मिन्निवृत्ते पुरुषः स्वरुपप्रतिष्ठः अतः शुद्धो मुक्तः ईत्युच्यते।"

Here *'nirodha'* means the complete destruction of the impressions (*samskaras*). The seed (*bija*) means the impression which causes the soul to reincarnate again and again. The words *"purushah svarupapratishthah"* mean that the individual soul realizes then his real sublime nature, and comes to know that he is not entangled in the trap of *maya*, but is free forever and ever.

Swami Abhedananda says that when an individual soul realizes the perfect oneness, he feels himself as the universal Soul in the state of *samadhi*. But before reaching the state of *samadhi* or the superconscious state, every seeker after Truth shall have to pass through some steps or states, and these steps or states really take or lead to the final step or goal. But, in the path of *sadhana*, there are many obstacles which have been described by Patanjali. Patanjali has called these obstacles as *'yogamalas'* or *antarayas*. The Swami has said that all these obstacles can be removed very easily by the constant thinking, "because what thou thinkest, shalt become, and it is as true as that I am sitting here. What we are today, is the result of our own thoughts. We have made ourselves what we are, and what we have brought ourselves to this plane of existence,

* * The moment we begin to know better, we live on a higher plane". But we should remember that most of the Sadhakas are enchanted with the charms of the *siddhis* or *vibhutis*, achieved through the practices of Yoga, and most of them also fail to attain to the highest goal for the obstacles in the path of the practices of Yoga. Diseases, physical and mental laziness, mental distress, disappointment, doubt, cessation of clamness, false perception, non-attaining of concentration, grief, weekness, etc. are the obstacles and obstructions to the path of *samadhi* (cf. *Patanjala-darshana'* 1.30-31), and Swami Abhedananda says that these obstacles can be studied carefully, and should be removed for getting the spiritual illumination, permanent peace and tranquil happiness. "It is a fact that when all the obstructions are conquered, the result would be a perfect concentration. Perfect concentration will lead to meditation, and meditation will lead to superconscious realization. Then we shall be able to know our immortal and true nature, that exists in our spiritual Self". Therefore the practice of Yoga is necessary to remove the bondage of nescience (*ajnana*) and to simultaneously realise the *Atman* which is the *summum bonum* of the human life.

SWAMI PRAJNANANANDA

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CHAPTER I

THE RAJA YOGA APHORISMS AND THEIR IMPORTANCE

(Thursday Night, February 12, 1915, 839 West 17th Street)

When we hold our mind to one point, make our mind one-pointed, and do not let our mind be distracted by other things at the time of concentration, then our mind is concentrated. In other words, it is the restraining of the mind stuff from taking various forms known as *vritti* or modifications. Now, the restraining of the mind from taking various modifications (*vritti*) in the mind stuff is known as suppression (*nirodha*). In Sanskrit, the mind stuff is known as *manas* or *chitta* which means the substance that takes various shapes and various changes, and each of these changes is called a state of consciousness, or a mental function. We may call it emotion. We may have it in the form of a thought, in the form of a desire, in the form of an intellection, in the form of an ideation, or in the form of a discrimination. But all these are the different names of the same mind substance. The mind substance, being churned all the time, throws out some circles of thought-activity in the form of heat. We cannot go into the cause of the activity of the mind just now. We will take the mind in its various forms and modifications, for it is a substance which is constantly changing. And so our mind is never at rest, and we cannot keep it still. We appear to hold it, but it slips away, because that is the nature or tendency of the mind to run away. So the most difficult thing for anybody is to conquer his mind. One may conquer the whole world, but may not conquer the mind. It is said: "He would not be the emperor of the world, who conquers the whole world or all nations, but he would be the slave of ambition; but he who conquers his own mind, is the real conqueror of the world". It is one of the sayings of Buddha. It is also expressed in the Bible in a different way that when the spirit is the master, it is the conqueror of the whole world. But still it is better ex-

pressed in the teachings of Buddha when he says that the conqueror of his mind is greater than the conqueror of the whole world.

Now think for a moment why it is difficult to control the mind. Because, the mind substance is propelled by the nature from within to get into different shapes. It is like a fountain. You have seen a fountain of the electric light that it is continuously throwing out. That is the activity, and you cannot stop it. If you try to stop it, it will be very difficult. So it requires the tremendous will-power. But our will-power is not strong enough. Try to see how weak is your will-power by trying to conquer your mind through continuous and steady practice. You will be able to gain that conquest eventually by restraining the mind from taking various modifications. The thought currents evolve and manifest first as one sensation, then evolves another thought or another idea ; and, in this way they are continuously coming one after another in a train. But they are all linked together to one unit which is known as the association of ideas. If there be one suggestion made, that suggestion will lead you to various associations, and the veins will continue to work, and it will dig out from the pigeonholes all the latent impressions that you have gathered during your lifetime. There come even those impressions which you hold from your previous incarnations. Each impression takes a seed form. It rises up and invests itself in a certain modification as soon as it gets a suggestion. And that is the state of our mind. It is like a mad elephant. It is always swaying like a pendulum. The mind stuff is going like that. Try to arrest your mind, but you cannot do it. It will go to sleep, and often in sleep the mind is not at rest. As soon as you sleep, you might dream. So the dream state is the state, caused by the modifications of the mind stuff. Some changes are going on in your mind all the time, and you are being conscious of them. There is a state, called the dreamless sleep state (*sushupti*). These different states are called in Sanskrit by different names, such as the waking state is known as *jagrat*, the dream state, as *svapna*, and the dreamless sleep state, as *sushupti*.

In the dreamless sleep state (*sushupti*) the mind goes back into its causal state. So there is a causal (*karana*), a subtle

(*sukshma*), and a physical (*sthula*) body. These are various stages or states of the mind. When you study your own mind, you have to go on studying the different phases of the manifestations of the mind. For the present, we will have to study the meaning of the mind i.e. we will study the process of having control over the mind. A good deal of explanation is necessary to clarify it. We have to understand what the mind stuff is and what are these modifications. You can take the illustration of the process of perception of sight. You can observe how the perception of sight, or, sensation of colour, takes place. If you study a little of the physiology, you will understand how the perception of sight takes place. It takes place when you look at a book, or at a flower. You know what happens in the process of this perception. The rays of the light fall from the sun, or from the lamp, on that book or flower and are reflected upon the retina. Now the retina is like the dark room of a camera where the inverted image takes place. Through the eyes the rays go inside, and like a photographic camera the form is inverted on the retina. Now that impression produces a little vibration in the molecules of the retina, and that vibration is carrried by the optic nerves those are connected with the eyes and also with the cortex of the brain at the back of your head. There create some minute changes, and these are the changes that physiology can explain through mechanical process. In fact, this is done through mechanical process. The reflection has produced the inverted image and there are certain changes which have occurred in the optic nerves and in the brain cells. But who sees the book, and where do you see it ? You do not see it from outside at first. If you were born blind and suddenly your sight was restored, you would not see the distance. You would see everything as if touching your eyes. You would have no sensation or idea of distance. This idea made in other ways by the feeling of by touch. The idea of space and distance we cannot get through sight, but through habit. We have now gained the power of measuring the distance by sight, but that is possible only with the association of ideas, or with the quick reckoning by the intellect, or by the reasoning faculty, and then by taking the feelings that are produced by the sense of touch to the idea of distance. They are all complex, but when you come to simplify these things, you

will find it very difficult to get at the bottom of things.

Now, we do not see that inverted image which is in the retina. We are not conscious of the brain vibrations, or the vibrations in the cells of the brain. We feel as sensation of colour, extended. The colour in a certain from is all that we can see. But the feeling of sensation is produced by another sense organ which is the sense of touch, and we combine these two. The eyes are only the channels through which we can get the vibrations of the colour. It is a fact that colour is produced by the vibration of the ether, and the light waves produce the colour. Therefore, we know that colour is nothing but a certain state of vibration. Now, there is a state of vibration that have range from red violet, but below and above that range we cannot see. There may be other colours too which we do not know. We have no organ by which we can perceive other colours. The physiological difference is here described that certain changes have taken place in the brain, but the brain does not see them. It requires something else to see the colour, and that something else is to be understood, and its nature must be learned. The eyes also do not see. The eyes are merely the instrument. The optic nerves do not see.. The brain-cell, or the centre of the brain, does not also see. There is a mind that sees, and that mind is touching that centre in the brain, changing that vibration of the molecules of the cells of the brain into sensation, i.e. to a state of consciousness. How that is done no one can explain. No psychologist has ever been able to explain how the translation of the material vibration causes a state of consciousness. It is the mysterious power of the soul of the cell. That power has the power to change that instantaneously. It changes the material vibration into a state of consciousness, when we call it red, yellow, or any other colour.

But when the mind is distracted, these physiological conditions will continue to occur, but you will not have any sensation of colour. The organ of vision is in the nerve centre of the brain. But the two eyes will not be sufficient alone to see the colour. Sometimes a man is asleep with his eyes open. Now, if you sleep with your eyes open, all the reflections might fall on your eyes, when all these pictures would be formed in the retina mechanically, and the molecular changes would

befall. These changes would be carried to the cordex of the brain, and still you would not see, as your mind is separated from the organ of sight. So, those who have the materialistic thery that the brain sees and there is nothing beyond the brain, are mistaken. They see only the physiological side, but do not deep enough.

In the modern psychology, these factors have been explained in a physiological way. The modern psychology traces the conditions of perception to the brain centre and there it stops. It does not consider the mind stuff as something beyond the brain centre that makes all these changes or translates the vibrations of the brain cells into the states of consciousness or sensation. It does not go so far, and, therefore, the study of psychology in the schools and colleges is imperfect. But the time will come when they will go deeper.[1] It is not meant for the young men and women to go so deep. They can get a flimmer of the process. And that is why this psychology is allowed a little in the schools and colleges. Years ago, psychology used to be the subject for those who were advanced in their studies in the higher schools and colleges.

Now you understand the physiological process of the psychology. It has been said before that sometimes a man is asleep with his eyes open. The light is there in the eyes and the picture is in the retina, but still a third object is necessary to see a thing. The mind must be joined to the organ, because if that mind is not joined we do not see anything. Similarly with our ears in hearing of sound. The cars roll down the street and we do not hear them when we are asleep, because our mind has not attached itself to the organ of hearing. We hear the vibrations of air which we call sound, and these vibrations, touching the tympanum of our ears, are carried by the auditory nerves to the nerve centres in the brain, and these some changes being created are translated in the terms of sound by a self-conscious mind. If the mind is separated or disconnected from that organ in the brain, then the physiological conditoins might be fulfilled. There might be a noise near our ears, but so long as our mind is disconnected, we would hear nothing of them.

[1] This lecture was delivered in 1915.

Some time ago, in 1896, I went to London. Swami Vivekananda invited me to come to London, gave me the charge of his classes there, and went back to India. I took to his classes, and started with my lectures. One morning I was lecturing on 'concentration'. It was about eleven o'clock. We had a hall on Victoria Street on the fifth floor, on the top. Victoria Street was a very busy street, and it was one of the main streets in London. While I was lecturing, there was going on a big parade of soldiers, and a brass band was being played. Then the audience, I think many of them, thought that my lecture would be disturbed by the noise, and that I would also be disturbed. But I did not hear anything of the noise. There was amongst the audience an Episcopal minister, Dr. Howeis. He was a great musician who wrote on Wagner—he was a great man. There were also other friends. After the lecture was over, they asked me if I was disturbed. I was astonished and answered: "Disturbed by what ?" They said: "Didn't you hear that noise ?" And I replied: "No, but where was it ?" Really I had not heard any sound. My mind was so concentrated on my subject that when the big parade was going on that road, I could know nothing of what was happening outside. In fact, my mind was disconnected from the organ of hearing. Dr. Howeis and others admitted that this was a perfect example of concentration.[2]

My mind was so concentrated that it was withdrawn from all others sensations. I was looking at my subject intently. You may have that in a similar way, or in different ways, when you are reading very intently. As for instance, when you are interested in a study, you do not hear even the ticking of a big clock. A street car may pass, somebody may knock, and there may be a terrible noise, but you do not hear them as because your mind is disconnected from the organ of hearing. As soon as the mind is connected with the organs of hearing, sight, taste, touch and smell, you hear, see, taste, touch and smell. The mind cannot do more than one thing at a time as the Naiyaikas consider that the form of the mind is like an atom or *anu*. The function is operated very quickly when you are

[2] Cf. Swami Abhedananda: *Spiritual Unfoldment.*

seeing and hearing at the same time. In truth, the mind hears or sees first and then goes back. It is done so quickly that you cannot perceive the interval. But the mind always takes up at the utmost at a time, either one sound, or one colour. It will see the object of sight, and hear the sound one after another, and in this way the mind works. It is always necessary to understand that the mind takes in and that we can perceive only, when the mind is connected with the centre or organ of our sensation.

There are finer organs in the brain, and there are the ones that are connected with the mind stuff. The cars may roll down the street, but you do not hear them going because your mind has not attached itself to the organ of hearing. First, there is the instrument, then the organ and then comes the attachment of the mind to these two. Now we have understood that. First the instrument, or the external instrument, the eyes or the ears, the nostrils, or the instrument of touch, then there is the organ or in the brain centre. Now, the third is the attachment of the mind to these two, that is, to the instrument and the organ. The mind takes the impression further in. The mind stuff, which is generally called *chitta,* takes the impression which is produced by the organ, and takes it in and presents it to the discriminative faculty. And you cannot know whether it is this or that. The cogitative state of the mind is the first state, and then the determination, or the determinative faculty. You can understand this better when a certain idea rises in your mind. You will easily understand the movement of your thoughts that move or rise in your mind. You may think: "Shall I go there, or not ? No. I had better go. No, I ought not to go" etc. These vacillating states of the mind is known as the cogitation. You have that first in everything, and then in the next. There is another faculty that determines: "No, I must go". Then you decide that you would go. But in every action you do that.

So there are two faculties: one, the cogitative faculty of the mind, which is presented before the determinative faculty, and the other, the determinative faculty which determines. And now you take the action. Then it becomes a will, and that will is obeyed by the nerve centres in the spinal column, in the muscles, and in the whole body. As a result, you will obey

that command of the will. But you cannot have that will until you have determined. First you vacillate as to whether you will do or not. You mind first takes this impression which picks it up, and then it shows on both the sides, yes or no. Then the determinative faculty determines, and in that way we perceive a sensation. This faculty reacts and brings the determination, and when that determination is done along with this reflection, then flashes the idea of egotism that means the sense of 'I'. When the sensation has come, you compare whether it is hot or cold, or something intermediate. If you decide that it is cold, instantly you connect the sense of 'I' with it, and say, 'I am cold'. It is that first you feel the cold and that is a sensation of cold. You know that you are separate from it, but at once identify yourself with it i.e. with the sensation of cold. That is called egotism. Then the mixture of action and reaction takes place which you do know always when you are angry. At first you feel a creeping sensation coming up, and you feel that it is anger. But gradually it becomes overwhelmingly strong and covers the whole sea of mind. It is like a wave, and is an absorbing passion. Now you determine: 'I am angry' and then connect it with 'I'. This is, at first it remains separate and gradually becomes attached to you, and then the anger and yourself become inseparable.

Carefully study your own mind, and you will find the passion and the feeling come together. At first the feeling is separate from you, but the sense of 'I' will come later when you attach the sense of 'I' with it. It is the most interesting and absorbing study. You can study the whole universe by studying first your own mind. You have in yourself a moving picture-show all the time. There is enough of these moving pictures within yourself. These pitcutes are rising, falling and disappearing all the time in yourself. You do not have to go outside. Better save your ten cents, and study yourself, and that study will help you in gaining more knowledge. You will not strain your eyes either, but you will go into the innermost recesses of the nature, and find that there is nothing more absorbing than the study of your own mind. A few people have patience and perseverance for this study. Those who will, take it up for a few times, and drop it. But once you get a taste, you will put your whole life to it. That is the way it

happened to me. At first I used to argue with my Master.[3] I said: "No, I do not believe this or that". And my Master stressed: "You will believe in everything later on". I asked: "When I would know that I will". He then fascinated me so much that I could not give it up. Thereafter I had to dedicate my whole life to it, because one life is not sufficient for it. You give your whole life in doing foolishness. but instead of that you may give it to some serious study or in search after some truth or knowledge that is better.

I shall tell you a story which is very interesting. Some people came to Sri Ramakrishna and called him insane, as he was not of the world. He did not care for anything of the world, and so they thought that he was unbalanced and insane. Sri Ramakrishna said to them: "My friends, who is not insane in this world ? This world is like a gigantic lunatic asylum. Some are mad for money, some for beautiful wife or husband, another for name and fame, or for nice comforts. But they are not crazy for God, whereas I am crazy for Him. Which is better ?" It is better, when you fool away. Your time to fool it away with something that will bring some good to you, and that good is worth-having. No money can buy it. It is the knowledge you are getting. You will have to study carefully and understand your nature. And he is greatest spiritual teacher who opens the spiritual eye of the pupils so that the pupils can see things in a different light. It is better when your eye-opener opens the eye, so that the seeker can see completely the light and get a glimpse of the truth. Who is better in between an earthly father and a spiritual father ? Which one is greater ? The wise will say that the spiritual father is greater than the earthly one, because the earthly father gives birth to the body that lasts only for a short time, whereas the spiritual father opens the spiritual eye which is an eternal heritage. Therefore, the spiritual father is greater. We all regard our spiritual teacher as our real father, and never think of going to him without reverence and respect, just as a dutiful son would show his spiritual master with the same feeling of respect and reverence. These qualities are to be acquired.

Now, you understand these states: (1) the cogitative state of the mind, and (2) the determinative faculty. The sense of

[3] Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa.

'I' must be connected with it, and then the whole mixture of action and reaction is presented with your true Self or Spirit. Then the object is perceived. You now come to know that there are colour, sound and other things. This whole thing takes place within a very short time, so short that you can hardly catch it. It is almost simultaneous. It is done just like a flash of lightning. All these different presentations and activities of the mental faculties take place one after another, but the whole thing is done like only a flash of lightning.

The mind stuff is the finer matter in vibration. It may be said to be ethereal. The finer matter goes on producing these various states those are said to be the modifications (*vrittis*) of the mind stuff. The waves can be called the whirlpool. And what is that ? That is a force which is absorbed in nature, the infinite storehouse. The instrument takes hold of that force ; and when it passes out at the other end, it is called the thought. This force is supplied through food. We observe that the mind is not intelligent and still it appears to be intelligent. The mind stuff itself really is not intelligent and shining, but it becomes so by coming in contact with our self-shining spiritual Self. This spiritual Self is like a furnace that has all the heat and the light. The mind stuff is like a dark iron-ball, but when it comes in contact with the furnace, it becomes heated and glows red hot, just as an iron-ball, when put into the fire-place, that heat and fiery colour are borrowed. They are not of its own nature. They are produced by getting in touch with the fire. So the iron-ball of the mind stuff, when placed into the furnace of your true shining Self, becomes red hot, or, in other words, it becomes shining or intelligent. Just as your material body has no consciousness, but yet it appears as self-conscious, so your inner body has absorbed the consciousness. But, in truth, the source of consciousness is in your true Self. So you see how many things you have to study. You will have to study the physical body and the organs. But by studying these alone, you cannot get all. You do not learn all by studying physiology, or by studying modern psychology. There is something more you have to learn. The study of your own self will not be complete, unless you feel these different things separately in yourself by trying to possess each of these points, and then you make it a part of your own knowledge.

I have already discussed that the mind itself is not intelligent. It appears as intelligent, because the intelligent soul is behind it. It has been said that the mind is a finer matter in vibration. The vibration is caused by the intelligent Spirit or the *Atman* that is behind the mind. So if you want to study your true divine Self, you will come to know that your true Self is not clothed with the mind stuff, but it forms the background of the mind stuff, and when that background which contains the source of consciousness, intelligence and knowledge, comes in direct touch with the mind substance, then the mind substance appears to be intelligent. That, by which you can separate these different functions, is a science that has been taught in the science of Yoga. The science of Yoga can be called as the higher spiritual psychology, and this spiritual psychology is of great value to you. You must study it carefully and understand its processes, and then you will gradually get into the practical side of it. First, you have the theory. I will tell you later on how to get control over these things, and how you can withdraw your mind from one kind and fix it on another, just as you take a switch from the telephone. You see it done at the central office; one connection is made, and then another. In that way, you can disconnect and connect at your will, and then you will become absolute master of yourself. Then concentration will be the process or the method by which you can do that. Of course, a study of concentration will not end in an hour or two. It will take many hours, nay, many days, and sometimes many years. But I can assure you that the method of concentration can be studied. It can be attained through the sincere efforts and perseverance; and when it is attained, meditation comes, and makes a man perfect.

The science of Yoga is vast. It includes all the methods by which the highest realization of the supreme Brahman, or the eternal Being can be achieved. Our universal religion (*sanatana dharma*) describes the ultimate goal of human life, and it is the attainment of the superconscious state of the Divine realization. The superconsciousness may be described in Sanskrit as *samadhi*. So, *samadhi* means the superconscious state, or the Godconsciousness, or the consciousness of the supreme Being. At present we are conscious of our physical bodies, and are conscious of our surroundings, of the buildings,

of the relatives, of our family, our home-life, and of business. But this is not all. There is no consciousness which is greater or higher or more up-lifting and more beneficial to us all than that which gives us immortality as its fruit. That state is regarded as the highest state which a human soul can attain after struggling through various ways and by which it can realize the force of nature and the various phenomena of nature. That highest goal has been the ideal of the eternal religion. In Buddhism, that ideal is also regarded as the highest. It is called in Buddhism 'Nirvana'. Nirvana is not a negative state by which we go into nothingness, but we attain to the highest realization of the infinite Being. The real meaning of Nirvana is suchness or *tathata* i.e. something that exists, and not nothingness or void. It has also been described in the Vedas, in the *Upanishads,* and in the Vedanta philosophy. In the Vedanta philosophy, Nirvana has been said to be the attainment of the infinite consciousness which is also known as the Brahma-Nirvana.

Now, we are conscious of those things which are dependent upon our sense perception. We have senses, such as, the eyes, the ears, the nose, the mouth and the touch. These five senses reveal the objects which we see and feel around us; but beyond these senses there is a higher sense which is described as the third eye in the middle of the forehead. We have seen the pictures and scriptures of our great *Rishis* and *Devas,* where on their forehead we have found the third eye. This third eye on the forehead of the *devatas* and *devis* is the spiritual eye. It is not meant for the gods and the goddesses alone, but meant for all. We have not that eye at the present stage in a rudimentary state. At present we have not got the God-vision and, therefore, we are bound by the limitation of our senses. When that eye is open in us, we begin to observe little glimpse of the eternal Truth and become more and more free and divine. Their third eye, that I have described, is the spiritual eye, and we make that eye open. But how to make that eye work, so that we can have a greater vision of the infinite Spirit, has been the question which also troubled the minds of our great seers and philosophers and also of the great saviours like Buddha, Krishna and others. In order to open that eye, they developed different methods. They found by spiritual practice

the different ways by which that eye could be opened. These methods are classified under four heads, and they are called the four Yogas.

The word Yoga comes from the Sanskrit verb root *juj* which means 'to join'. In fact, Yoga means the method by which we can join our individual soul with the divine soul or the divine Being. The English word 'yoke' on the bullock cart is derived from the same Sanskrit root *juj*. So Yoga means the same as 'yoke', as I have already explained in some of my books[4] that most of the English words can be traced back to Sanskrit words. So Yoga is the method by which we can unite our individual souls with the universal spirit, the Brahman, or Siva, or Vishnu, or Mahadeva. or Mahadevi, or Buddha, or Tistse (the highest Being according to the Chinese philosophy). You will find the same ideal in all religions. The Mohammedans believe that Allah is no longer a personal Being, but an infinite Being who has attained that universal consciousness, or the goal of *samadhi* or *mukti*. The Christian mystics of the middle ages of Europe described that ideal as *samadhi*, or the superconscious state, and that is the highest ideal of Christianity. However, in all religions, you will find that there is only one aim known as the Godconsciousness.

The Karma Yoga

The Karma Yoga means the path of action. 'Karma' means 'work'. That is, all the works we do during our daily life, can be made to go towards the one ideal, or can be made as acts of worship. In fact, the followers of the universal religion (*sanatana dharma*) alone have made the daily works of their lives as acts of worship, but in other religions the act of worship is separated from the daily works. They have a special kind of devotion, for instance, as you know, the Christian people once in a week go to the church. But their daily works are different. They are entirely different from their devotional exercises. They will cheat, rob, and tell lies, but at the time of devotion they are different. But in our universal religion of the Hindus, we find that we are not allowed to tell a lie and

[4] Cf. Swami Abhedananda: *How to be a Yogi*, and the *Yoga Psychology*.

do anything which is wicked, because all actions must go towards the supreme Being, just as Krishna said in the *Bhagavad Gita* (IX. 27):

यत् करोषि यदश्नासि यज्जूहोषि ददासि यत्।
यत् तपस्यसि कौन्तेय तद् कुरुष्व मदर्पणम्॥

"Whatsoever thou doest, whatsoever thou offerest, whatsoever thou givest, and whatsoever thou doest of austerity, do thou that as an offering unto me." Even when we sit at the table and get our food, we first offer the food to the supreme Spirit before we begin to eat, and this is the greatest idea, and an idea that we must offer our food first to the Lord before we can use it for ourselves. This idea is that we eat it as the *prasadam* of the Lord of the universe. It is the grandest thing or conception in the world. There is no nation which has performed this ideal so earnestly and so sincerely, as the Hindu people of ancient, mediaeval and modern India have done.

The Karma Yoga is the path of work. We have the right to work, but we have not the right to seek the result of our work. We must work through love for works sake and as an offering to the Lord, and that ideal was given by Sri Krishna in the *Bhagavad Gita,* when Arjuna at the battlefield did not want to fight against his kinsmen. Krishna said: "My friend, do not seek the result, to work thou hast the right, and not the fruits thereof". So we have the right to work, but not to seek the results thereof. We must leave the results to the Lord, and by that we become free from the bondage of the law of *karma* i.e. from the bondage of action and reaction. Then our souls will be purified.

The purification of the heart is the most important thing. In other religions, we find the same ideal being held at the highest. Christ said: "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." The purity of heart is the precondition of the God-vision. You cannot see God unless your heart is pure. Purity means to be free from all the bad ideas and selfish motives and also desires of the flesh. It makes your heart free from envy, jealousy, greed, lust, anger, etc. These are all the enemies we have to conquer one by one, and that conquest would come only if we are sincere seekers after the highest

Ideal. Further, the Karma Yoga means the method by which we become free from bondage, or cut off the tie that holds us down to the plane of the earthly attachment, purifies our heart, and makes ourselves ready to attain the highest goal. And, therefore, the Karma Yoga is the first stage, and there is another Yoga which is called the Bhakti Yoga.

The Bhakti Yoga

The Bhakti Yoga means the path of devotion, or the path of love. In this path, we must be devoted to the Ideal, must love the Ideal, and must worship the Ideal through love only and not for gaining any result on this plane. There are four kinds of worshippers who worship the Lord. The first kind is of those who are sick, and who want to be healed. You find thousands of the majority of the people in Europe and America are sick people. They want to be cured, and so the Christian Science and the New Thought Movement have taken up the healing as the highest ideal of their religion. But in our universal religion (*sanatana dharma*), we consider healing or healing practice as the lowest stage. He who worships God for curing diseases, is the lowest kind of worshipper. There is another kind who seeks the material results through worship. There are thousands of men and women in Europe and America who worship the Lord to have a good wife or a good husband. This kind of worship is the lowest, but they consider this to be the highest. I have been to Catholic countries like Italy, which is the headquarters of Roman Catholicism. These Catholics call us idolators, but they are more idolatrous than we are. I give you an illustration of it. The Christians have a baby Christ. and it is a gold statue put in a glass case. The statue is about $2\frac{1}{2}$ feet tall, just like the figure of a baby with its head, face, arms, etc. and clothed with a beautifully embroidered silk robe, and all the ornaments that you can imagine, are decorating its arms, head and body. I saw a big gold watch hanging with a gold chain round its neck, and they do all these things for their desires to be fulfilled, and prayers to be granted. When somebody gets a child, they put an ornament, and when a woman gets a good husband, she gives a necklace. The Italian peasants are also very superstitious. They consider the

Bambino as a living God. When there is a draught and crops do not grow, they pray for rain ; and if there be no rain, they get a stick and beat the Bambino, because the Bambino does not grant their prayer. Now, it is a ridiculous thing that they call us the superstitious idolators. Go and see these things they are doing. So I say that we are far better off than they are. They have accepted all the images of the saints and their statues, and they worship each one. They have a saint, and there are plenty of snakes, and they worship him so that he may drive these snakes away. This custom is even found in Ireland and other Catholic countries. So you are not the only one who have idols and statues. There are others too worse than you.

The devotion, that is prescribed in the Bhakti Yoga, is a different kind of devotion, and that devotion is the offering of the heart and the soul and all our ideals to the supreme Being, and that supreme Being may be called Vishnu, Siva, Mahadeva, or Mahadevi. They are all manifestations of the one supreme Being. So the Bhakti Yoga gives us the path of love. Some of the Christian missionaries state that there is no place of love in the Hindu philosophy, or in the Hindu religion, and it is all dry. But, my friends, our whole religion is based upon the greatest love that can be imagined. Our religion is based on an unselfish love, and not on the shop-keeper's love, which, I can say, is known to the majority of people in Europe and America.

Do you know what shop-keeper's love is ? So long as a buyer buys things in his shop, he praises him well, and speaks very kindly with him ; and when he does not buy, he tells him to keep out. And this is the form of shop-keeper's love. But our love is different.[5] We sacrifice everything to the ideal and do not seek any result, and this is grander. Devotion, without seeking any objects of desire, would enrich us on this plane.

The third kind is the seeker of knowledge which is considered as greater. Those who know God, cannot help but loving God, and cannot help but worshipping God, are included in the third category. Those who attain to the knowledge of the supreme Spirit through love, reach the highest

[5] Here Swami Abhedananda means to say that in India the spirit of love is different.

state, and they are the real Yogis. There are other Yogis also who want to have their desires fulfilled.

The Jnana Yoga

The Jnana Yoga is the path of knowledge, or the path of discrimination and ratiocination (*viveka* and *vichara*). This path is very deep and wonderful. The Jnana Yoga tells us that the world is like a dream or a delusion. It would be very difficult for us to understand, because we are not in a position to see anything that is beyond our vision, or our perception. In the materialistic and commercial world of Europe and America, this idea of delusion of all the material objects is spreading very fast today. This is done by the Christian Science movements. It was first started by Wover who married three times, and after marrying three times she was awakened to the spiritual knowledge. She was a sick woman, and she healed herself by a method by which all sicknesses can be cured, and that is through the spiritual force which lies in each of us. She also discovered first that this world is like a dream ; everything that is material is on the sense plane and, therefore, is not eternal. It is *maya* or delusion, and is like a dream, and beyond that *maya,* there shines the eternal Truth, or the supreme Spirit. That is the path of Jnana or the path of discrimination or wisdom.

The Raja Yoga

The other Yoga is called the Raja Yoga which has been described before. 'Raja' means 'king' i.e. it is the king of all the Yogas. This Yoga teaches us how to concentrate our minds upon one subject and how to develop the power of meditation. It is a mental method, or a physic method, by which we practise concentration. We know that concentration is the most wonderful thing, as without concentration nothing can be achieved. We cannot be great scientists unless our minds are concentrated upon one object for a certain length of time. Look at the astronomers who discover the distant heavenly bodies, by fixing their eyes steadily on the path of the planets, and stars day after day, night by night, month by month, and

year after year. Sometimes they do not eat their meals, nay, they have no time to eat. They do not even take care of their books, because they concentrate their minds althrough. And in this connection I would like to tell you about Thomas Edison, the great scientist.

I met the great scientist, Thomas Edison in one occasion. I went to his laboratory and had a great talk with him. He was a friend of the Hindu philosophy. This man has his own laboratory, and it is in this laboratory, when he has a problem to solve, he sits at his table with the problem. His breakfast is brought to him in the morning and kept in the corner, but he has no time to take food. His mind is all fixed upon the problem. The breakfast gets cold, and it is taken away. He is not conscious of it, and he does not feel hungry. Day by day his tiffin is brought and put in the corner. But he has no idea of time, and the whole day goes by, he sits there solving the problem with a firm determination that he would not move til the problem is solved, and, therefore, he sits unmoved. The evening supper is brought, gets cold, and is taken away. He does not go to bed. He sits at the table, and when he feels very sleepy, he dozes and bends his head for a few minutes, and gets up again, and solves the problem. In this way, he would remain for days until the problem is solved. And that is concentration. Have you got concentration in you ? If you have, then you will be the greatest man today. In any branch and in any line, fix your mind upon that one ideal ; you will find all the questions and their pros and cons arise, and then you will be able to find their solution. The same man Thomas Edison is determined to invent an instrument by which everybody would be able to communicate with the departed spirit. He is not going to stop until he gets that. See, what benefit he has done to the whole world, by catching electricity and putting it into two wires, and giving you light. Why you cannot do such kind of things ? It is because you have not the power of concentration. So, learn the method and practise it everyday, and you will be able to discover the secret of success.

It has already been said that the Raja Yoga means concentration which is the king of all the Yogas. You cannot cook a good dish unless your mind is concentrated upon the cooking. If your mind wanders all over the world, your food will be

burnt, and you would never have a good dish to eat. So you need concentration. When you drive a motor car, you need concentration, otherwise you will run all over the whole place and kill the people. When you ride a bicycle, you need concentration, else you will fall down and break your neck. Therefore, concentration is the first thing, and in view of that our great Rishis taught us how to concentrate. You see, in the temples, the statues of our gods and goddesses. These symbols are not really gods, but they aid to the process of concentration. You cannot fix your mind on the infinite Brahman all at once unless you first begin from the concrete object. The concrete object is placed in the temple, and when your mind is concentrated upon the object, then from the coarse you go to the fine and from the fine you go to the finer until you reach the absolute Spirit. How can that be attained ? It is by regular practice. Patanjali also said: *"tatra yatno'bhyasah"*, i.e. if you sincerely strive day after day, that repeated efforts will be turned into habit. So, everyday you have to sit in concentration. Concentrate your mind upon the ideal, and form a habit hold it up there for a certain length of time so that the mind will not move away. There is no break when you pour oil from the vessel to another. So should your concentration be. Then it will be perfect. Then you will be able to solve all the problems that are before your eyes today, and you will be able to be the greatest man in the world.

Therefore the Raja Yoga is the greatest. Siddhartha became Buddha through concentration and meditation. He struggled for six years, living on a small quantity of food. He was emaciated and was reduced to a skeleton with only skins and bones. He could hardly stand up, and after six years of asceticism and struggle, he found that he had not reached the goal. Then he sat down under the Bo tree (Banyan tree) with the determination that he would not move till he reached the goal. He said: "Let my body be dried up at the spot". He said too with firm determination: "Let my bones be scattered to the four winds, and my flesh be eaten by the insects and worms, but I shall not move an inch from this spot, until I reach the highest goal which is so difficult to be attained even by gods". And with that determination he sat down and attained to *samadhi* in three days and then he became Buddha.

the Enlightened, the saviour of the mankind. This is the power of concentration of the Raja Yoga.

By concentration you must have self-determination and so if you have this self-determination, nothing can stop you. If you have confidence and self-determination, all forces and powers, no matter in what plane you are working, will come to you. Therefore have confidence in yourself. The old religions use to teach that he who does not believe in God, is an atheist but I say that he who does not believe in himself, is an atheist. You are the child of God, but you do not know God. You say that you know the son of Mr. and Mrs., or of So and so, but you do not know the immortal soul which is the real entity of all the sentient and the insentient objects. So remember that your body may be finite, but your soul or *Atman* is infinite. You are struggling now for a few dollars, and working like a slave. It is a degeneration to you. But you can be the you realize that you are the child of God. The Raja Yoga teaches that God dwells within us, and we are not to seek God far away. He is not sitting above the clouds, but He is here and in everyone of you. Believe me that I see God in each one of you.

Now, in this connection I would like to remind you one thing. Perhaps you know that we do not shake hands, but bow down, and that is the recognition of the Divinity in man. We salute a man means we salute God who is dwelling within a man. And this is our method of salutation (*pranama*). Do you know the origin of your shaking hands? You think that shaking hands is the most respectful way of receiving your friends. In ancient times, when people were uncivilized and uncultured, everyone used to doubt every other as an enemy. Because they had no real love for the *Atman*. They had swords in thier left hands, and their right hands were free to draw the sword. When somebody came to them, they did not know whether he was a friend or an enemy, and if he was an enemy they were ready to kill him; and when they found that he was a friend, they gave him the right hand. It means, if you are my friend, I am not going to draw my sword. Do you think that we would adopt it? No, we cannot do it. We would rather salute the Lord, and this is based upon the spiritual truth. Now-a-days, you do not understand the meaning of this

shaking hand or salute. You will be able to convert the whole world if you can understand it. The ignorant people cannot appreciate the higher truths just as sowing pearls before the swines. You must have self-confidence, and then you will be able to make others realise the truth that you have realised in yourself.

In the Raja Yoga, you will find that concentration and meditation lead to the highest state of superconsciousness or Godconsciousness. That state can be attained to step by step. But, along with the practice of concentration and meditation, what will you gain ? As you progress, you will develop the wonderful powers i.e. the powers of reading others' minds. You will be able to send your thoughts to your friends, just as through wireless telegraphy, and you may send messages across the oceans, thousands of miles away, in an infinite part of a second. You will be able to send your message like a wireless telegraphy from mind to mind. Certainly you know that you send your thoughts when your friends receive them instantaneously. Even the historians of Europe have conceded that this power of telepathy was known among the Hindus during the time of the Mutiny. There was no other way of communicating messages. They used to send their messages by the power of thought, and this has been recognised all over the world. You can send a message from one part to another, regarding the movement of the enemies by this power of thought.

Then you get another power of clairvoyance which means clear vision at a distance. You would be able to see from America what is going on in Calcutta now. You need no telescope. You do not have to see through these eyes, but there is an eye, as I have described it a third eye or the spiritual eye, which will enable you to see things at a distance, and that will be gained by the practice of the Raja Yoga. Then there is another power of clariaudience. You can hear at a distance the music of the spheres in the heaven, and that power you will be able to develop, and heal others. You will be able to develop the healing power in you, which was manifested by jesus the Christ. We have had many healers among the Yogis of India who have cured innumerable diseases by the power of thought.

Today you will find these things among the Europeans

Psychical Research Societies. The members of the Societies are investigating the mental powers like the power of suggestion. I will give you an illustration of what can be done by the power of suggestion. There was a great doctor in Europe who gave a suggestion to a girl that on every Friday she would develop a red-cross on her chest for six weeks. She was first put into a hypnotic sleep. If you make some poses and make the person gaze upon one object, you can put the person to sleep. And that is called the hypnosis. In that sleep, the conscious mind is in abeyance, but the subconscious mind is ready to receive the suggestion of the operator, and gives the suggestion to the person who is operated; and thus the doctor gave the suggestion to the girl that on every Friday morning she would raise a red-cross and true to this suggestion she raised a blister in the form of a cross. On every Friday she did that. That is the power of suggestion, that works through the subconscious mind into the conscious plane. If you give a suggestion to a sick person or a lame one that he would be better, he would be able to walk or he would be cured. It is the power of spirit by which all healing is done. The medical men do not know the power of healing, but the power of healing is a power of thought, and that is demonstrated today in the scientific circle of Europe and America. You can develop that power. That is nothing new to us, because the Raja Yoga has taught us that this can be done, and the same power is developed in a great degree in our Rishis. Then there are other powers such as by which you can disappear from among the crowd. There are the Yogis who can do that even now in India and who will make themselves vanish, if and when they are imprisoned and put in a room with the doors locked and the windows shut; they will disappear, and that is the power described in the Raja Yoga.

This Raja Yoga is practised by the Yogis in India. It is not a myth, but is a fact. Then there is another power that whatever you desire you get. If you want wealth and prosperity, you draw it from the Infinite. The Infinite is everything, and if you direct your thoughts with proper concentration and meditation, you will get abundance of wealth, abundance of health, prosperity, and everything you desire. Nothing can stop you. The channel must be opened between yourself and the

infinite Spirit, and those secrets were known in India long ago before the Christian era, and long before any other nation became civilized. These truths were given out by the ancient vedic sages. The auto-suggestion is nothing but that it describes the methods by which those different desires can be obtained through the power of mental suggestion. If you study the Raja Yoga, there is no limit to your powers. There is another power by which you rise above the surface of the earth. You are seated in an *asana*, and practise some of the Raja Yoga exercises, such as the breathing exercise (*pranayama*) and you will rise above the surface about three feet. You will float in the air, and it is possible. Do not think that these are all myths, but these are facts, and the scientific world is experimenting on these and has found that these are true. There is scientific explanations that whoever counteracts the power of the gravity and make himself like feather, he would rise above the surface. If you want to kill an animal by your will-power, you can do that, but that is not regarded as desireable. It is considered as a black magic. It should not be done. There is an injunction against it, and it is prohibited. Because these mental or psychic powers are obstacles to the path of the spiritual progress. But you can know for your knowledge how can these powers be developed by the practice of the Raja Yoga i.e. by practising the science of breathing. By the *pranayama* we can keep our health and be free from all diseases. No malaria will touch us if we regularly practise this *pranayama*. No influenza will also attack us. No cholera will attack us, and not any other germs many attack us. We will develop the power within us by which we will kill these germs. A Yogi is never afraid of these diseases. He will live in the midst of cholera patients and nurse them and not catch the contagion, because he has the power to kill the germs. And this is done by the Raja Yoga.

So, the Raja Yoga is the greatest study. I can talk to you for hours on the Raja Yoga, because it is my speciality. But I am not going to detain you very long. In conclusion, I shall say that all these different Yogas lead to the same goal. You study and practise everyday whatever path is suited to your ideal. Take a suitable path, and follow it diligently and sincerely, and you are sure to reach the goal even in this life.

You will be able to realize who and what you are, why you have come to this world, and what you will be after death. All these questions will be solved. Christianity and no other religion of a sectarian nature can solve these questions. But these questions can be solved by the practice of the Raja Yoga of India, by developing the power of opening the spiritual eye which is hidden at the present time, or which is closed and is rudimentary at this moment. Then through the opening of the eye you will be able to understand the hidden power which is working in the form of *kundalini*[1], the coiled up energy at the base of the spinal column. When it passes the six *chakras* and reach the *sahasrara* at the top of the head, you will have *samadhi*. You will penetrate through all the phases, and enter into the very door of eternal bliss and infinite existence. There is the goal of all religions. There is the ideal of life. Unless you realize that, no matter how wealthy you are, and no matter how much possession you have. You cannot carry even a pin to the grave. Therefore, why are you so attached to these material things? You are rather a slave to these passions. It is only on account of the *maya*. So, my friends, there are teachers here among us who can show us the way, by which we can get out of these limitations and enter into the abode of the infinite existence, eternal happiness, and everlasting bliss. This abode is the prime goal of all human beings, and it is the be-all and end-all of their life.

[1] *Kundalini, kula-kundalini, kamakala kundalini* are the same thing. It is the stored up basic vital energy.

CHAPTER II

THE PRACTICE OF YOGA

I

The science of Yoga is the most practical of all the applied sciences, and is the most beneficial to mankind under all conditions and circumstances. Those who practise faithfully the teachings of this science of Yoga, will surely gain a perfectly healthy body and a healthy mind. They will understand the higher forces and the higher laws of nature, and will eventually unfold the higher powers which are latent in their body, mind and soul.

In practising the teachings of Yoga, the students are not required to believe in any special doctrine or dogma of any sectarian religion, but the main thing is for them to understand the laws which govern their soul-life and to obey those laws in daily actions of their earthly existence. Earnestness and sincerity are the first qualifications for the students of Yoga. So those who wish to practise Yoga, should be earnest and sincere. But those who take up the practice through curiosity, will gain some good results in the end, but perhaps they will not have patience and perseverance to continue for a long time. If they be earnest and sincere, they would be able to enter into the realm of their true being, and be familiar with the laws which govern their inner nature or higher self. At present we do not know our own inner nature. We may think that we do, but we know very little. Really we are not conscious of our higher Self. We think that we are mortals and are one with the body and that we are born with the body and shall die with it, and that is the common belief in every man. But that is an error. We are not one with the body and not the mortal souls, but we are immortal *Atman*. We have eternal existence, but we do not know it. We do not know even our own beings. So how can we know God ? As no one can know God without knowing his or her own being first. So first we must know ourselves, and then we would find the greatest help

from this science of Yoga. Because, it teaches how we can know ourselves first, and then by knowing ourselves, we shall know the universe and also know God. Those who are earnest and sincere, will be able to overcome all the obstacles that exist in the path of the practice of Yoga.

There are a great many obstacles, such as laziness of the body, depression of the mind, and so on. I have mentioned about these obstacles which you will find in the thirtyfirst aphorism of the Raja Yoga. The first obstacle is disease. The physical disease is an obstacle. So, we must overcome that. The mental laziness is another obstacle. Doubt or a doubtful state of the mind is another obstacle. The cessation of struggle for the attaining to realization is also known as an obstacle. We may struggle for a few days, then drop it entirely, and that is an obstacle. Heaviness of the body and the mind is an obstacle. Thirst of the mind for worldly things is a great obstacle, but ordinary mortals do not know that it is an obstacle. Those who run after worldly things, do not think for a moment that they are losing the sight of their soul-life i.e. losing their eternal being. The false knowledge is also an obstacle. We are self-deluded at present. What can be more self-delusion than this state is that we are identified with the material body, that we are born and going to die ? There cannot be any other state worse than this. This is the worst state of self-delusion or false knowledge that we are living at present. The non-attaining of the power of concentration is an obstacle. We may struggle to gain the power of concentration, but we fall and give it up. We also have no patience and perseverance. Then falling away from the state, when attained, is also an obstacle. If we rise on a higher state of realization, but cannot keep it, we fall down and come down to the lower plane as quickly as possible, because the attractions to worldly things are too powerful. Then grief from pain fear or other physical causes, mental distress, melancholy state of depression of the mind, and restlessness of the body are also obstacles. So, we cannot quietly sit for five minutes in one position ; and that is the most undesirable condition. It is a nervous state and, consequently, it is an obstacle in the path of the practice of Yoga. The irregular breathing is an obstacle. Very few people can breathe correctly and regularly. We do not pay

any attention to that, and, therefore, we cannot get mental poise and nervous repose.

There are many other obstacles too, as the unfavourable environments of discouragement caused by unjust opinions of relatives and friends, and so on. These obstacles prevent the curiosity-seekers from continuing the practice of Yoga. But those who possess earnestness, sincerity, firmness of will and strong determination, will overcome or surmount all these difficulties and obstacles very easily. There is a saying: 'Where there is a will, there is a way', and so, if we have firm or determined will, then we can accomplish anything on this plane. The fickleness of the mind and the tendency to run after fads for a certain length of time are the characteristic traits of those who cannot accomplish great results in any line, whether in art, or in music, business, or any other line. Patience and perseverance are called the great virtues, because they bring success in the end in all lines of work. If we have the patience and perseverance, we can become great musicians, great artists, great scientific men or great astronomers. Even in business-life, we cannot accomplish good results without patience and perseverance, and so it is in the spiritual life, or in the path of spiritual realization.

Some people have an idea that spiritual realization is easier than acquiring money or gaining any talent, like that in art or music. It is not correct, but it is the most difficult thing. If you spend half of your life to become a good musician, you will have to spend perhaps three times of your present life in order to acquire the art of music. So, if we devote the whole of our life in becoming an artist, how much more time we ought to devote in order to realize the Divinity, or to attain to the Godconsciousness! We do not think this for a moment. People come here[1] to study just for a month, or for two months, or for a year, and they think that they ought to realize God right a way, and then to go to business. They cannot do it as it is impossible for them. It is a life's work. Jesus the Christ devoted his whole life before he attained to perfection. So we must be prepared to devote our whole life to attain to the Godconsciousness. At least we should have that firmness

[1] To attend the class lectures of Swami Abhedananda.

and determination in our mind to attain to that highest goal. What else is to be acquired on this earth? We spend our whole life for acquiring wealth, the success and prosperity in business, but they last only for a short time. They are transitory, and they never permanently satisfy the soul. So we must realize who we are and what we are in reality, what relation we bear to the universe, and whether we are immortal or not. These are the most important questions, and so we must try to solve them first.

The students of Yoga should never be fickle-minded. They should never take up the practice of Yoga as a passing fad, but should exercise patience and perseverance, and follow the instructions of a Yogi teacher as faithfully as possible. The Yoga teacher must be pure in his life. He should be chaste in his character and unselfish in his acts. In this country, there are some who pose as Yogis, take Hindu names, and then begin to teach with a view to gratify their selfish desires. They make a commercial success of it. The earnest and sincere students of Yoga must learn to discriminate these false teachers with those who are genuine and true, by examining their character, their mode of living and what they want, and also by understanding their private lives.

The students of Yoga should first begin to practise that branch of the applied science which is known as the Hatha Yoga. The practice of the Hatha Yoga would be the first thing, as it is most beneficial to all those who are desirous to gain the good results through the practice of Yoga. They should change, or rather restrain the mode of their living and should live a better life. They should observe hygienic laws and practise physical cleanliness by taking daily baths, and so on. They should breathe pure air, eat simple vegetarian food and drink pure water. Vegetarian diet is necessary for them, because the meat diet is unhealthy and dangerous, as they excite the mental feelings of the practitioners. Those who are habituated to eat meat, will find it difficult first, but they must try to overcome that desire or that weakness of the system which seeks meat diet, as vegetarian food will be extremely helpful and beneficial. Some people think that the lower animals are created for our food, and they do not think of the sacrificing highest, or some spiritual experiences. An evangeli-

cal preacher once said of Christianity: "Our religion is not a religion of fasting and privations; it is a religion of beef-steaks." Now, those who think that beef-steak is absolutely necessary for becoming spiritual and gaining perfect health, cannot practise Yoga. So, those who would like to attain to the highest results of Yoga, should not live in rooms over-heated by steam, and so on. Because that is not healthy. We must have fresh air, and learn to bear heat and cold as much as possible, and have out-door exercises. The students of Yoga should not waste their nervous energy unnecessarily, just as most people do by rash habit and dissipation. Regularity in eating, drinking and sleeping should be observed. Occasional fasting is helpful and good. It must be remembered that most of the diseases we get from eating too much and, especially, from eating meat. Those who suffer from rheumatism and gout, should give up meat entirely and should become vegetarians, breathe fresh air, and drink as much fresh water as they can. Purity, chastity, continence and other moral virtues should be held before the mind as ideals. The students should practise daily to reach those ideals as perfectly as possible within the limits of their environmental conditions.

Those who live on the sense-plane like the animals, should practise self-control. Self control is the first step in moral and religious life. We must control our senses, passions, ambitions and desires, and must not become slaves to those passions and desires, but must live as masters. We have no idea how much strength will come to us, if we live as the master and not as a slave of passions and desires. The whole world will be at our feet, if we know the greatness of our soul. We must live as the masters of ourselves. Self-mastery should be our ideal. Self-control will come to those who practise regularly, and hold such higher ideals always before their minds under all circumstances. Then the students of the Hatha Yoga should study the science of breath and practise the breathing exercises as given in the Raja Yoga.

The science of correct breathing is the most wonderful science. Nothing is more practical than this correct breathing. So we must regulate our breath. We may ask what relation there is between the correct breathing and the mental condition, or the spiritual realization. But we will find that there is a

very close relation between the two. Our mental condition and our respiration are closely related to each other. If one is affected, the other is also affected. If we have irregular breathing, we have restlessness in our minds. At the time of extreme passions, anger and hatred, we will notice that our breath is quick and short; but when our mind is quiet in repose, and is meditative and absorbed in higher ideals, higher thoughts, and divine love, we will find our breath smooth, regular and deep, and sometimes perhaps we would not notice that we are breathing at all. Then our breath will become slow. The breathing will be inward and not external at that time. So, the art of correct breathing should be learned by the students of the Hatha Yoga from the competent teachers who are versed in the science of breath, and then should practise it regularly.

These and other instructions of the Yoga teachers will help the students within six months to see changes in their own systems, and the improved health will be the result. If we practise regularly and faithfully and live the right kind of life which is required for gaining good results, then we will find within six months wonderful change in our systems. Then we will be able to understand the value of this science of the Hatha Yoga, and we will know what right living means. A few people understand the true meaning of right living. The majority of people live the most artificial kind of life. They eat too much, drink too much, and waste their nervous energy by dissipation by going to theatres, and so on, and still they wonder why they do not possess perfect health and healthy minds and why they have the nervous prostration. The nervous prostration is the inevitable result of dissipation. So, if we do not want the nervous prostration, we must not be dissipated. Remove the cause, and the result will be removed by itself.

The practice of the Hatha Yoga will lead to the practice of the Raja Yoga. As the Hatha Yoga is the science which deals entirely with the physical constitution and its ideal, so, on the other hand, the ideal of the Raja Yoga is a perfectly healthy self-controlled mind. It deals with the mind and the mental functions and teaches how we can develop the power of concentration. The power of concentration is very important and valuable in our daily life. The majority of people do not possess this power, and, consequently they cannot have success in their

business, in art, music, and other branches of their profession of works.

The power of concentration can be developed only by the practice or *abhyasa*. The practice is absolutely necessary for concentration. If we practise regularly and follow the instructions of a teacher, we can gain wonderful results within six months. The power of concentration will be so developed that you will be able to fix your mind on one subject for a long time and understand all the conditions for and against that subject.[1] A Yogi is supposed to know the past, present and future. How does he know that? He knows all these things by the power of concentration. You will be able to know what is going to happen to you, simply by concentrating your mind upon the conditions that are about to come. If you wish to know what you were in your previous incarnation, you may be able to know simply by the power of your concentration. Concentrate your mind upon your past, and then you will know the exact conditions and circumstances that you had before. All these impressions and ideas of our past lives are pigeonholed in our subconscious plane. We shall be able to arouse them by directing our concentrated mental energy towards those latent impressions. So, you will notice how valuable is the power of concentration, which cannot be developed except through practice. We must devote at least half an hour everyday to the practice of concentration. Take any object that is very attractive and pleasing, and think of it for five or ten minutes, and gradually increase the time everyday, then you will see what a wonderful result will come to you. Those who have studied the *Patanjala-darshana*, will understand how valuable and important this branch of the science of Yoga is. Its ideal is to unfold all the latent powers of our own self, which are now dormant in our subconscious mind. We can unfold them through the repeated practice, and can develop them and gain wonderful results in every possible way. It describes the psychic phenomena, and at the same time, tells us why these psychic powers are obstacles in the path of spiritual realization. The psychic powers are not the same as the spiritual

[1] The subject of concentration has been discussed in a separate chapter.

powers. A few people understand the difference. You may possess the psychic powers, but you may not be spiritual. There are persons who can read other people's minds, or who are clairvoyant and clairaudient. But if you ask them or study their character, you will find that they are not spiritual at all. They have also no spiritual consciousness. So, by studying the Raja Yoga, we would be able to understand the relation of the psychic powers to our mental conditions and the reason as to why they are not helpful in gaining the highest spiritual realization, or the Godconsciousness.

The Godconsciousness is the ideal of the Raja Yoga. Through the practice of concentration and meditation, one can attain to the Godconsciousness. Some people may ask, why should we try to attain to the Godconsciousness? Well, it will make us free from all bondage, it will make us realize our past and future, as we know our present. What else do we want to have? If we attain to that Godconsciousness, we may not be rich materially or commercially, but we will be rich spiritually. Some people have an idea that God is like a multimillionaire, sitting above the clouds and possessing enormous wealth, and so they try to become perfect like God by acquiring wealth. That is a mistake. God is not rich materially, but he is the absolute bliss, omniscience, omnipotence, and is absolutely free. He is the master of everything, and if we can become masters of our environmental conditions and attain to peace and higher knowledge, then we will be approaching the divine Being.

The students of the Raja Yoga and the science of Yoga can be divided into three classes. The first class are those who are the born Yogis; that is, those who are born as the awakened souls. After practising Yoga in their previous incarnations they acquired a tendency to live a pure life, and so these awakened souls manifest those tendencies from their childhood. Nothing of this world attracts their mind. They do not care for anything of this world. The mortals are dying to have certain things, but these awakened souls do not want them. Can we imagine what state of mind these awakened souls possess? Why is it that they do not care for those things for which others are dying? What do they possess? They possess something which is much higher and much greater

than what we possess now. These awakened souls do not care to have luxuries and sense pleasures, but they are longing for something which they do not know. By the law of attraction, they are drawn into the surroundings of some great Yogis, or wise men, and then these souls feel quite at home. The instructions of these Yogis appeal to them, and they follow the instructions of them, and, in a short time, they gain wonderful results. Nothing can obstruct their progress. They take up the practice of Yoga from the very point, where they left off in their previous incarnation. Nothing is lost, and they go on practising till the highest ideal of their life is attained.

The second class includes those who are the half-awakened souls, who need more experience, and who try to find their ideal by going into various things without striking the right one at the very beginning. They waste a great deal of their time and energy. They do not know exactly what they want. They think that they want the world at certain moments, and at other times they think that they do not want the world, and so they vacillate from one state into another. Sometimes they follow the world and get certain results, and then are dissatisfied and try to become spiritual, but they are not steady enough to stay in that state. They go back again to the world, and, in this way they waste a great deal of their time and energy. They take up the practice of Yoga for some time, and they do not like it. They give it up again and then after a few years they wake up again and take it up. They cannot make any steady progress. They find a great many obstacles, but they are not strong enough, as they are weak. Their mental conditions are disturbed. They find a great many distractions, but still in the long run they can attain to the highest goal through constant practice.

The third class includes those who take up the practice of Yoga for the first time in this incarnation, who are born as unawakened souls, who have no spiritual ideals, and who live on the animal plane. The sense pleasures and the sense desires are the highest ideal of their lives. If you ask them anything about the spirituality, they do not know or care for it, and if they try to practise Yoga, they find a great many obstacles. Perhaps their physical conditions are not favourable. They

may have many diseases, and their environmental conditions are not helpful, and so they cannot overcome those obstacles. But after a long practice, they find very little results. These obstacles are stronger than their desire to accomplish the higher result, but if such persons follow faithfully the instructions of a Yogi and take up the breathing exercises, and practise them faithfully, then wonderful results will come to them. Then they will be able to remove all those obstacles gradually, and will gain the perfect health by correcting the errors in their mode of living, and so on. In fact, the science of the Raja Yoga is beneficial for all these classes of people which we find in the world. It is a science which has been in existence for ages in the East. It was extolled by Pythagoras, Plato, the Neo-Platonists, Plotinus, Porphiry and Proclus as well as by the Gnostics, the Christian mystics of the Middle Ages and the Roman Catholics. You will find amongst the monks and the nuns of the highest order the practice of concentration and meditation, but they have converted this universal science into a sectarian system.

As I have already said that the students of Yoga are not required to have any particular belief in a particular doctrine or a dogma of any particular religion, so one can practise the religion by retaining his faith in creeds and dogmas, in which he was brought up. A student of Vedanta may be a Christian, or a Buddhist, or a Mohammedan, or a believer in any creed. The practice will bring the result and not the belief only. The belief is secondary, but practice is the first thing necessary. The earnestness, sincerity and faithful practice will bring good result. Spencer, Kant, Schopenhauer, Ralph Waldo Emerson and others spoke highly of this science as one which unravels the mysteries of the soul and of the universe. It was kept secret in India for a long time. The Yogis would not give these instructions and teachings to ordinary persons, but only to their faithful disciples. They did not want to throw the pearls before the swine. When a faithful disciple came to them, they would teach, otherwise they would not. Now the Yogis in India have become more liberal, because they find that the people who are living a different kind of life, ought to know a little of this, and ought to practise a little. They will get some results in the end; and, therefore, they give it freely.

The first steps of this science of Yoga are eight in number, and the first four of these include all the moral trainings. We must not kill any living creature. Non-killing should be practised in thought, word and deed. We must not injure anyone. We should practise the golden rule. "Do unto others as you wish others to do unto you". If you kill others, others will kill you. Why do you not think of that? As we do not want to be killed, so we should not kill any living creature. We must not steal another person's property. We must speak the truth. We must practise continence and have the higher moral ideal. The perseverance, fortitude, and all other should be practised. Here you will notice in these first two steps all the teachings which make up the Sermon on the Mount are embodied. That is the beginning of a pure, spiritual and godly life. And then we can go higher and higher through practice and at last we attain to the highest realization.

There are other branches of Yoga, the Karma Yoga, the Bhakti Yoga, and the Jnana Yoga. The Karma Yoga tells us how we should live in this world. This is very practical and important. How can we make our works as the acts of worship? It is possible only by understanding the secret of the work. So we will know that all these daily works of our lives can be turned into the acts of worship, and can be made the means towards the attainment of the highest realization of the absolute Truth.

The science of the Bhakti Yoga is called the science of the divine Love. It covers the whole field of emotions and feelings. It teaches how to transform our human affections and earthly love into the divine Love by directing them towards God, and then those human affections which are a source of bondage today, will become the means for the liberation of our souls. Therefore, let us direct our thoughts towards God; let us feel that God is our dearest friend, our husband, wife, father, mother, brother, sister and everything. Let us have all these emotions directed towards Him. That is a wonderful science, and also the most practical one. You will find in India hundreds and thousands of people are struggling everyday to devote their human affections to God, who after a short time become saintly and divine. The path of love is regarded by many as the highest path for realization, but it is at the same

time most dangerous, because there are a great many attractions or distractions and temptations in this path. We cannot keep up the highest ideal before our minds all the time. We may slip and plunge into the world again, but if we have competent teachers or *Gurus* then through their instructions we can overcome all these temptations and difficulties, and gradually, we attain to the highest goal through love and love alone.

The other path is the path of the right knowledge and the right discrimination. It is for those who are intellectual and philosophical in their tendencies, who can analyse the nature of things, and who are able to sacrifice their earthly ideals for the sake of knowledge. It is the Jnana Yoga, or the path of knowledge. The path of Jnana Yoga is described as the most difficult path. It is as difficult as to walk on the sharp edge of a razor, having the fear of being hurt at every moment. But there are students all over the world who are capable of travelling on this path of knowledge. Then can attain to the highest goal through the right discrimination and right analysis, and they will not stop until the highest Truth is realized.

The Jnana Yogis are those who have conquered death in this life through right knowledge or divine wisdom. The sufferings of body, pain and disease do not affect their souls. As the difficulties which encompass this path do not exist in relation to those who are living in different planets and so the pains and sufferings which affect the body, do not affect the souls of those who are dwelling on the higher atmosphere of the absolute Truth. Drinking the cup of the eternal bliss, they conquer death and all troubles of life, and they enjoy the everlasting bliss even in this mundane life. They see Divinity everywhere and they live like the emancipated souls. They stand on the top of all scriptures of the world, and they are regarded as the great ones, or the enlightened souls. The masses of people worship them as the ideals of the nations, nay, they themselves become the ideals. They attain to that state of oneness with the Divinity.

The attainment of oneness is the highest goal of all kinds of Yoga. All the practices of all kinds of Yoga teach that to be one with God or to become Divine, is the ideal of all souls, and he who has attained to that state, has become perfect. So we see how many-sided is the science of Yoga, and how practical

it is too. A true Yogi sees Divinity everywhere, as is described in the *Bhagavad Gita,* in the verse which runs thus: "He who has attained to that realization of oneness, sees God in all animate objects of the universe, sees God everywhere, he dwells in God, and ultimately becomes one with God, and remains there forever and ever."

CHAPTER III

THE VALUE OF CORRECT BREATHING

The science of breath is the most important of all sciences, and no other science is so closely connected with our earthly existence, as this science of breath is. The right knowledge of correct breathing is the most important thing in our daily life. Our earthly life commences with the breath, and ends with the passing out of the breath. If a child right after its birth does not breathe for some time, we give up the hope of its life. So also the old man is said to be dead when the last breath passes out of his body. Whenever we think of our life, or of our living substance consciously or unconsciously, we associate it with the breath. Our system is so organized that we cannot live without breathing. We may live without food or drink for hours or days, but we cannot stop our respiration even for a moment. The first lesson we receive direct from the mother nature is the lesson of breathing. Our physical health, growth, and purification of blood, and, consequently, the activities of the internal organs depend entirely upon the respiratory process, and, therefore, the study of the science of breath will help us in getting a clear idea of the wonderful powers and marvellous results that can be obtained through correct breathing. The correct breathing destroys all the germs of diseases that enter into our system, and we can get rid of all the microbes which we constantly draw from the atmosphere around us, if we know how to breathe correctly.

In the first place, let us understand the physiological conditions of the respiratory process. We all know that our breathing apparatus consists of the lungs and the air-passages, such as the nose, the pharynx, the larynx, the wind-pipe, and so on. We also know that the atmospheric air is drawn through these passages by the mechanical action of the diaphragm, which is nothing but a strong and flat muscle which separates the chest from abdomen. The oxygen of the air, entering through the open door of the lungs, filters through the thin

walls of the pulmonary capillaries, comes in contact with the venous blood, produces a kind of combustion, and destroys all the impure matter that is deposited in the bood, and, as the result of this combustion, carbonic acid gas is generated which comes out in the form of breath. Ordinarily, when we inhale the air that contains about twenty-one per cent. of oxygen, and when exhaled, it contains twelve per cent. in the system, and the blood which has once been used will be of no further service, if it were not purified by the lungs. In a healthy adult man, the average pulsation is seventyfive in a minute, and two ounces of blood are driven from the heart by lungs by each pulsation, or nine pounds and six ounces in a minute. The whole quantity of blood in the system is considered to weigh about one-fifth of the entire weight of the body, or twentyeight pounds in a man weighing one hundred and forty pounds, and this quantity of blood will take about three minutes to pass from the heart to the lungs or through the lungs, or thirteen thousand and five hundred pounds in tyentyfour hours. Ordinarily we use one-sixth of the full capacity of the lungs. If the full capacity of the lungs be brought into proper use, who can tell what marvellous results might not follow. The nature has not given capacity to any organ without a purpose, and we are sure that if everyone were to use the full capacity of the lung power, the weak and diseased lungs would be found nowhere. All the disease like tuberculosis and others that of the lungs will be driven away from the civilized community by a single generation of correct breathing. If we know exactly the causes which produce such diseases and how to remove those causes, then we shall gain perfect health and live in this world without being affected by any of the germs of diseases that we come in contact with. The science of breath teaches us how we can develop the lung power to its fullest capacity, and how, by regulating, we can purify the cells, the tissues and the organic activities of our system.

Modern physiology tells us that blood is nothing but a vehicle to carry oxygen in the oxy-haemoglobin throughout the system in the cells, tissues and organs of the body; and the organic combustion does not take place in the lungs only, but also in the cells and the tissues themselves. The oxygen invigorates and strengthens every part of the body, and helps

in digesting the food by producing chemical changes in the food; and those who suffer from indigestion and poor digestion, will find that their system lacks in proper supply of oxygen and, if they can get the proper supply of oxygen into system, they will be free from all such troubles of digestion. They should also remember that, in order to get proper nourishment, every particle of food and drink that we take into our system, must be properly oxygenated, when imperfect nutrition is the result of insufficient supply of oxygen in our system. Deep breathing will be extremely helpful to us in drawing larger quantity of oxygen into our system from the atmosphere. It will be especially beneficial for those women who wear tight dresses around their waist, and most of the diseases from which they suffer, can be traced to the lack of adequate supply of oxygen in their systems. In this country (America) especially, many people have their internal organs undeveloped or abnormally developed on account of the unnatural clothes worn, and the deep breathing will help such people in overcoming those defects, and thus becoming free from all diseases and all organic troubles from which they suffer continuously. Deep-breathing, however, should not be practised through the mouth, but always through the nose. Mouth-breathing is extremely injurious to our health, and this habit which we find amongst many people all over the world, should at once be corrected. Parents should never allow their children to breathe through the mouth, or sleep with open mouth. Many of the contagious diseases are contracted through the mouth-breathing and catarrhal troubles of the throat come through this practice. Why should people breathe through the mouth when nature has supplied them with the splendid apparatus for breathing, with dust-catchers and mucous membrane along the wind-pipe and air-passages? Mouth breathing is not only injurious to our health, but also we get all kinds of the germs of diseases, and there is no protection from them. The passage from the mouth to the lungs is unprotected, while the passage through the nose is well-protected, and, if we breathe air through the mouth, all dust and impure substances will find clear track through the mouth into the lungs, and the nostrils will, in course of time, get clogged up on account of disuse, and then other troubles will begin. The pain in the forehead between

eyebrows which is generally caused by chronic catarrh, will be the result if we continue mouth-breathing. So the nostrils should always be kept clean for taking air for breathing.

Those who do not practise deep breathing, generally breathe from the chest. Chest-breathing can be divided into two classes, the one is the high or the collar-bone breathing, and the other is the rib-breathing. In the first (that is, in the collar-bone breathing), the collar-bone and the shoulders are raised up and a small quantity of air enters into the lungs and only the upper part of the lungs is filled, and, consequently, a very small supply of air is taken in by that method. This is the worst of all kinds of breathing, i.e. the high collar-bone breathing is injurious to health. That kind of breathing does not help us in getting sufficient amount of oxygen into the system. The second or the rib-breathing is a little better than the first. In this, the abdomen is drawn in, and the diaphragm is pushed upward, while the chest is somewhat expanded. This kind of breathing, of course, fills the upper and the middle parts of the lungs. The music-teachers generally give this kind of breathing to their students, and they get good results and their chests are expanded to a certain extent. But the deep-breathing is different from these two kinds of breathing that I have just described. It is sometimes called the abdomen-breathing, or the diaphragmatic breathing. Deep breathing is now given in Delsarte and in the physical culture schools; but the Yogis of India, who have studied the science of breath very carefully, prescribe a different method of breathing, by which we can develop the power of the lungs, and use the full capacity, and learn the method, by which we can draw the largest quantity of oxygen from atmosphere for use in our system. That method is not merely the deep breathing, because if we simply continue the deep breathing, we may get the tissues and the cells of our lungs inflated or increased in time, but we must learn how to draw more oxygen into the system by regulating our breath. The science of breath means not only a proper supply of oxygen in the system, but also it tells us how we should learn to regulate our respiratory process, and that is the most important thing, because when we have learnt to control the motion of the diaphragm, we can do anything with those organs.

II

The Yogis of India claim that through the breathing exercises all kinds of diseases can be cured, and there is a science behind it. They say that it is not merely the oxygen that cures all the diseases, but there is a different force of different powers. The healing power is not merely the oxygen, but it is what they call the power of the *Prana*. The power of the *Prana* is neither oxygen, nor electricity, nor molecular attraction, but is a force distinct from these forces and also other physical and chemical forces. It is not produced by oxygen, but it is a power which governs and directs the physical forces of the nature. It is sometimes called the nervous force or the life force, or the vital force, or the vital energy. In Sanskrit, it is called the *Prana*, and the object of these Yogis in India is to gain absolute control over this *Prana*. By gaining control over this *Prana*, we can not only get the physical results, but also the mental, moral, and spiritual results can be obtained. That is a thing unknown to the physiologists and the medical practitioners of the West, but the Yogis of India claim that this is possible, and their theory is that the mind and the thought and all other mental functions are closely related to the respiratory functions of our systems. They say that we gain perfect self-control, peace, and calmness of mind through the process of the correct breathing. The tranquillity and the spiritual enlightenment can be obtained through correct breathing, and the Yogis of India as well as the greatest thinkers of the ancient times, after studying the science of breath, discovered the proper method, by which these higher results can be obtained through the breathing exercises. They call these higher breathing exercises the *pranayama* which means the 'control of breath'. The word *Prana* is, as I have stated, a Sanskrit term which stands for that higher force, or the vital force, or the vital energy, or the life-force, or the nervous energy, and they say that this *Prana* is all-pervading.[1] It exists everywhere. It is in the atmosphere, it is in the rays of the sun. It is the cause of the heat, light, motion, and electricity. Sometimes it is called the 'breath of life'.

[1] In the *Upanishads* and the *Brahmasutra*, their *prana* has been mentioned as the 'Brahman'. But it should be remembered that this *prana* is known as the *saguna*-Brahman.

It is also the cause of our will-power and thought-force, which are the first manifestations of a living soul. A living soul must begin to think, and must possess will-power, and these powers are the highest manifestations of that energy which is called by the Yogis of India the *Prana*. This energy is also the cause of gratification, and all the physical forces of the nature are but so many manifestations of that one eternal energy, called the *Prana*. God, we know, is a living God. But how does He live ? He does not live merely by breathing air from the atmosphere, but He lives without breathing, that is, by the vital force of this *Prana*. If we study our own system and the organic functions, we will find that the air drawn in and breathed out by the lungs, is drawn in by that motion of the diaphragm, and that motion of the diaphragm is caused by some nervous energy which exists in our system. What is the cause of this motion of the diaphragm ? The Yogis say that it is caused by the *Prana,* and that motion of the disphragm produces motion in the lungs, and then by the pump action the air is drawn in and thrown out.

But that *Prana,* or the life force, or the vital energy, is located in the spinal column, from which all the motor and sensory nerves branch out and spread all over the system, or over the organs. The activity of the heart is regulated by this nervous energy of the *Prana*. The nerve currents flow through the channels by this power of the *Prana,* or the life-force. Without this life-force, the organic activities will be impossible, the heart will not beat, the lungs will not move, and other organic functions will stop. There is a special organ for the manifestation of this *Prana,* and that is called the spinal column in the vertebrates, equivalent organ in other animals. This spinal column affords a vehicle for this energy of the *Prana,* and it is located in the nerve-centres in the spine, and from there it flows through the nerves all over the system.

This will give us a little idea of the importance of this power of the *Prana,* and if we can store up a certain quantity of this power of the *Prana,* or the vital nervous energy, we can gain perfect health, both physical and mental. The power of the *Prana,* again, is the cause of all mental functions. The power of the *Prana* is the cause of our will and thought. If the vital energy, or the nervous energy, does not manifest itself

in the brain cells, the brain will be unable to think, and a man who lacks in this power of the *Prana,* lacks in his will-power, and also in his thinking power. In order to gain the perfect control over our will, or to develop our will-power, thinking power and intellectual faculties, we must learn the method, by which we can store up this *Prana* in our system. Then the Yogis say that this *Prana* exists in the atmosphere, in water and in food. Everything that we eat or drink contains a certain quantity of this *Prana,* and a student in the science of breath knows the method, by which a larger quantity of the *Prana* can be drawn in our system from the atmosphere, from food, from water, and from everything. Of course, we are naturally drawing this *Prana* to a certain extent into our system from the system of our environments, but when we do it consciously, we gain control over it. The whole respiratory process is caused by this power of the *Prana,* but at present we do not know how to gain control over this *Prana.* How are we to regulate this *Prana* or the vital energy, and make it manifest on the highest plane, how to develop the will-power and conquer our hunger, thirst and all the mental passions and desires, to which we are enslaved in our ordinary life ? The Yogis of India claim that one can attain the absolute control over the organic functions as well as over the mental and the intellectual functions, by controlling the power of the breath. But the power of the *Prana* is invisible. We cannot see as well as perceive it, but we know its external manifestation in the form of the motion of the diaphragm, and its most outward expression is the respiratory process. The air is drawn in and breathed out. The inhalation and the exhalation of air are the grossest manifestation of this power of the *Prana.* In order to gain the absolute control over this invisible force, we must begin with the grossest manifestation, because we can get hold of it very easily.

Now, if we try to stop the motion of the lungs, or the motion of the diaphragm, how can we do it ? Simply by controlling our breathing exercises or respiratory process. When we have done that, we have given a tremendous shock to our system. The power of the *Prana,* or the whole nervous system, is agitated. If we are under the direction of competent teachers, we can learn very easily a method by which we can control

that agitated state of the *Prana* and transmute that power into our will-power. When we have tried to control the motion of the lungs we are needed to exercise our will-power. At first, the will-power may be very weak, but gradually it will be strengthened. Then the will-power will, in course of time, be so strong as to control the activity of the lungs and also of the diaphragm. The ordinary people may not believe that it is possible to bring this mechanical activity of the diaphragm and the movements of the lungs under absolute control, but it is possible. I have seen the Yogis who can control the heart-beat by their will-power and who can control the motion of the diaphragm. There are instances of persons who were buried alive for forty days with their ears and nostrills sealed with the sealing-wax, and their bodies kept in hermetically sealed boxes and then buried under ground. Constant watch was kept over that spot and after forty days the body was raised and the person revived, lived after that. That shows that it is possible to develop the power by the absolute control over the motion of the lungs and the motion of the diaphragm. In fact, that power is latent in every individual, but it is never brought into play by ordinary persons. Only the Yogis have studied it carefully and have developed a system by which this can be done. So the practice of Yoga is necessary, and we should realize the value of the correct breathing which will enable us to control over the breath and also our mind ; and when the mind is controlled, or its activities are silenced, or are balanced, then concentration and meditation help us to realize the *Atman.*

CHAPTER IV

THE HEALING POWER OF THE PRANA

Our earthly life consists in a continued adaptation to environments. A living substance is that which is capable of adapting itself to its surroundings, and the very moment it completely fails to do so, it is dead. The more perfect is the adaptation, the more perfect is the manifestation of life. All vegetable, animal, and human lives are subject to this great law of adaptation. This law manifests itself, and governs every step of existence, growth, evolution and development of a living creature. That power, by which an organism can adapt itself to its environments, is not a mechanical one, and not merely a chemical force, but it is what we understand by the word 'life-force' or 'vital energy'. Wherever there is the manifestation of this life-force, there is a natural tendency to bring a perfect harmony with the surrounding condition as well as with the laws that govern them. This tendency is to be found in all the living beings as well as in every department of nature, whether vegetable, animal, or human. Therefore the fulfilment of this tendency, the establishment of a perfect harmony with the environment, and obedience to the natural laws, are implied in the meaning of adaptation, and these are the products of the life-force, or the vital energy.

The normal manifestation of the life-force under favourable environments, creating perfect harmony with them and obeying the laws that govern them, is the state which is ordinarily understood by the common expression 'health'. In other words, health means the life under natural conditions, where the law of adaptation and other laws that govern the environments are not violated in the least. But if these laws be violated, if the conditions be abnormal, and if the adaptation be imperfect, then the result will be the lack of health or that state which is meant by such expressions as ill-health, sickness, or disease—all of which mean the lack of health. The disease is not a real entity, which stands outside of ourselves as the enemy of health and attacks us from time to time, as some

take possession of us from outside, but is produced by the inability of the life force to adapt itself to its environments and to obey the laws of nature. In order to adapt ourselves to our surrounding conditions, whether internal or external, we need a certain amount of the energy and the force, and when that amount decreases, either by the waste or dissipation, or by the lack of proper nourishment, or by the violation of the hygienic laws, then we grow weak, and, consequently, become unable to resist environmental influences which are constantly working against the earthly existence, and are trying to crush it, then we succumb under the pressure and become subject to of the life-force under the abnormal conditions. It does not people may think, but it is simply an imperfect manifestation of the various ailments. As for example, when the temperature of the atmosphere is low, if we cannot adapt ourselves to that external change by getting enough of warmth, then our system will be affected and we shall catch cold, or be frozen. If the food be too rich or unwholesome, our system will try its best to assimilate it, but if it fails, then the result will be indigestion, etc. If water which we drink, contains germs or impure substances, they will enter into our system and try to dwell there, produce various symptoms of abnormal conditions, which our system will naturally struggle to throw off and recover its normal condition.

If there be enough of the life-force, the organs will destroy all the germs of the disease and also all the microbes and bacteria which are constantly entering into our bodies through breath, food and drink as well as through the pores of the skin and are attacking the cells and the tissues. An abundance of the life-force is necessary to resist their influences, or to drive them away, or to kill them, and eventually bring back the normal condition, which we understand as health. No disease can arise in the system, if there be a sufficient amount of the life-force and if the cells are able to resist the influences of the common environments. The life-force has the primary tendency to preserve itself. This tendency for self-preservation is manifested not only by the individual being, but also by every organ and every tissue, nay, by every minute cell of the whole organism. Propelled by this force, each cell acts instinctively, as it were, to protect its normal or healthy state, and to remove

all such obstacles as stand in its way. If any part of the body be wounded or injured, immediately the minute cells which are floating in the blood, begin to work with and extra force to remove that obstacle, to attack that enemy, and to recover the normal state of that part. As in a bee-hive, when any part is injured, thousands of bees will rush to attack and remove the enemy to repair and restore the natural state of the hive, so when the body receives any injury, or when any germ enters the system and attacks the cells, the other cells rush forward with tremendous force and fight against the enemy; and if they succeed in driving that enemy away or killing that germ, the health or normal condition of the body is restored; but if they fail, the result will be pain, aches, or disease. Each cell possesses that life-force or power, by which it preserves itself, and heals the wound. Ordinarily we say that the healing power is generated by the drugs and the medicines which are given by physicians. But do they impart the healing power to us? Take a concrete example of it. When a bone is broken, what does the medical surgeon do? He simply sets it in its proper place, and with the help of the bandage keeps it in the same position for a few days. The mending and repairing are done by nature, as we all say. But what do we mean by nature? The nature is nothing else but the life-force or the vital energy which dwells in the organs and the cells. No other force of the nature than the life-force can perform this task. It is the healing power of nature which manifests itself in the human body in the same manner as in all animals and vegetables. When the bark of a tree is scratched or torn, the same life-force of the tree heals it and makes it perfect. The healthy condition of the body is the result of the normal activities of the vital energy, or the life-force. We all know that if the life-force, or the vital action, is perfect, a man can easily recover from any injury or disease, however malignant it may be. But when the vital force is wasted, the nervous system is run down, the recovery becomes much more difficult, and recuperation is impossible, and then the life-force is impaired or extremely weakened or compelled to work continuously under adverse conditions.

No disease will ever arise, if free scope is given to the vital energy, or the life-force to act under proper conditions. On

the other hand, limit its scope and provide adverse conditions, the life-force will naturally take vigorous measures to overcome, or to remove the obstacles. The results of this effort will appear in the form of aches and pains, and, eventually failing to resist and recover the normal activities, the organism will die under heavy pressure, producing the symptoms of incurable disease.

Thus we can understand that nature has supplied us with a certain amount of the healing power. This power dwells in every form of the living substance. But its quantity varies in different individuals; some have tremendous power of healing, and others have little. A healthy child possesses an abundance of the life-force. If a bone is broken, or any organ is injured, it will be cured in a shorter time than in a grown-up person whose life-force is wasted by dissipation.

In the science of Yoga, this healing power of nature is called the *Prana*. It is a Sanskrit term, meaning the life-force, or the vital energy, which is sometimes translated as the 'breath of life'. That breath of life, which is described in the 7th verse of the second chapter of the Genesis: "And the Lord God had formed a man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life"; and again in the Book of Job, Chapter XXXIII, verse 4: "The Spirit of God hath made me and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life," does not mean merely the atmospheric air which enters into the nostrils, but it means the life-force, or the *Prana*. It does not signify that a specific quantity of air was bottled up in the human system by God at the time of our birth which must be exhausted before death comes, but it means the power of the *Prana*, which is the source of life, the cause of the respiratory process and the producer of the vital actions.

According to the science of breath, each living soul possesses the power of the *Prana*, by which are caused the activities of the motor and sensory nerves. The nerve-currents which travel through these nerves are produced by the vibration of the *Prana*. The nerve-centres in the spine are the storehouse of this life-force where it is generated and kept. In case of emergency, this life-force goes through different parts of the body, distributing the healing powers. The more we can store away

this power of the *Prana,* the stronger we shall be physically and mentally. He who possesses sufficient quantity of this breath of life, or the *Prana,* has perfect health and enormous vitality and strength which he can impart to others if he wishes to do so.

This is the secret of the magnetic healing. The loss of the *Prana,* or the nerve-force, is the cause of nervous prostration and of all other diseases. He who has gained mastery over this breath of life, can consciously direct the healing power of the *Prana* to the diseased part, can generate new vibrations in the cells of those parts, and by the higher breathing exercises and destroying the cause of the disease, he can easily gain perfect health and strength. He can bring health and strength constantly to every part of his body. By polarizing the activities of the cells, he can remove the obstacles that prevent the normal vibration of the vital current of those cells. The cells are moving in certain directions, but he can make them all obey his will-power, and then he can do anything with them, and cure all diseases. But an ordinary person who has not control over the breath of life, cannot do it. A true Yogi claims that he can gain mastery over this breath of life, and can cure all diseases, of course, such diseases as have not produced decomposition or disorganization, but all other diseases in the preliminary stages can be cured by these higher breathing exercises. The breathing exercises will bring actual control over this nerve-force, and they will help us to draw the *Prana* from the atmospheric air, and from food, water, etc., because this life-force is all-pervading.

The manifestation of this force is only to be found through the nerve-centres and the nerves. Therefore, if we know the secret of drawing from the atmosphere the life-force or the *Prana* into our system, since the quantity of air which passes through our lungs, possesses the *Prana,* if we can extract it and store it in the nerve-centers, then we can use it at any time when it is needed. Nature possesses it, but no individual can give it, unless that individual possesses a superabundance of the *Prana.* Therefore, when we go to a healer, he may give it, and we may feel better for the time being, but as soon as it is used up, we shall be obliged to return to him once again. The true Yogi, however, says, if you know the method, by which you can

manufacture that life-force in yourself, then there will be no need of your going to others and borrowing it from them.

The Christian Scientists, the Faith Healers and the Mental Healers can cure diseases without the drugs, but if they knew the secret of manufacturing the life-force, or, the *Prana,* through the breathing exercises, as taught by the Yogis of India, they would surely gain more marvellous results. Having learned the secret of manufacturing the life-force, a Yogi says that one can easily become master of his body and the mind. Here we must not forget that all these different methods are either by the power of arousing the healing power of the *Prana* in the patient through suggestion, or by transmitting that power of the *Prana* to the patient. A Yogi can cure diseases by the power of touch, or by the power of command, by simply saying: 'Be thou cured, be thou healed'. Such instances of instaneous cures can be found in all countries. Jesus the Christ was one who possessed the power of command. Buddha and Sri Ramakrishna also had this power.

The power which is developed through the breathing exercises, as given in the Yoga classes, held under the auspices of the Vedanta Society of New York, will produce wonderful results in a very short time. Those who know the secret of manufacturing and storing away the *Prana,* possess perfect health. But this cannot be achieved in a day, or in a month, it will require some time to gain that mastery over the breath of life, and it will also require an absolute self-control. One should live a pure and chaste life, and learn the secret of transmuting the nervous energy and the sex energy into the will-power, by practising the higher breathing exercises of a Yogi.

In order to cure diseases, we must wield a tremendous will-power in us, and that will-power can be more strengthened and increased by the breathing exercises. This development of the will-power is one of the ideals of a Yogi, or of a student of the science of breath. The first effect of the successful breathing exercises is the control of the nerves, or what we call the freedom from nervousness as well as from all diseases which proceed from the nervous disorder. The physical strength will be almost unlimited, and the person will be so strong and hardy that he will not be easily affected by sudden changes of weather, nor by hunger or thirst; a small

quantity of food or drink will be enough to produce great results. Anyone who practises the breathing exercises faithfully as given in the Yoga classes, will gain highly beneficial results both in the body and the mind. He will remove all impurities from his system, and overcome all abnormal and diseased conditions. He will no longer be subject to rheumatism, stiffness of joints or muscles, paralysis, and other ills, for the higher vibrations of the *Prana* will destroy their causes. Every individual, whether young or old, man or woman, is bound to get some result, if the exercises are properly practised for six months. He is furthermore sure to cure the mental *dis-ease*, that is, a restless state of the mind. He will be master of his senses as well as of the passions and the animal desires. He will conquer anger, hatred, anxiety, jealousy, and worry, by raising the vibration of the *Prana* on the higher plane of psychic activity.

This *Prana* produces the will-power, and this will-power is the highest manifestation of power. The spiritual power will also come to him who has gained absolute mastery over himself. Thus gradually conquering hunger and thirst, and gaining mastery over his body, mind and senses, he will live in the world like a true Yogi, and he will know what this breath of life is and how wonderful is the healing power of the *Prana*.

CHAPTER V

THE VEDANTA PHILOSOPHY AND THE SCIENCE OF BREATH

The Vedanta philosophy is as old as the first and most ancient civilization of the world. It is one of the oldest systems, and has given the highest ideals of life as well as the best explanations of the phenomenal world. The phenomenal universe is described in Vedanta as the expression of one supreme Being, the eternal existence. That eternal existence is called by various names, and is worshipped under various forms. The most ancient writing of this philosophy, the Rig Veda, tells us that the ancient sages realized this unity of existence 5000 years before Christ and declared to the world in a trumpet voice: "That which exists, is one, men call it by various names." This Vedanta philosophy is not like any other purely speculative philosophy; it is not like the German philosophy, or any of the Western systems of philosophy which deal merely with speculations, but it has given the most solid foundation to a system of religion which is nameless, creedless and without dogma. It is the universal religion which underlies all the special religions of the world. The special religions are but so many expressions of this nameless and formless universal religion.

The Vedanta philosophy is not only a system of philosophy, but it is also the foundation of the universal religion. It is not speculative, but it gives an explanation of the universe which perfectly harmonizes with the latest conclusions of the modern scientists. Some people may wonder how those ancient seers could have realized certain truth of the universe which are in perfect harmony with the latest facts of the modern science. But when we remember that truth is one and truth is true all through eternity, then we do not wonder. The same truths that were realized and discovered by the ancient seers of India centuries before Christ was born, are the truths of today, and will remain truths throughout eternity. Whether Herbert ncer discovered these truths, or did discover Plato, or Buddha,

or Krishna, or any other sage of the vedic period, it does not matter. But the truth is one, and that eternal truth is the foundation, upon which the structure of the Vedanta philosophy and religion has been founded. Furthermore, Vedanta is the most practical system. It teaches where philosophy ends and where religion begins. The practical side of philosophy is religion and the theoretical side of religion is philosophy. In India, as we all know that philosophy, science, and religion have never been separated from one another. That which is unscientific and unphilosophical, cannot be called religious. It must appeal to our reason, and that which appeals to our reason, must be based upon the practical truth. So Vedanta embraces the various branches of science. These are described under different names, as given in Sanskrit, and is meant to describe a system, by knowing which, we can benefit ourselves. The Sanskrit name for each of these systems is Yoga. If we study the method, by which this science of Yoga was discovered, we will find that even in those ancient days observation and experiment were considered to be the best means of discovering the secret truths of nature. By the process of observation and experiment, the ancient seers of Truth discovered the laws which govern our lives. The finer forces of nature and the description of these laws as well as these forces are embodied in the various branches of the science of Yoga.

Among these the science of breath is most important. It is more closely related to our earthly existence than any other science; and a knowledge of this science is more beneficial to our earthly life than the knowledge of any other science of the world. Because the breath is a part of our life. We cannot live without breathing. We may go without food for days, and we may live without drinking for hours, but we cannot stop our respiration even for a few minutes. Our physical health, growth, development, evolution of the organism, and activities of the internal organs depend entirely upon the breath, and a study of the science of breath, together with the practice of the breathing exercises, will help us in gaining the marvelous results. The correct breathing cures all diseases, and kills all the germs that enter into our system.

First of all, let us learn the physiological conditions of the breathing. The breathing apparatus, as we all know, consists

of the lungs and the air-passages, such as the nose the wind-pipe, and so on. We also know that the external air is pumped in by the mechanical action of the diaphragm, which is a strong flat muscle separating the abdomen from the chest, and the oxygen of the atmosphere enters through the open door of the lungs, filters through the pulmonary capillaries, and comes into direct contact with the venous blood which is laden with the waste matter of the system, producing a kind of combustion which destroys the imperfect, or the impure matter, and purifies the blood. As the result of this combustion carbonic acid gas is produced, which comes out in the form of the breath. Air, when inhaled, contains about 21 per cent of oxygen, and when exhaled 12 per cent, having lost 9 per cent, and the blood which had been once used will be of no further service if it is not purified by the lungs. In every adult man, the average pulsation is 75 in a minute and 2 ounces of blood are driven from the heart to the lungs at each pulsation, or 9 pounds and 6 ounces in a minute or 13,500 pounds in 24 hours. If we examine the weight of the whole quantity of blood in the human body, we know that the weight of the blood is about one-fifth of the weight of the entire body or 28 pounds, in a man weighing 140 pounds, and this whole quantity of blood will take 3 minutes to go to the lungs, and become purified. At present it is a familiar fact that ordinarily we use only one-sixth of our lung power, but the science of breath tells us that if the remaining five-sixths of the lung power be brought into play, no one can say what marvelous results may not follow. The science of breath claims that a person who uses the full capacity of the lung power and breathes correctly, will never be diseased, will kill all disease germs, and will acquire perfect health. All the lung troubles and other organic troubles will then be a thing of the past. One single generation of correct breathers will destroy all the germs of disease that prevail in a civilized community.

The physiology tells us that blood is nothing but a vehicle for carrying the oxygen in the form of air from one part of the body to another, that this oxygen filters through the different cells, and that organic activities are produced by this filtering through of the oxygen. The organic combustion does not take place in the lungs only, but also in the tissues and the cells themselves. When the oxygen enters a cell, that portion of

the oxygen produces a kind of combustion, however minute it may be, removes impurities, and helps its growth and normal activity. The oxygen invigorates and strengthens our bodies, and it also helps in the digestion of the food. In order to have perfect digestion we must have a sufficient quantity of oxygen in the system. If we do not forget that before we get any nourishment, every particle of food and drink must be properly oxygenated, then we shall pay the proper attention to the breathing exercises, and the science of breath will help us to learn the secret by which we can draw a greater quantity of oxygen into the system and voluntarily let it pass through all the internal organs, thereby gaining the wonderful results. The deep breathing will help us to do this, and it will be especially beneficial to those women who wear tight dresses. But the deep breathing must not be practised through the mouth. The mouth-breathing is extremely dangerous. It is injurious to our health, and parents should never allow their children to breathe through mouth, or to sleep with open mouth.

Those who do not practise deep breathing, generally breathe from the chest. The chest-breathing can be divided into two classes. First, the collar-bone breathing, in which the upper parts of the lungs are only filled with air; and second, the rib-breathing, in which the abdomen is drawn in, the diaphragm is pushed upward, and the chest is extended on the sides. The music-teachers generally give this kind of breathing for the voice culture, and by this breathing we can fill nearly half the upper half of our lungs with the atmospheric air, but the lower half cannot be filled by this process. The deep breathing is entirely different from these two classes of breathing. By this method the lower part of the lungs also can be filled with air. In some of the physical culture and the Delsarte schools, we get lessons in the deep breathing, but, in India, the teachers of the science of breath, who are called Yogis, say that there is another kind of breathing, by which all the parts of the lungs can be filled without producing any injury to the system, and the science of breath tells us that this peculiar method of breathing will help us in gaining control over our nervous system, internal organs and our minds, and that by this method we shall be able to possess the perfect health as long as we shall live on this earth. Besides these physical results,

moral and spiritual results can also be obtained through the practice of the breathing exercises. These yogic breathing exercises are described as the means by which the self-control can be obtained. One who has mastered one's breath, has mastered one's mind. He has conquered his passions, and has gained the absolute self-mastery. In fact, he has mastered his physical nature. The self-control, the calmness of mind, tranquillity and peace, the spiritual enlightenment and the moral upliftment will come through the breathing exercises, if one is properly directed by a Yogi.

From the very ancient times the Yogis of India observed the effects of the different systems of the breathing exercises upon their own bodies, and those results, gathered through centuries of investigation, have been handed down to us. By studying these results and also methods we find that there is nothing in the world which cannot be achieved by one who has mastered his breath. But the breath does not mean merely drawing in, or pumping out, the air, nor does it mean a large quantity of oxygen. It has a different meaning, and the Yogis have described how by the higher exercises of breath one can attain the spiritual perfection. They called these higher breathing exercises in Sanskrit the *pranayama* which means the control of the *prana*. The *prana* is commonly translated into English as breath, but it is not the breath. It means that power or force, which draws the air in, and which gives life and vitality to an organism. But what power is that ? That power is that by which we are able to say that we are the living beings. The science of breath tells us that if we can gain control over this *prana* and store a great quantity of it in the nerve centres, we shall possess a superabundance of the vital strength, health, and power, and the vital and healing power which can be transmitted to others if we choose to use the force in that way. Not only this, but the science of breath also claims that the will-power and the mental activities are also the manifestation of this *prana*.

I have already said that the breath has a close relation to the mind. If you notice the condition of your mind and also the condition of your breath at the same moment, you will find the relation between them. They are so closely related that if the breath of a person, who is extremely angry, be examined,

you will see that his whole system is poisoned for the time being. If a mother is angry and feeds her child at that time, the child will drink the poison. If, on the contrary, you examine your breath, when your mind is peaceful and spiritual inclined, you will see that your breath will be deep, rhythmic, gentle, and slow. Gradually, when your mind becomes absolutely centered upon the highest Truth or the supreme Being, you will find that your breath will stop. And what will happen then ? The sixth sense, or the spiritual eye of the soul, will be opened, and a great and a most wonderful illumination will come. In that state, the soul will realize its true nature, and gain the absolute mastery over the mind, intellect, and passion. Thus we see what wonderful results may be attained through the study of the science of breath, and the Vedanta philosophy admits or welcomes this study for quiting the modifications of the mind and to realize the highest Truth which is the ultimate goal of the human life.

CHAPTER VI

THE PRANAYAMA

(Delivered in America, in 1901)

The *pranayama* means the control of the *prana*. It is an art as well as a science of controlling the breath or *prana*. In my lecture on the *prana*, I have explained what the Yogis mean by it. So it will be needless to describe here fully what the word '*prana*' signifies. The *prana*, when it moves the universe, is called the cosmic *prana*[1], or the life-principle of the universe, and when it moves the individual body, it becomes the individual *prana*. The cosmic *prana* is the same as what the modern scientists call the eternal cosmic energy. It manifests in the form of different forces in the external and internal nature. From the minutest atom up to the biggest solar system the whole universe is nothing but the result of the vibrations of the eternal cosmic *prana*. When that cosmic *prana* begins to manifest, it vibrates, and produces different force-centres which are known by the nature of the atoms, or the ether. Then those force-centres are set in motion, and that motion is known by the name of attraction (*akarshana*) and repulsion (*vikarshana*). The manifested vibration of the *prana* is called by different names, such as the gravitation, the heat, the electricity, the magnetism, and so forth. All the action and reaction of the external and internal world can be reduced to a single expression which a Yogi uses as the 'vibration of the *prana*'. The sun, the moon, the stars, nay, every object of the universe are the result of that vibration. The various discoveries of the physical forces are nothing but the discoveries of different kinds of vibration of the same *prana*.

All our sensations are but the vibrations of the *prana* within time and space. If in 1/1000th part of a second there be four billions of vibrations of the ether, then the eye would see the red colour, the skin would feel 31° centigrade of the heat,

[1] The cosmic *prana* is the sum total of all the individual *pranas*.

and the ear would hear the tone of e. Our whole life consists in a continuous struggle between the being and the non-being, and that struggle is nothing but the highest state of vibration. The cause of all such vibrations is the motion of the *prana.* The finest manifestation of the vibrating *prana* is the mind, and the grossest manifestation is the matter. The less the vibrations, the grosser is the manifestation. Suppose the whole universe is like the ocean of the ether, set into motion by the cosmic force, called the *prana,* and the greatest number of vibrations of the ether in a second will produce the finest thought, a little less will produce the electricity, still less will become the gravitation, and so forth. Thus the whole universe, when analysed, can be reduced to the degree of vibration of the one force which is called by the Yogis, the *prana.* The lowest manifestation of this *prana* is the mineral, a little higher is the vegetable, and higher than vegetable is the animal. So each stage from the insect up to the highest man who is extremely advanced in spirituality, shows the difference in the degree of the *prana,* both physically and mentally. When a higher kind of vibration comes, the lower vibration merges into that higher and disappears. The noise of a thunder or the sound of a cannon ball, when fired, overpowers and drowns the other sounds which are caused by less number of the vibrations. If the vibration, which causes sound, be enormously increased, our ear will not hear any sound at all. Our eyes can see under a certain number of vibrations of the ether, which we call light. If the number be increased, we shall not see the light. If our mind vibrates in a higher degree, the functions, caused by the slower vibration, will be stopped and controlled by that higher vibration. In our ordinary state, the mind vibrates in a certain degree, and produces all the lower functions which we call the animal desires. If the vibration of the mind increases, it produces the higher thought, and drowns the lower thought as long as the higher thought exists, and overcoming the animal nature, makes us moral and intellectual. When the vibration is still more increased in number, it produces the spiritual blaze which overcomes all other lower activities.

This is the natural method of subduing the lower by the higher. The highest vibration of the mind produces the super-

conscious state, what the Yogis call the *samadhi*. In this state of *samadhi*, all other states of the mind are controlled or subdued. This production of the highest vibration of the mind which brings the superconscious state, is the aim of a Yogi. A Yogi who has reached that state, has got the perfect control over all other states. It may come through concentration, through devotion, through proper discrimination, or through the practice of controlling the manifested *prana*, or the motion of the lungs, which moves the whole system of the body. This control of the manifested *prana*, or the motion of the lungs, produces the results, both physical and mental. It brings the health in good order, prolongs the period of lifetime, and prevents untimely decay of the physical frame.

There is one class of the Yogis in India who practise this control for the physical results. They are called the Hatha-Yogis. But there is another class of Yogi who goes to the psychical side. Their object is to bring the superconscious state of the mind. They are known as the Raja Yogis. These Raja Yogis say: "We want to shorten the time for reaching the perfection". Every human being, after passing through the various stages of evolution, will reach the state of the perfect control of the body and the mind, but instead of going through the slow process of walking all the way on foot, they want to go by the quickest means of attaining to it, and become perfect in this mundane life. All the great sages and prophets of the world did the same thing. Each one of them passed in a span of life through some stages which might have taken hundreds of births, or thousands of centuries. They thought of nothing else, and they worked for no other thing, but they worked for the realization of the perfect state, and so they shortened the time, and reached perfection in this very life.

A Yogi says that the perfect control over the mind and the body can be reached by controlling the motion of the lungs. He says that there are various nerve-centres in the spinal column, from which proceed the motor and the sensory nerves all over the body. The centre, which regulates the respiration, is that which is opposite to the thorax. It is a kind of controlling power over the other centres. Therefore he tries to control this centre that regulates the breathing system, or the plexus, as the Yogis call it. Then the control of the other centres

become easier. There are three other centres below this and two above the brain. I shall not go to the detailed explanation of these centres. Those who wish to know, will understand clearly by reading carefully the elaborate explanation, given by Swami Vivekananda in his *Raja Yoga,* and in my books, *How to be a Yogi* and the *Yoga Psychology.*

From each of those centres have come out the several nerves which carry the sensations as well as the motions of the body into the brain, and afterwards bring them out of the brain to the different parts of the body. One current is going from the body to the brain, and the other is coming out from the brain. They are known as the afferent and the efferent currents. These two currents run through the right and the left channels in the spinal cord. They are called *ida* and *pingala* by the Yogis. I have dealt it in my book, *How to be a Yogi.* In the middle, there is the *sushumna.* As long as these two currents are passing through the innumerable ramifications of the nervous system, it is impossible to control them. The whole nervous energy is scattered all over the body. It can only be controlled, if the principal stations or centres can be controlled, and all the centres move as long as the respiratory centre is moving. Therefore by controlling the respiratory centre, we can control all other centres, and collecting the nervous power that lies in each centre, if we direct it through the *sushumna,* the whole nervous system will be controlled, and a new power will be produced which would make the mind vibrate in the highest degree, and the result will be the attainment of that superconscious state or *samadhi.*

Thus we have understood that *pranayama* is not only the method or process of controlling the breath, but also the method or process of controlling the power or force which causes the lungs to move, or, in other words, it is the process of controlling the vital forces. The method of obtaining such a control, that has been discovered by the Yogis in India, is most scientific, and produces wonderful results. They say that ordinarily we have an irregular breathing. Again there are natural differences of breathing between men an women. The cause of this irregular breathing is the irregularity of the motion of the lungs. Again the irregular motion of the lungs is caused by the irregularity of the respiratory centre. If we

can regulate the motion of the respiratory centre, the motion of the lungs will be regular, and, consequently. the respiration will be regular ; and, conversely, as the respiration, the motion of the lungs and the respiratory centre in the spinal column are working simultaneously by regulating the one, the other two will be regulated. So, if the breathing is regulated, it will check the irregular motion of the lungs, and when the motion of the lungs is regulated, the respiratory centre will move regularly. Consequently, the Yogis first begin with the practice of regulating the breath. It takes a long time to change the course of the breath, because if I practise utmost half an hour to breathe regularly in the morning and half an hour in the evening and the remaining twenty-three hours I am breathing irregularly, then shall I be able to make my respiration regular in a week, or in a fortnight ? Moreover, if my manner of living be irregular, then I shall have to practise for months, before I can get my respiration regular.

So the eating, sleeping, and other physical works ought to be regular. These things will help us to a great extent. Those who practise breathing without taking notice of these things, do not find proper results, and at last find fault with the practice of the *pranayama,* and say that it is useless to practise, as it does not produce the good results. Therefore, if you want to find the good effects of the method of the *pranayama,* then you will have to make your manner of living regular, and at the same time you will have to practise the regular breathing.

The first lesson in the breathing is just to breathe in a measured way. Before you begin to practise, you will have to sit upright, keeping the body, neck and head in a straight line, and then count one, two, three and four, when you breathe in and out. Count and breathe as slowly as you can without feeling any kind of straining. Do it three times a day early in the morning before the breakfast, before the lunch, and before the dinner. If you do not get time before the lunch, do it twice before the breakfast and before the dinner. Do it regularly. After a week, or a fortnight, you can increase the number from four to six. In India, instead of counting one, two, three, etc. we use a symbolical word, such as OM. The word OM ought to be uttered or pronounced in such a way that it will flow in and out harmoniously and rhythmically

with the breath, and think of the meaning of that OM. There is no danger of any kind, nor any fear of disease in going through this practice. But the effect of this practice will be perceptible, if one leads a regular life. If after practising for sometime, you do not find any result, try to investigate into what irregular food you had taken, and so forth. But do not give up the practice, but try to be regular from the next time.

Then the second lesson is this: when you have practised it for a few months, you can breathe in slowly through the left nostril, and utter OM for four times, and then breathe out through the right nostril, and utter OM for four times. Then reverse the process, and breathe in through the right nostril, and breathe out through the left one. Again breathe in through the left nostril. This breathing in and breathing out will make the *pranayama,* and make four such breathing in and breathing out in the morning and four in the evening. When it will be easy, you can increase the counting of OM gradually from four to six, and do it for sometime, and when you will be able to do it easily, you can increase from six to eight. Then after a few months' practice, you will find a marvellous change in the whole system. Then your psychic powers will manifest, your mind will be restful, and your health will be fit for the higher form of the *pranayama,* as is described in the Raja Yoga. These two processes are preliminary to the higher *pranayama.* Those who can go through these, feel no difficulty in getting good results from the higher practice. These two are perfectly harmless, and there is no fear of any kind.

The third lesson is not for the beginners, but for those who have passed through the first and the second lessons. It is the breathing in, then holding the breath and then the breathing out. In India, the Hindus are taught this from their childhood, and so it is easy for them. But this third lesson ought not to be tried without going through the other two. As the Yogi advances through these practices, he gradually gains the power of control. And when this *pranayama* is practised accompanied with concentration, then it produces the great will-power, and one can read the thought, and can foretell what will happen, and experiences the various phenomena which he never experienced before. Then he gradually reaches the highest state of *samadhi,* and acquires the perfect control

of the mind and the body. In this state of *samadhi*, he realizes the *Atman* which is beyond the *prana*. Then he realizes the *Atman* which is described in Vedanta as self-luminous and formless Brahman which is without and within, and which is beyond the *prana*, the mind and everything. Then the Yogi attains to the self-realization which is known as the perfection (*mukti*).

CHAPTER VII

THE SACRED WORD 'OM'

(Delivered in Tuesday, January 29th, 1901)

In the twenty-seventh aphorism of the first chapter of the Raja Yoga, we read: "His manifesting word is OM".[1] We have read it over and over, and again and again in the New Testament, the first gospel: 'In the beginning, was the Word and the Word was God'. But it is very difficult to understand the real meaning of the Word; what was the significance of the Word which was in the beginning, and which was God? This idea. however, is not new to the Hindu mind. It existed in India many centuries before the first gospel was written. In the Vedas, we find the similar ideas. We read in the *Mahabharata* as well as in the *Upanishads*: "He who existed by himself, let first stream forth the eternal word, without beginning or end, and out of which the evolution of the word came into existence." What is the meaning of that 'word'? It was one with the Divine, one with that first being, and was the cause of the evolution of the universe.

Before we can understand the real meaning of the 'word', we must know the relation between the thought and the word. Every word we utter has some idea behind it, and some thought connected with it. The words may vary, but the idea is the same. As for instance, there are many words which are used to signify a 'cow', or a 'horse'. The cow in Sanskrit would be *gau,* the horse would be *asva.* Now, each word is the symbol of some idea, or some thought, and the manifestor of a certain thing. When we use a word, we use it for something, or when we think of something, we think it along with the word. Again in using a word, we have a thought behind it. Try to think of a type without using the word 'type'. But all thoughts must be connected with the words, and the words are also the manifested forms of the thoughts. The thoughts exist in the mind,

[1] *'Tasya vachakah pranavah'*. 1.27.

and when they are universally expressed, they take the form of the words. If you try to understand the thoughts of a person, you will have to read the words, or understand the meaning of the words, used by the person.

Therefore if we realize properly, we will find that the whole world is the consumption or projection of the thoughts of the universal mind, and, consequently, God projects His thought, and the result is a type. He thinks of a form and thinks in the words, and afterwards when that thought is projected in the external world, the shape takes place, and the thing is changed according to the nature of the thought.

The words are the manifested thoughts. In other words, the words are like the embodiment of the manifestations of the thoughts, and every object of the phenomenal world is the garment of the thought, and the external objects are the material embodiments of the word. In fact, that word exists in the cosmic mind, and every natural thing is nothing but the expression of the idea which exists in the cosmic mind. These are like the types which Plato called, and these types are eternal, or the types eternally exists. The Indian grammarean philosophers call their type the *sphota* which is uncreated and eternal. The modern theory of evolution tells us that a protoplasm going through certain changes takes at last the shape of a man and further passes through different stages. Now each stage is a type. There is a tree type, a man type, and thousands and thousands of varieties of the animal type, and at the same time, as a type, they are all the same. We are sitting here; we have many different faces and different figures, but at the same time, the type is human and it exists eternally. Whenever the process of evolution reaches the human stage, it will continue in this way; and if this whole universe be dissolved and reduced to its primordial condition, after a certain period, this energy goes through the same process, and will appear through all these types. The type will come out just as the seeds may remain latent or potential during the winter season and after the snow melts away the seeds produce that kind of trees, of which the seeds are the type. So the same process is going on in the universe, and there are infinite varieties of such types and each type exists through a certain thought or idea. In the Rig Veda, the oldest scripture of the Hindus, it has been

said that God, the Creator, creates the sun, the moon, and all the universe as before, in the beginning of each cycle, with the help of their respective types or causal seeds those exist eternally after the dessolution (*pralaya*) of the universe: *"surya-chandramasau dhata yatha purvamakalpayat"*. God creates or projects everything by his thought (*samkalpa* or *iccha*), and the Vedas say that everything evolves when He wills or desires. From this it is understood that thought and word are the cause of creation, or of the phenomenal everything.

When a protoplasm takes the type of a man, it does not come by accident, but there is some thought connected with the process of evolution of that protoplasm. It grows under the direction of a certain intelligence, mind, and thought; and it will go through many changes and then reach the human form, where it will rest for a certain length of time. There are types of the gods, or of the *devas*, and these types are eternal in the same way. When we understand this that we are types or genera, then we can classify the whole universe. There are the gross materials and the objects of senses, there are the material objects and the minute particles of atoms, there is the stage of energy, and all these can be included under the same of the phenomenal energy which contains the names, or the words and the thoughts.

The objects of senses are the projections of the cosmic ideas i.e. the ideas of the cosmic mind,[2] and the objects of our thoughts are also the projections of those ideas of the cosmic mind. We see certain things during our waking state, and during our dream state we do not see these things as in the dream state we see certain things which exist on the psychic plane. During the deep sleep we are conscious of a certain state, and that will come under the classification. All these states, like gross, material, unmanifesting, waking, and deep sleep, can be divided into two classes, individual and universal. Each individual has certain experiences during the dream state and also during the deep sleep state. aking the sum total of all the experiences of the individual souls during the dream, the deep sleep, and the waking states, every one of these objects

[2] The cosmic mind (*samashti manas*) is the sum total of all the minds of all individual beings, and this cosmic mind is known in Vedanta as *Isvara, Avyakta* or *Prajna*.

is the expression of the exact word and thought or idea that exists in the cosmic mind. That is the source, and through that source different objects have evolved, as has been said before.

In order to understand and to represent the cosmic mind, we made a word which would include all these different stages. Still these things which are connected with a particular individual, should be included by the word which would represent the cosmic mind. But is there such a word ? Because all these ideas exist in the mind, and we made a word which would include all these things. We utter a word like God, and it includes a certain state, but does not include the material objects, the forces, and the experiences of the individuals. In trying to express all these ideas, we must have a word which would be the basic word, or the foundation, of all the words, and the ancient philosophers of India discovered a word which included all the ideas and which is considered to be the common basic word. It can be asked as to why is it the basic word ? To this it can be said that because it consists of three basic sounds A-U-M which include all the sounds of the universe. These three sounds are included in that one sound OM. The sound 'T' is 'U' as in hut. If we examine carefully the process by which that sound is produced, we find that we do not make any motion within the mouth. It is a perfectly free sound ; it is the basic sound ; and all other sounds are more or less connected with this basic sound. The second sound is 'U' or 'OO', and the last sound is 'M', made by closing the lips. The first sound 'A' i.e. 'U' is made by opening the mouth, and the last sound is 'M', and all the different sounds are nothing but the combination of these three basic sounds T-U-M. In the Vedas, it is said: "You cannot pronounce any *akshara* (letter) and *mantra* (contemplative composition) without the help of the sound of UH'. There are many sounds, and this OM is the basic sound. In the English word 'go', we have the sound *'guh'*. All the sounds must be based on that first sound, the simplest 'UH' sound, and when we get this, we have the foundation of all sounds that can be pronounced or uttered by any organized being, or by any individual or animal who can pronounce or utter anything. Out of these three we can make thousands and thousands of words and sounds. And

these three, when combined, become the sound of *AUM*. First pronounce the word 'A' opening your tongue and then pronounce 'U', and then close the lips and pronounce the sound 'M'.

These sounds 'AUM' include all the different stages. The sound 'A' stands for the gross as well as for the waking state which are individual and universal. When we think of the meaning of the word 'OM', we take it as symbolic, and cover every object of the universe with this sound. It was first tuned by the divine Being, before the beginning of the evolution, when there was no vibration of the atoms, and when everything was in one etherial ocean. At that time all the particles of matter were in a state of perfect equilibrium (*samyavastha*). Then it begins to vibrate, and produce a sound like humming. The whole universe is producing that sound, and we cannot hear it, because our ears are too gross. But if your ears are tuned to hear the music of the spheres, you will hear the sound which is produced by the motions of all the different objects of the universe and the vibrations of the molecules and all the things of the universe. The Yogis hear that causal sound. It is like the sound of a bell, or like an unconnected sound. The whole universe, in this way, is singing the praise of the Almighty.

So the sound 'OM' is perfectly formed for the expression or representation of the cosmic mind, because it coveres all sounds and all words. All words and sounds have in their background the thoughts, or the ideas. Again all thoughts or ideas are included in the universal basic sound 'OM'. So if you try to substitute any other word in the place of the sound of 'OM', you cannot do it satisfactorily, and you will have to take these basic sounds. So if you take them and put them together, you will have to have the sound or word 'OM.'

In the 28th aphorism of the first chapter of the Raja Yoga, it is said that if you think of the meaning of this word 'OM,' you think of the cosmic mind, and you also understand the whole universe. That is one of the subjects for meditation. When you are going to think of the words that are included in this sound 'OM,' you will have to take the three sounds as symbolical of the different stages of the universe. Take the three states, the waking, the dream, and the deep sleep; then take the gross subtle and unmanifested states and you will see

that these are all expressions of the words, and everything that exists in this stage, is but the expression of that one idea. Then take the sum total, and take the ideas and the impressions that exist on the psychic plane, and take all that is the sum total of that which exists on the higher plane, or the state of the unmanifested energy of the unmanifested universe. Then you take the sleep state, and you will find that all these things must be included in the meaning of these three sounds, the gross. the subtle, and the unmanifested. There are also different names given in Sanskrit for these three stages. The unmanifested state is called the 'causal' state.

It maybe the same being who experienced certain ideas in the dream state, but still there is a difference in the perception and experience, and this difference can be explained very clearly if we give the different names. We call the being which is conscious of the objects that exist on this plane of consciousness. 'A', the same being when dreaming, is called 'B' and when it is sleeping soundly without having any other kind of experience, it could be called 'C'. So in trying to differentiate them, we give the different names. 'A' may be one who is conscious of the objects which exist on this plane of consciousness. 'B' is another name for the being who would exist in the dream state, and 'C' is the other name for the being who is sleeping soundly without having any other kind of experience.

Now, the sum total of all the experiences of all living creatures in the waking state may be called 'A' ; in the dream state, we call it 'B', and the sum total of the experiences of the causal state may be called 'C'. These are the principle sounds. Having understood the different stages that are included in that one sound 'OM,' if we think of the meaning of the sound 'OM,' when medicating, then we gradually go from the gross to the subtle and from that to the causal state, and from that to the realm which is beyond all the relativity.

The object of Yoga is to reach to the Absolute and to understand that beyond which no mind can go. By understanding of the law of causation, we know that the gross is the manifestation of the subtle, and the subtle is the manifestation of the causal. Now what do we mean by the subtle state ? Everything that goes through the evolution, takes different forms and becomes the objects of the senses. If we have the

finer parception we may, going into a room, smell an odour that will not be noticed by another. So with our hearing. The Western ears would notice many of the finer notes in music, which the Eastern ears are tuned to them. Those who are colour-blind, do not distinguish different shades of the colour. In fact, all of us are more or less colour-blind. What we can see, is very limited, and beyond a certain vibration we do not realize the things. Professor Huxley said that when a rose-bud blooms, it produces a sound like a gun shell. If we had ears to hear, we could hear the sound, and if we realize our inability to do so, we find that our perception is in a limited scale. But these finer perceptions must be included though our senses are most imperfect. Some of the Western minds depend much upon the senses, and cannot find the real thing,[1] but the Indian mind go beyond the senses, and realize the essence of the thing. Most of the scientists try to find the existence of soul, try to perceive the soul, and to catch it with instruments, but they do not get it, and as they do not got it, they deny its existence. The pity is this that hey do not think that their senses delude them almost every moment about the soul. The soul is described as a very subtle object, because it is not perceived by the senses. There are the subtle things and the subtle forces which are not seen, but the gross manifestations which are but the expressions of those subtle things and forces are easily cognizable. Again the finer objects and the subtle particles of the matter and the force are the expressions of the causal state of the universe, which cannot be cognized in any way by the senses. This universe existed in the beginning of the evolution in the unmanifested causal state, and has been projected on this plane of consciousness in the manifested form, and that is the reason why we perceive with our senses. In fact, this world exists in relation to us and to our senses. If we shut our senses, the whole world will disappear. If we close our eyes and stop our ears, nose and sense of touch, the universe is gone beyond our relation. So of these three states, we must remember that the gross is the expression of the subtle, and the subtle is the expression of the causal, and beyond these three states shines the *Atman*.

Now, in trying to think of the meaning of the word 'OM,'

[1] The Swami here meant to say about the direct realists of the West.

the Yogis in India adopt a certain method, and by that method they merge one state into another. In pronouncing the word 'OM', when they make the first two sounds or words, 'A' and 'U', which are gross and subtle, they try to dissolve the gross into the subtle, and then the subtle into the causal. When the first (the gross) is merged into the second (the subtle), think of what they are going to do and what they ought to do, and the case stands for a certain abstract thought and idea. This world 'OM' is a symbolic word, meaning the gross is merged into the subtle and that is again merged into the causal, and that which is beyond these three, is the truth, or the reality of the universe.

Now when you have closed your lips, it is no longer 'M', but something higher, and that is the fourth part which is the Absolute. It has been before that after the gross and the subtle, the causal is merged into the Absolute, and so there remains no longer the causal, the subtle and the gross, but each one is reduced to that absolute ocean of the Divine intelligence and bliss. The Nature, or the cosmic mind contains the seed of all the different forces, types, ideas, words, names, and forms, and the Absolute is the (socalled) cause and ground of the cosmic mind. The Absolute does not change its nature. It is not transformed from one state into another, and it is not affected by any other things. Supposing that you have a canvas, and upon that canvas you paint something and brush it off and paint again, but the canvas quality remains the same and unchangeable. So these different things we perceive are like the paintings upon the canvas of the Absolute. We can go to that background, or rise above all conditions, if we try to enjoy the paintings. But we see every moment that we cannot do it. Try to keep it in any state all the time, but it is impossible, because everything is in constant change. That which is within time, space and, causation, is subject to the laws of evolution, and, therefore, that must change. So it is a vain hope to expect that this body will remain unchangeable. It will take its own course, otherwise there would not be development of any kind.

So a Yogi, understanding that there is no permanent peace and happiness in the material manifestations, tries to go beyond that state, where there is permanent peace and happi-

ness. Then he comes to know that real peace and happiness are possible in that state which is unchangeable and not anywhere else. In order to reach that unchangeable state, you will have to rise above all conditions. This plane of the phenomenal consciousness is limited, and does not go far. So, until we reach the higher state, we cannot understand the absolute Truth. The absolute Truth cannot be brought down to this material plane, and if it could be possible, it would take the name of the conditional, and the moment it becomes conditional, it is subject to all the laws of the phenomenal world, and is also subject to changes. So peace or happiness that arises from the changeable condition is but temporal and ephemeral. We crave for the continuance of all kinds of happiness, but that craving is seldom satisfied. The time is coming when we will have to leave this plane and go to some other condition. The Yogi, understanding this truth, does not waste his energy by following the phantoms of hope, but makes the best use of his time and energy by trying to go beyond the conditions, and, consequently gain that happiness which is everlasting. The everlasting supreme state exists in the abode of that being which is called the absolute Being of the universe. It is the abode of the transcendental knowledge and bliss. In that, supreme state, there is no pain, no sorrow, no suffering, no disease or death, and all other states below is subject to all kinds of pain and misery.

If we keep this ideal in our mind and repeat the word 'OM' and understand the different sounds that are included in the universal sound or word 'OM,' then we realize that the gross will merge into the subtle and the subtle, into the causal and that causal again, into the transcending Absolute. Then we realize something which cannot be realized by any other method. A Yogi who has accomplished this realization, is happy, peaceful and restful, and is above all the conditions of suffering, disease, and death. Having realized that state which is described as the state of the eternal bliss or perfection, a Yogi becomes one with the source of 'OM', and becomes 'OM.' Then he becomes the cosmic mind, nay, he becomes the cosmic mind, nay, he becomes one with the Absolute; and when that is accomplished, the purpose of the human life is served, and the ultimate goal is reached.

CHAPTER VIII

THE CONCENTRATION

Well has it been said by Ralph Waldo Emerson that the only good in life is concentration and the only evil is dissipation. It is true that one can gain success in business, in politics, and in all the avocations of life through concentration. After exercising the power of cencentration, one can accomplish anything, either in music, or in any of the arts, in astronomy, or in any science, or even in war. So concentration is the secret of all success.

First of all we will have to understand the object of concentration; then to find out the difficulties that attend the accomplishment of that object; and if we consider those difficulties carefully, understand the causes, and find out the method by which those difficulties can be removed, then we are bound to have success. We all wish to have success. We do not know exactly where we are lacking. The lack is not in the object itself, but is in the methods which we have adopted to accomplish the object. If we do not practise concentration in our business, on the contrary, if our minds are scattered all over the world in different things and the mind is distracted, then we cannot converge the cell-forces and the mental energy towards one point. The rays of our minds are scattered, and the forces are dissipated through the doors of the senses, being coloured by the objects of the senses. The senses are the doors and the windows. The objects of the senses are the objects towards which the forces are running from our centre, just as in an electric lamp the rays are scattered. Of course, that produces some kind of the diffused light, and when we converge the scattered rays of an electric lamp and direct them towards one object after focussing, then that flood of light will illumine the mind in details as well as the mind in brief of that object. That is called the search-light. When the mind is well concentrated, it may be compared to a search-light. If you can converge the rays of your mind that are going through your different channels, and can focus them on one point and forget

everything outside of that object for the time being, then every minute detail of that object will be plain and clear to you, and you will see all the difficulties as well as all the causes of the success and the failure. All great businessmen who have achieved the great success in their lives, have exercised the power of concentration.

Take an example of a great scientist like Edison. What did he do ? He had the tremendous powers of concentration. Think of the wonderful results that he achieved by his mental efforts. I went once to his laboratory at East Orange in New Jersey, and had a conversation with him. He was stone deaf, and could not hear anything; yet he was a wonderful man and had remarkable power of concentration. When he tried to solve a problem, he used to sit at his desk, and forgot everything about himself. The comforts of his body he never thought of. His breakfast was brought into the room and placed on the table, and no one was supposed to disturb him while he was engaged in his work. They left the breakfast and the luncheon and the supper on the table. They stayed there, got cold and were taken away, and he had no time to get up to eat his meal. His mind was absorbed all the time, and he did not think of anything else. He continued in that way for days and nights. At night he did not go to sleep. He sat at his desk, and when he got very tired and needed the sleep, he just took a doze, bent his head over the desk for a short time, took a nap, and then he woke. He dreamt of all his problems, and his mind was so engrossed that he could not be satisfied, and he could not have any rest or peace in his mind, until he got the solution. And the result of his work you can see in the form of the light, in the phonograph, and in many other inventions that he made.

Now we find that all the great men in all ages .have accomplished all the discoveries and inventions through this power of concentration. Think of the concentration of that man who is studying the stars and watching the heavenly bodies through a powerful telescope night after night. His whole energy is focussed in that one direction. Think of the absorption of that scientist who is watching the movements of the micro-organisms through a powerful microscope, watching their activities, until he finds the solution of the problems

which he is trying to solve. Concentration is the one and only method by which we can know something. You cannot know anything unless your mind is concentrated. If, for instance, you are disturbed by the music, or by anything else, you will not be able to follow or understand me; but when your mind is absolutely concentrated, you will not hear anything else. and you will hear only what I am saying. Ordinarily, when our attention is fixed on a very interesting story which we are reading or telling, suppose there is a big clock in the room, or in the hall and there is ticking, but you do not hear that tick. The street cars are running with the sound of the horns, and there are going on the ringing bells in the churches, but those do not disturb you, because your mind is concentrated. That is the secret of success. At such times our minds are concentrated. It is a kind of suspension of sensation i.e. the senses are in a suspended condition during concentration. You see this when you watch a cat catching a mouse. The cat tries to fix all its energy in one direction, and it exercises a tremendous power of the self-control. It paralyzes the muscles and the cell-power behind the muscles of its body. Through concentration it is able to catch its prey. When an eagle catches its pray, it looks down upon its victim, and its eyes are so concentrated that they cannot lose a moment's time in any other direction, or think of any other object other than the prey, and it has always a great success in that particular line.

So you find in studying your mind that concentration is absolutely necessary in all kinds of work. Without exercising this you will find that your life will be in danger. When you are walking in the street, if you pay no attention to the cars and automobiles those are hurrying by, you will be run over. You know that without exercising the power of concentration the motorman could not run the car. You have seen the sign in every car: "Do not talk to the motorman". Why is that? It is to avoid all the dangers and collisions and other accidents. So it is absolutely necessary that we should exercise this power of concentration.

In order to gain this power of concentration we should study our minds a little more carefully. We should understand that we are going to accomplish. Of course, concentration of our energy will be directed towards the particular object we

wish to gain. And if that object be a material success, or a business success, we shall learn to discriminate. The method of discrimination is one of the most important things in getting the good results of concentration, getting the right kind of success that we wish.

Now, when our mind is concentrated we withdraw our mind from the organs of the sense. The different organs of the senses have different positions in the brain, where they view certain sensations. For instance, the sound which is a vibration of air is carried through the nerves into the brain. There certain molecular changes take place, and these changes are turned into a self-conscious entity which we call 'personality', and that entity translates all changes into the sensation. Nobody has ever been able to define it. It is nothing but a state of consciousness. The modern scientists have described them as the states of consciousness. Every feeling, every sensation, every idea, and every thought, that rise in our mind, when properly analysed, will be found to be nothing more or less than some state of consciousness. Now, what that consciousness really is you cannot find out, or you cannot satisfactorily explain, because the consciousness is like the light which illumines everything. The light which illumines everything, cannot be known by itself, or cannot be made an object of knowledge, because it would presuppose another consciousness to enlighten that which we do not have. Now you are sitting here. You are conscious that you are sitting here and listening to me. Do you know where that consciousness is ? Your existence is inseparable from that consciousness. You cannot live and remain unconscious of yourself. Again the consciousness and the existence are inseparable. They are the two phases of the same thing. You exist and your existence depends upon your own consciousness, and this consciousness is the light that illumines everything. By that light you know that there is the electric light which illumines all the things at night. The light of the sun illumines everything in this universe. We know that the sun rises and sets. The sunlight cannot make us realize the rising and the setting of the sun, if we were just dead or unconscious like the stones and the tables, then you would not know the rising and setting sun, although there might be the light of the sun falling on you. Therefore the whole source

of knowledge is in that consciousness. That consciousness is again the part and parcel of our being. The being means the existence, and the existence without consciousness is impossible, because we cannot exist and remain unconscious of ourselves. Now for that reason the great philosophers like Nietzsche, Kant and Hegel, have always come to that one point of the oneness of the consciousness and the existence. They have only reiterated or repeated the same truth which has been taught by the greatest philosophy of the world, the Vedanta philosophy. It has been described in the Vedas, and it is that by which you know everything. By what will you be able to know that by which you know everything? That is the consciousness, and that consciousness is your life and being, and by that consciousness you are able to know everything. There is no other second consciousness by which you can understand the nature of your own consciousness[1]. Now when you understand this thought, then you will come to know that everything else is a state of consciousness, of sensation and feeling, and all other emotions. These are nothing but the states of consciousness, and these states of consciousness are like the clouds rising in the firmament of your own being or personality.

Now you remember that you are the centre of your world. You cannot enter into my world of feelings and sensations; neither can I enter into your world. Then I touch a table, I have a certain feeling or sensation. But I cannot express it in words, and I can only say that it is hard or soft, it has roughness or smoothness, and further that it is inexpressible. If I ask you to express your feeling or sensation about it, you cannot express them. But it is your feeling or sensation. Try to express what hardness is. You cannot do it, as it is purely abstract. You can form an idea according to your feeling or sensation. Similarly you cannot actually describe what the colour is. If I say the colour of this wall is yellow, you ask me what is yellow. It may be a particular shade of perceiving, but that minute shade of difference you do not consider in your ordinary conversation. So practically you ignore that. Now when you

[1] We generally divide consciousness as primary and secondary ones. The primary consciousness is the first and basic one, and the second one, by which we know the first, or the basic one, is known as the secondary consciousness. In truth, both are consciousness as the unit of knowledge or *chit* (cf. the author's *True Psychology*).

see a horse, you form a particular idea or concept about the horse, and that idea or concept of a horse which you have, may not be the same as I have, and at the same I cannot also express that. If you ask me: "What is that ?" I would only say: "This is a horse". I learned to call it a horse, but your perception may be entirely different from my perception, and there is no way of comparing.

In that way, if you examine and analyse your feelings and try to compare them with the feelings of another person, you will find that you are the centre of your world of feeling, you are living in your world, you are radiating these forces from your centre within yourself, and you are also radiated by these forces from this enclosed feeling, or from your self-consciousness, personality, or entity, and you have drawn a boundary line around it, and that is the limit of your world. Anything that is beyond that limit, you know nothing about it, unless you expand hat range of boundary of your consciousness. When you learn something new, what has happened ? It was at first the outside of the boundary of your world, or of your consciousness, and, therefore, you did not know it. Either you have brought that in by some method within the range of your consciousness, or you have expanded the range of your consciousness to cover that living. Then it becomes known to you. That is the meaning of knowledge. No one has ever gained knowledge from outside, but all knowledge is within yourself. You may not know it, yet that is the real explanation of knowing a thing that we did not know already within the boundary of our own consciousness, or expanding the zone of our consciousness which would enclose or cover those things which were unknown to us. And we are doing that all the time. There are also different zones of consciousness. To the man, living on the material plane, his zone is limited by the sensations of his own body, and he seeks nothing else. His zone of consciousness is very narrow and limited ; but gradually it will expand, and will include his relatives, wife, children and neighbours. It will still expand, and this expansion will continue until it covers the whole universe.

That is what we are going to do. We are going to expand the zones of our consciousness, and we cannot stop until we reach the infinite and really become God the Absolute. We

have come from this perfect centre in which everything was in a potential or unmanifested state, and we are manifesting all the powers. Everytime we do it we become conscious of it. I will give you an illustration. You have the power of thinking, reading, walking, and doing various things. Perhaps you are a musician, or an artist, and you can perform the wonderful music, or do other very interesting things. Now, all these powers are in you. When you go to sleep, and when you are sleeping soundly, all these powers have gone down to your subconscious or unconscious plane. Then you are not conscious of them. Do they exist in relation to you when you are sleeping ? No. Why not ? Because you are not conscious of them. Anything of which you are unconscious, does not belong to you, but they are all these. As soon as you wake up and become conscious of those forces, they are yours. The state, in which these forces remain when you are in sound sleep, is the state of potentiality, and in your waking state, they have become kinetic or actual. Therefore one state is unmanifested, and the other is manifested. When you are asleep, they will remain dormant or latent, just as in a seed form. When you wake up, they are potent, and are ready to do their work. At the time of death, all these forces will be converged into one point, and they will remain latent, or in the unmanifested state. Then perhaps you will get another awakening, and then they will become the part and parcel of your own being or existence. This is the way we are living, and this shows that the unmanifested condition is the seed or causal form of the manifested force.

Before the world was created, everything gross and subtle remained in a seed form, and everything was unmanifested. Then creation began. Now, what do we mean by 'creation' ? It does not mean getting something out of nothing. In the beginning, the world was in an unmanifested state, and it gets out, and gets back again. It takes millions of years to be evolved. This present state will go back to its primordial nebulous state, and it will remain in that state perhaps for millions of years, and then it will come out again. This expansion and contraction of the whole manifested world into the unmanifested energy is the eternal process of the infinite Being. There is no ten cycles or anything like that, and you

will have to understand the process of nature, or the process of evolution, or creation in this way.

If you study your own self you will find that everything is clear to you. Man is the microcosm, and the universe is the macrocosm. My Master, Sri Ramakrishna used to say it in this way, *Ya ache bhande, ta ache brahmande* i.e. what exists in the microcosm exists also in the macrocosm. So you cannot study nature unless you study yourself. Try to study any micro-organism, and you will see that you are studying your own state of consciousness. You cannot get into the mind, or the force, of somebody else. The external object produces a certain change in your brain, and that change is carried or translated into a state of consciousness, and this you are stating, whether that is caused by an animal, or a plant, or a leaf, or a fish, or a star, it does not make any difference. When you see a star, you are stating your own state of consciousness. When you hear the music, you state your own state of consciousness. So you cannot go beyond your own state of consciousness. It is absolutely impossible to go beyond the consciousness, and that is our limitation. You cannot know the real matter, i.e. the matter *per se,* or by itself, no one has ever seen. It is the unknown and unknowable substance of the universe. And that is the object, and you are the subject. The object is unknown and unknowable, and only it produces certain changes in your consciousness. And that is all you can know about the object, or the matter.

So what the materialists would call the matter, is the same thing a spiritualist would call the spirit. The difference between them is only in name. But both are unknown and unknowable, as you cannot differentiate them. The matter and the mind are the two phases of one substance. One half of the world is the object, and the other half is the subject. If you take away the one half, the other half will be gone. So the mind and the matter are like the two poles of the some magnet, the positive and the negative as I have discussed in my book *Self-knowledge.* Take away the one pole, and the other is gone. If you deny the matter, you also deny the mind, as the Christian Science does. The Christian Science says that the matter does not exist in outside in the world, but it exists in the mind. The Christian Science seems to be influenced by

the subjective idealism, as advanced by Bishop Berkeley and others. Devid Hume . also holds that everything can be reduced to the ideas or sensations only. The Yogachara Buddhists also believe that everything external is the representation of the mind or the *vijnana,* and the mind or *vijnana* is only real, and the external world is like a dream. The philosophy of the *Yogavasishtha-Ramayana* subscribes to the same view, and it seems that the *Yogavasishtha* was more or less influenced by the *vijnanavada* of the Yogachara Buddhists. The Christian Science also maintains the same view. The Madhyamika Buddhists absolutely deny the existence of the world.

So you cannot deny the matter and also the mind, because one exists in relation to the other. There is the fallacy. The moment you deny the matter as the object of perception, you have denied the perceiver also. If the object of perception does not exist, then the perceiver does not exist either. When you deny the matter, you deny something that is a part of your state of consciousness. Have you seen the matter ? You have seen a table, or a piece of gold. That is not matter. You have never seen the matter. You have seen something that evokes the sensation of hardness or toughness. The eyes see colours, but they do not see the hardness, or the softness. The ears hear sound, but these are only the vibrations. When you deny the matter, what are you denying ? Are you denying the vibrations or something that you call the matter ? In reality, if you have denied the matter, you have also denied your mind. If your object of perception is denied, the subject is also denied. But, in reality, you cannot deny either so long as you exist on this plane. You have to take both, or neither. The one pole of the magnet is the matter, and the other pole is the mind ; and the neutral point is neither, yet it is the cause of both. The infinite is neither the matter, nor the mind, but it is the neutral state or point. It is beyond both the matter and the mind.

Have you tried to go beyond the matter, or beyond the mind ? That is the ideal. We must do this in order to reach the truth. Truth is neither the subject, nor the object, neither the matter, nor the mind, neither the perceiver, nor the object of perception ; yet it is the cause of both. You will have to direct your whole attention towards the neutral point. That

you can do it with your concentration. If you wish to know the truth and understand the laws of nature which are governing not only your physical body, but also all the forces which are known, the finer forces of nature which are working in your mind and intellect, and in your moral nature, and in your soul, how are you going to understand those states? You will have to develop your power of concentration, and direct your concentration towards that neutral or central point, which is neither the matter, nor the mind, yet the cause of both. You will have to go beyond the realm of thoughts. Thoughts are the states of consciousness. Everything that you know is nothing but a state of consciousness. If you wish to go to the source of consciousness, just withdraw your mind from all the different objects of senses, and do not let the mind of your being be influenced or be subject to the changes that are produced by these external objects. These are called the modifications (*vritti*) of the mind, known as anger, hatred, desire, etc.

When you look through a Kaleidoscope, there are pieces of glass making a conventional figure. That form is a delusion. Now, why do you see them? You do not know. That is a delusion or *maya*. Here, in this world, you are seeing all these changes, and feeling these changes of sensation, feeling, and desires. Your mind has become like a Kaleidoscope, and you have become subject to change. You have become absolutely under the control of the external influences like the slaves. For this reason you have no power to get hold of ourselves. You have no power to get hold also of your mind. You have become like the machines. You do something, feel tired, go to sleep, wake up, and do the same routine once more, but if you want to realize something, or to know something, or to understand something of your own self, you will have to withdraw your mind from the sense organism and learn to control these sense-forces, and direct them towards your own personality. By 'personality' I mean your being. That is, that which thinks, that which perceives, and that which knows, is your personality. Try to converage the forces towards your own self, and introspect, and that will solve all the problems of life and death. Then you will know how great and wonderful and mighty you are. You are the creator. You are the part and parcel of the

infinite wisdom. You do not have to go outside to gain a little knowledge from here and there, but the whole ocean of knowledge is behind your being.

You are just like a mouth-piece. Enter yourself into your innermost being, and there you will find God, the omniscient spirit dwelling, and directly your whole nature will be changed. There you will become immortal. I mean that when you become conscious of your immortal nature, you become immortal. You are already that now. You do not get that by going through a change or by becoming angelic. At this moment you are immortal, but you are not conscious of it, or do not feel it. What is the cause of it? There is something that distracts the knowledge or the consciousness. Now take that veil away, and open your eyes. Then you will see or realize your immortal nature. Ask, and it shall be given unto you. Knock, and it shall be opened. But you have not knocked. That is the reason why the door is closed. You do not know perhaps how to knock. When you pray, go to the closet and shut the doors. Now the closet is this body and the doors are the senses. You will have to shut these doors so that the external conditions do not produce the changes of the modifications of different states of consciousness. But hold your consciousness towards that neutral source of the matter and the mind. If you can do it, everything else will be added unto you. If you can develop the power of concentration, success in business and success in everything will be the child's play. Wherever you go, you will have the success, because you will then understand the law. Everything that you try to accomplish by other methods, if you have success, it is only temporary and not real. Every time you understand the laws of nature, you make your vibrations harmonise with the universal vibrations, and then whatever is in the universe, will come to you. You will have to learn to make your vibrations *en rapport* with the vibrations around you. Every time you think of something, you are sending a current of vibrations. Every time you think that you are effecting the vibrations, but when you do it consciously, it produces wonderful results, and it is the knowledge that brings power. But we cannot get that knowledge without the power of concentration.

Ordinarily our mind can be divided into four states, first,

the state of scattered, or that of distraction ; second, the state of stupidity. You go to sleep, you cannot keep awake, and it is too much of an effort. Perhaps you will have to regulate your food. Sometimes that perhaps after eating some good dishes you will find that your brain wants to take rest. There was a gentleman in Boston who could not live without eating chunks of beef ; and he was a great scientific man. Through our constant efforts his method of life was changed ; from a meat easter he became a vegetarian, and the first thing he said was: "Now, Swami, I can think better. My mind is clearer. My thoughts are finer. I can see a change in myself. Now how is it?". I said: "You have changed the vibration of the molecules of your system from coarser vibration to finer vibration, and when your vibration is finer you can see things better and get the finest points".

So the food should be considered. What kind of food will help you in clearing the impurities of your brain and also in removing the stupidity and inertia, that should be examined. In Sanskrit, in the Hindu psychology, we divide all these states of the mind into three: *tamas, rajas,* and *sattva.* That which produces dullness, stupidity, inertia is *tamas.* The second, the *rajas* creates the passion, activity and tremendous energy. The other, the *sattva* is the best, and is the state of equilibrium. Your whole system will be in perfect poise, the forces will be well balanced and your can realize thee truth if you develop in you the *sattva* quality.

At present you must watch what food and what kind of work make you stupid. That you can find out if you watch. Take the effect of food in your own system, and see what kind of vibrations that particular kind of food produces, and then make a note of it. Take another kind of food, and you will find that certain kinds produce certain effects. I cannot prescribe for you. There is no one standard for everybody. Just as the two vases are not alike so the two bodies, or the two systems are not alike. There would be the differences in the degrees of vibrations. You will find these changes which are peculiar to yourself. I have noticed that one particular kind of food may not be suitable or agreeable to all. Some cannot take milk, and at the same time it is the most nourishing food. A baby would gain strength by living on pure milk. And now

there is a kind of treatment, the milk cure, and it can cure almost all your diseases. Yet you will find among people those who cannot digest milk. Their system is different, and if they tried to live entirely on milk, they might find it not agreeable. If they keep it up for a while they will find that all the disagreeable conditions will change and that it will be source of health and strength. So in that way one particular kind of food may not be good for everybody. You will have to regulate your own diet and find out what kind of food will bring peace and equilibrium into your brain. Your ideas will be in a perfect state of harmony, not only harmony with yourself but also with the universe.

If you can find that, then you have come to that third state, the state of well balance. However, I was describing the four states of the ordinary kind. One is scattered, and the other is stupid. Then there is the intermediate state, partly scattered and partly stupid, sometimes tremendously active, sometimes dull, just as you find among all working men and women. The mind is active during the working hours and then gets dull. When your mind is well poised, in a state of equilibrium, when you can sustain the balance of forces that are working through you and through your mind, you will never get tired in your mind. You will be able to equalise and equipoise the vibrations in such a way that your tired condition will be removed, and it will be restored by the new vibrations. That is, there is a source of infinite energy behind your mind, and you will learn to draw energy from that infinite source. You feel fatigue when your power or energy is exhausted, but if you can draw from that infinite source of energy that is behind your mind and let the door open and let some of that current of energy flow in and strengthen your mind and intellect, why should you have any fatigue? Perhaps we have shut the door, and cut off the connection between the infinite sources of energy and the divine mind, the centre of our personality. Now we have to go back and open the door, and get the connection right, and we can do that only by practising the power of concentration.

The fourth state of the mind is concentration. You can hold the mind on one point for a long time. It is just like a pendulum. You can take the illustration of an elephant, An elephant is never quiet; it is always having a pendulum-like

motion. You will have to hold your mind steady on one point. At first you cannot succeed, and it will run away. From the outset you cannot see the strength of its force. That is like the Niagara. From its surface it is smooth and calm, but try to check that current. So your mind is running in one direction, and if you try to check its current, you will fail many times. So practise every day. There are various methods by which you can develop that power. That power could be brought to play in order to bring the perfect results, and concentration is one of the methods by which you may converge these scattered rays and forces of your mind, and hold them on one particular point.

Take a flower, and hold your mind on it solely. Try to think of it and of nothing else. Take a concrete object first. Many people give you the abstract thoughts, like the thought of love and pity and all that kind of thing. You cannot think of love, or you cannot have a thought of love without somebody loving another person. Love is an abstract feeling. You cannot think of love as an object at first. Your mind is not trained to it. We go from the concrete to the abstract, from the abstract to the absolute. So take a concrete object, fix your mind on the concrete something, and then gradually, when your mind is held on that concrete form, you will go on to the abstract i.e. to the absolute and to the infinite.

These are the methods, roughtly speaking, which might be considered as steps towards concentration. So try to learn to develop the powers of concentration, and for this development regular practice is absolutely necessary. If you like to take private lessons and instruction, then I shall be glad to help you in that particular line. If you like to make experiments, devote a little time i.e. any time during the day and just try to draw all the forces into the centre. Your forces are scattered from the head to the toe, but you can withdraw and can develop your will power, and when you have done this, you will be able to send your thought. Then you can regulate it. There are different nerve centres in the system and you can call on different centres, and get different results. Then the power of thought reading and other psychic powers will come to you. Then other mental powers will also come. Finally you will be able to reach the highest goal. You will be able

to reach the neutral point of the magnet, which is at the same time the cause of both the mind and the matter. And when you will reach the neutral point, you will be near to the heavenly Father who is the eternal Being and the omnipotent Lord of the universe. In reality we are one with Him, but at present we do not know that. But through concentration and meditation we will be able to commune with that Being, and become one with Him in the end. Concentration brings all the divergent modes or modifications of the mind in one point and helps to absorbe in the unfathomed ocean of meditation. In meditation, the mind loses its active phase or existence and is reduced to its own form which is no other than the pure consciousness. And when the mind is transformed into pure consciousness, it shines as non-different from the Brahman-consciousness. Therefore concentration brings the state of meditation, and meditation brings the state of the superconsciousness (*samadhi*), and the superconscious state brings a man face to face with the *Atman*.

CHAPTER IX

THE SAMADHI AND ITS OBSTACLES

The superconscious state is called in Sanskrit *samadhi*. *Samadhi* means that tranquil state of the mind where the conscious mind is in abeyance, and the *Atman* is beyond the conscious plane, but manifests its own glorious nature. It is a state where the divine communion is accomplished, and where the individual soul is united with the universal Spirit and realizes the perfect oneness. This is a state which was reached by all the great prophets and saviours who have appeared on this earth, and no one came a spiritual teacher of the world without attaining that state of super-consciousness.

Now, all the spiritual truths that have ever been described by any human being on the earth, were attained in that state of *samadhi*. It is a state of the spiritual realization. It is called by the Buddhists the state of the Buddhahood, which means one who is enlightened. It is also called the state of salvation in this life, or the state of the Godconsciousness, which having been reached one overcomes sorrows, sufferings and miseries of this life and transcends all the relative conditions of the phenomenal universe. It is called by the Christian mystics the state of ecstacy. It is the ideal of all the followers of all religions whether he be a Mohammedan, or Christian, or Buddhist, or Hindu. Everyone is struggling after the attainment of that highest state, and at the same time many are missing to attain to that state. It is so highly esteemed and appreciated by the Hindus and by those seekers after truth who have lived in India from ancient times. The kings and the princes have renounced their thrones for the attainment of that ever blissful calm state. The rich people have renounced name, fame and everything for attaining to the superconscious state or *samadhi* Buddha, Chaitanya and other saviours have renounced their home and hearth for attaining to the everlasting calmness which is obtained in that highest state of *samadhi*. Jesus the Christ became the son of God after reaching that state.

True religion begins after one reaches that state of *samadhi*.

If we study the lives of the great spiritual seekers, we find that their ideal is the same. Plotinus, the neo-Platonist, reached that state three times during his life. Dionysius attained to that state and called it the state of union with God. Porphyrius also attained to that state. Eckert, the great Christian mystic who lived in the 14th century said: "There must be perfect stillness in the soul, before God can whisper His word into it, before the light of God can shine in the soul and transform the soul into God. When passions are still, when worldly desires are silenced, then the word of God can be heard in the soul." Then the soul reaches that truth which is the goal of all religions, and becomes one with God.

In that state of *samadhi,* one realizes all the ideals that are given in the sacred scriptures of the world. You may read any scriptures and get higher ideals perhaps and these will all be your own property if you attain to them through that state of the superconsciousness, which is the realm of the absolute Truth. It is for this reason the Yogis, throwing aside all other ideals, have made this the highest aim of life. All the practices of Yoga are really for the attainment of that superconscious state that comes through concentration and meditation, achieved by the breathing exercises. All these are helpful in the way of quieting the disturbed and highly strung nerves of the mankind.

Before the mind can be still we will have to go through some practices of Yoga. Then we come to that state where the worries and anxieties of life do not bother us, and we come to the state of the superconsciousness or *samadhi.* Those who can practise concentration and meditation do not care so much for the sense enjoyments. Their desires for the sense pleasures are diminished, and they do not seek the comforts of the worldly life. The Yogis can do this easily, but others who are on the sense plane, do not care for meditation, because their highest ideal is just the little happiness that comes through the sense pleasures, and that is their aim. How can we expect that such people will realize the purposes of life and solve the problems of life and death? There are some who try to attain to that state, and seek a comfortable path. They want to get the results, but do not want to renounce anything. They do not want to be deprived of any of the pleasures of life, their

energy is divided, and so they are unsuccessful in their life to attain to that state of *samadhi* and to enjoy permanent peace and happiness. So their mind must be one-pointed before concentration can be acquired, and when concentration is perfect, then he attains the state of meditation, which brings unto him afterwards the state of *samadhi.*

The first step is the longing for truth, and extreme desire for the realization of the *Atman* ; it comes to a very few, because all of us have a kind of longing for material something, thinking it will satisfy the desires, then we find it is not that the soul really desires. That longing becomes different to a few who have gone through the different stages of the spiritual unfoldment. We find that when the soul longs extremely for the truth, his mind becomes calm and concentrated, and whatever he thinks, he thinks keeping the ideal before his mind, and thinks of the ways by which that realization of the Divine will come, and when the mind is thus concentrated, the concentration remains unbroken, and this unbroken flow of concentration (*dharana*) is known as meditation (*dhyana*), and when no other thought takes possession of the soul and no anxieties remains in the mind, then that individual soul is ready and well-fitted for the attainment of the superconsciousness (*samadhi*). He then overcomes all the obstacles, which come in the path of the superconsciousness.

There are many obstacles, and these must be overcome first through the constant practice of meditation. Among the obstacles, the first one is the disease of the body. When the body is diseased, the mind is also disturbed, and consequently, the health is also affected, because I have said before that the mind is closely related with the body. The perfect health is that state when the mind does not think of the body and is not enhanced by the conditions of the physical form. So any diseased person cannot be a Yogi. Because, when he tries to concentrate upon the higher ideal, his mind is drawn toward the affected part or parts of the physical form, and he will have to struggle and fight, and this will end perhaps after a long struggle, or may not end at all. Those who have the perfect health already, have the best physical condition for the practice of Yoga, and the sincere practice leads him to the attainment of the superconsciousness (*samadhi*).

The second one is the mental laziness. When the mind is in a low state of activity, it wants some trivial thing, and refuses to think of anything higher. It is a kind of laziness and it brings an obstruction in the path of practice of Yoga. The third one is the doubt. This is also a great obstacle in the path of spiritual unfoldment. There are many kinds of doubts ; as we may doubt the existence of truth, we may doubt the attainment of truth by the mortal beings etc. and these doubts will prevent one from practising the lessons and exercises that are given by the Yogis for the attainment of the superconscious state. The fourth one is the cessation of the struggle for the attainment of the superconsciousness. There suddenly comes a time when the mind is distracted by some other thing, and we lose interest in the ideal. The attainment of truth is the highest ideal, and if that ideal is covered by some trivial ideal, our interest is shaken, and we do not try to struggle for the cherished attainment of the realization of the highest.

The fifth one is the heaviness of the body and the mind. If we have cold, our body is over-powered by it, the mind is affected by it, and we feel tired all the time and do not like to sit and meditate. The sixth one is the thirst of the mind for the worldly pleasures. As long as our mind is attracted by these things of the world we do not seek the highest. We rather remain contented with this changing of the world. The seventh one is the false knowledge. This is of many kinds. As when we think of ourselves as bodies, this is a false knowledge (*mithya jnana*). By taking care of the body we can take care of the soul, and that is a false knowledge. If we think that this body will remain for ever and will not be destroyed, then that is also a false knowledge.

The eighth one is the non-attaining concentration. Some people try to concentrate, but cannot do so, because their mind is not yet ready. It will be ready if they practise, but it may take some time. Those who cannot concentrate, cannot expect the superconscious right away. The ninth one is the falling away from the state when attained. The mind is distracted and you are brought to a lower plane, and you begin to think of other things. Some people attain to the highest state of concentration and meditation. While we meditate on some high ideal,

suddenly some trivial thought appears in the mind and they fall. That is one of the obstacles.

Now these are the distracting obstructions along with them, and these may be grief, sorrow, fear, or some physical cause. If a friend dies, the soul does not die, and we carry the dead body all the time. If the mind is overpowered with grief and sorrow, that person cannot concentrate. For this reason, if a friend dies, all the exercises must be stopped, because it will not help the mind for a month or two weeks, or during the time of mourning. The material disasters may come through the loss of fortune, or money, or from the non-fulfilment of our desires. If we have a certain desire and do not succeed in securing it, we have a material disaster.

The tremor of the body is also an obstacle to the practice of Yoga. The American people have a great deal of restlessness. The irregular breathing is another obstacle. The mental activity becomes irregular by irregular breathing. Each individual has a particular way of breathing, and if we examine the different ways of breathing, we find some differences in them. There is a difference between the breathing of men and that of women. When the body is not in a good condition, we do not breathe properly, and this produces a bad effect on our mental condition. That is the reason why the breathing exercises are helpful in controlling the nerves and the mind. There are some other obstacles, but these can be overcome by the constant practice of the meditation and the breathing exercises. The mind must be trained in such a way as to think of the ideal constantly. The body may work and the senses may work, but the mind will think of and look at the highest ideal. The mind should be three-fourth towards the ideal; and that state is to be accomplished. But the persons who have accomplished it, are very few in every country. Their one ideal in this life is the realization of the truth, and whatever they do, and wherever they go, their mind is constantly thinking of the truth. If these have been accomplished, then the superconscious state is near at hand.

All the obstacles can be removed very easily by constant thinking, because what thou thinkest that thou shalt become, and it is as true as that I am sitting here. What we are today, is the result of our own thoughts. We have made ourselves what

we are, and we have brought ourselves to this plane of existence. We have been living this way, because we do not know better. The moment we begin to know better, we live on a higher plane. If we think of the ideal constantly, the mode of our life will be different, and our work will be different from that which we are doing now, and this work would no longer please or satisfy us.

In order to attain to the superconscious state and also to overcome the obstacles, we must practise that kind of meditation which is one-pointed, i.e. that kind of process of meditation should be adopted in which the mind must be pointed towards the ideal, just as the compass points towards the north. So the mind must be pointed towards the ideas even in the dreams. The dream state shows what thought is predominant or strong in the mind in the waking state, appears in the form of a dream. There are other obstacles which should be considered. Again, killing or injuring any living creature, either for our own benefit, or for serving our own purpose, is considered as one of the obstacles. Killing is of three kinds: to kill ourselves. to cause another to kill for them, and approving of the killing caused by another. These three kinds of killing or injuring must be avoided. One may kill an animal, another may not kill himself, but go to a butcher and make him kill, and the third will go to a butcher and buy some meat. Now every meat eater is responsible for the animal which is killed, whether in Chicago, or in London. If there were no meat eaters, the butchers would not kill. So that kind of killing, either cutting, or causing another to cut, should be avoided if we wish to attain to the highest state of the superconsciousness.

Telling a lie is also an obstacle. It is also of three kinds: telling, causing another to tell, and approving of another person's doing so. These should also be avoided. The stealing is another obstacle. It is also of three kinds, and those must be avoided. The desires for attaining the Yoga powers should also be avoided. As for example, the desires for curing the disease, the raising of money, the acquiring of fortunes etc., should be avoided because they are the obstacles in the path of the practices of Yoga. Now, if these lower powers (*siddhai*) are overcome, the higher powers manifest. The internal and external purification of the body and the mind as well as

chastity and purity of the mind must be observed by repeating some of the formulas like OM, or any other formula, which is expressive of the highest ideal of the union of individual soul with the divine spirit by the practice of meditation upon the eternal Truth. The lack of these practices brings obstacles in the path of the superconsciousness (*samadhi*). Again when the non-killing is established, there shall be no enemy of the Yogi in the world. And it is also a fact that when one has firmly established the habit of the non-killing, there shall be no enemy of him in the universe and even the lower animals will not harm that person consciously, tigers or snakes will not hurt him and this is one of the results of the establishment of the non-killing. Similarly when the truth-telling is established, whatever we utter, becomes truth. If we say to a person 'be blest', that person will be blest. After attaining to the establishment of truthfulness, if we say to any one 'be thou cured' that person will be cured. That is the power which comes by the practice of Yoga after the establishment of the perfect truthfulness. Again when non-tealing is established, all wealth comes to that person ; whatever he needs, he gets, he will not have to work for it, and he does not know himself how he would get it, but he does get it.

When chastity is established, the spiritual strength comes to that person. Those who have read the Raja Yoga, will find that by the practice of purity and chastity, some powers come to the soul. It is a spiritual power, and is far-reaching in its influence. When you sit in the presence of a Yogi, you will find the effect ; he may not speak eloquently, or have a nice combination of words, but he will produce effect through this power. The non-receiving of the gifts is another means to peace. The moment we receive the gifts from any person we put ourselves in the condition of dependence upon the giver. So a Yogi tries to avoid the receiving of the gifts. When a mother does anything for a child, we do not call it a gift. If a stranger gives a gift to help a person, we would call it a kind of indebtedness. Again when a gift comes through that desire, it is not to be accepted. The non-receiving of the gifts produces a help to the mind. If you do not find a gift at the Christmas time, how you become unhappy. When non-receiving of the gifts is perfectly established, a Yogi can see and read his past

life. He understands his past life, his present and future. The past, present and future become eternal present to him. Then he is not bound by any condition or dependence upon any being. In order to gain perfect independence of the mind. he refuses to accept all gifts.

When we observe the purification of the body, if we constantly try to keep the body clean, then the attachment to the body ceases and we can realize how unclean the body is. It must be remembered that the body is not the soul, and in order to get over the attachment to the body, the purification of the body along with the idea of the perfect cleanliness should be practised. When the purification of mind is established, the mind becomes one-pointed and concentrated. If all the impure and trivial thoughts and ideas are removed, then the mind is ready to rise higher, and we gain the self-control. Then our understanding becomes profound, we can understand things better and the abstract truths become easier for our comprehension. That is the result of the purification of the mind. "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God". The God-consciousness is only possible when the mind and the heart are pure and are free from evil desires and selfishness.

We must always be contented. Too much ambition makes us slaves. If the ambition is fulfilled, what is gained? Supposing you become the ruler of the three continents, but will the real happiness come to you ? No, because true happiness does not come through ambition. The ambitious men are always unhappy, but those who are contented with their condition in life, gain perfect happiness. In fact, the supreme happiness comes to those who are contented with simple living. If the person is contented, and instead of following the fortunes for help, develop in him the spiritual thirst, he will realize the truths which the millionaires and multi-millionaires do now get.

One may think highly of the happiness which comes through the fulfilment of desires, another may think of that happiness which comes through sense desires, and may think to be the highest, but true happiness comes only through the thirst after right knowledge, which is the highest. All the desires cannot be fulfilled in this life, because the span of our life is very short. So we must use the right discrimination and

through it we should realize that by the fulfilment of many of our desires, we shall not be satisfied in this life. Moreover hundreds and thousands of our desires will have to be fulfilled. So if we be contended with the things we have at present and make the best use of our energy for the attainment of the highest, we gain the highest in this life. A Yogi is wiser than those who are following the phantoms of ambition. We should follow the example of a Yogi, and then we shall be able to control our mind, and be happy.

By the practice of austerity, a Yogi gains the power of seeing and hearing at a distance. A Yogi does not practise these powers which come automatically to him. He does not care to have them when his real aim and ideal are to attain to the superconsciousness. In fact, the attainment of the superconsciousness is gained through meditation upon the divine Being. When one has succeeded in fixing his mind steadily upon the divine Being, he knows everything, and understands everything, and sees the divine Being everywhere and that can be attained very easily through concentration and meditation. If we have a strong longing for the psychic powers, that longing is one of the obstacles. Those powers come, automatically through the practice of Yoga, but if we pay attention to these powers, we stay there and cannot progress any further. Sometimes they come and manifest in the daily life, but if we use these powers, we do not make progress in the spiritual life. Christ said: "First seek ye the kingdom of heaven, and all these things will be added". So we should try to attain to the superconsciousness, and then all other powers will manifest in us. But we should not pay any attention to them, because if we wish to attain to these powers and make them the highest ideal of life, then the superconsciousness will not be attained in our life. It has been asked what shall we gain by attaining to that state? To this it can be said that first, we shall know what we are. Second, freedom from the slavery of senses will come and the perfect freedom will be attained. We are thinking that we cannot live without this or that. How unhappy we will be, if we do not know ourselves. We shall gain our divine nature and shall be conscious of that truth that each one is a child of immortal Bliss. Then the whole world can be put aside; we shall no longer be subject to birth and death. Why have we come to this plane?

Because we wanted to have these things of pleasure. If we have the same desires after death, we will have to come again. But when the desire for the attainment of highest truth comes in us we become conscious of our Divine being and after attaining to the superconscious state or *samadhi,* we become perfect as the Father in heaven is perfect, and thus attain to the goal of all religions, and understand what Christ meant when he said: "I and my Father are one". Then we eternally escape from the chain of nescience, and become one with the absolute Brahman.

TRUE PSYCHOLOGY

PREFACE

True Psychology was first published in 1946 as the second contribution to the *Abhedananda Memorial Series.* It contains nine illuminating lectures on Indian Yoga psychology, which were serially delivered by Swami Abhedananda in America in 1920, before the selected American talents. The lectures created a great sensation and absorbing interest among the psychologists and philosophers of America, because the lectures appeared to them something new and novel. The phychologists of the West mainly deal with the problems of the mind and its modifications, and they do not generally admit the existence of the soul as separate from the mind substance. So they were surprised, when they heard about the theory and function of Indian psychology from the Swami, who was well-versed in both the Western and Eastern psychology. They came to know that there is an entity, separate from the mind and the body, and that entity forms the background of the mind. They came to know that the all-intelligent and all-knowledge soul is the prime mover of the mind, and the mind becomes inert and motionless without the help of the self-shining soul. So the then leading psychologists as well as the philosophers of America were much interested in the learned lectures, delivered by Swami Abhedananda, and some of them also admitted True psychology as the real science of the mind and its modifications.

It should be mentioned in this connection that Swami Abhedananda delivered the lectures on True psychology, which were no other than the fundamental principles of the Yoga psychology of Patanjali. The Swami's observations and arguments in the book on True psychology are logical, critical and analytical. He has refuted all the materialistic theories of the soul, namely, combination theory, production theory, etc., as advanced by the eminent scholars like Prof. Percival Lowell, J. Luys, Herbert Spencer, Prof. Cliford, G. J. Romanes, Dr. Wiggs, Dr. Thomson, and others. Swami Abhedananda has pointed out all the flaws of all the materialistic thinkers, and has said that they have done a great mistake in accepting the mind as the soul, because the mind and the soul are funda-

mentally different from each other. In truth, the soul is the mover and director of the mind, and mind is the instrument of the soul. So the Western psychologists failed to prove psychology as the science of the *psyche* or soul, and that means they deal only with the science of the psycheless psychology. Swamiji has raised many knotty points and problems of psychology, and have faced them with strong and logical arguments, together with scientific explanations and solid conclusions in favour of the transcendental non-dualistic viewpoint of Vedanta.

Hundreds and thousands of savants of the West studied the mind and its phenomena for a long time, and tried to solve the mystery of the mental world. But, as a matter of fact, no definite conclusion has been reached by them. Their methods of study and investigations were different from one another on account of their different ways of approach and appreciation, and so they created different schools of psychology with different new and novel doctrines. Some different schools of psychology came into being in the eighteenth-nineteenth century, when savants like John Stuart Mill, Bain, Lotze, Hamilton and others appeared with their respective contributions to the field of research, and enriched the domain of the psychological thought. Prof. John Stuart Mill insisted on the necessity of the actual empirical study of the process of association. Prof. Bain laid stress upon the doctrine of 'psycho-physical parallelism', and though his psychology was tempered by the admission of mental activity and spontaneity, yet was balanced by the laws of contiguity and similarity, recognizing the importance of conation and movement that gave rise to sensation and explained the phenomenological aspect of the will.

Prof. Hermann Lotze developed the theory of 'local signs', and made a synthetic treatment of detailed and intimate relationship between the mind and the nervous system. After Lotze, appeared Profs. Miller, Helmholtz, Weber, Fechner, Elliotson, Esdâile, Brail, and others. Prof. Helmholtz's theories of sensation and sense-psychology and especially the theory of vision were famous, though he sponsored substantially the Young's theory of the colour vision. Dr. Murphy said that Prof. Helmhotz's work on acoustics was as substantial and noteworthy as his work on topics. His work *On the Sensations of Tone as a Physiological Basis for the Theory of Music* opened a new

vista both in the fields of the analytical psychology and the history of music.

After Helmholtz, the German experimentalist, Herings appeared with his specific contributions to the working principles of psychology as a science, which are worth-mentioning. Prof. Herings contributed several aspects of sensory physiology, including problems of temperature of sense and optics. He was celebrated chiefly for his theory of colour, with which he opposed the theory of Helmholtz. He introduced some improved experimental methods for the study of such phenomena as contrast, after-mage, and colour-blindness in the periphery of the retina. His theory afterwards underwent many revisions and changes, but yet many other new evolutionary theories evolved out of his novel theory, and the Ladd-Franklin theory is one of them.

Profs. Elliston, Esdaile and Brail were credited for their theories of hypnotism and abnormal psychology. After them Profs. Darwin and Spencer appeared with their novel discovery on the evolution theory. Prof. Weismann, Lamarck, Fabre, Jacques Loeb, Theorndike and others made further new experiments on the animal psychology. Sir Francis Galton pointed out a new way to an individual psychology on an experimental basis. Profs. Shinn and Stanley Hall's experiments on the child and social psychology were worth-mentioning after them. The systematic form of psychology gradually evolved with Profs. Lipps, Höffding, Külpe, James Ward, Stout, and others, and Prof. Fechner approached with his psycho-physic law in the field of psychology. The study of experimental psychology began from Prof. Wilhelm Wundt, and it was gradually developed by Profs. Ebbinghaus and G. E. Müller. Prof. Wundt's pupils Cattell, Hall, Kraepelin, Munsterberg and Dr. Scripture made some successful expansions, and contributed their novel theses and thus made attempt for the popularization of psychology. In 1870, the development of 'abnormal psychology' began in France by Profs. Charcot, Alfred Binet, and others. Experiments were going on constantly, and new discoveries were made in the field of physiological psychology. Profs. Broca, Wernicke, Flouren, Goltz, Munk, Luciani, and others also brought some new changes in the field of psychology by subscribing their learned contributions on that subject.

Then we find the advent of modern psychology and other

schools of thought of conflicting ideas between *structural* and *functional* aspects of psychology. The disciples of Profs. Külpe and Wurzburg made experimental studies specially on *thought* and *will*. Profs. Wertheimer, Rignano, Spearman, Köhler and Koffka also made researches on the doctrine of configurationism or *Gestalt*. Prof. Husserl's *phenomenology* played an important role in that new movement of psychology. That movement also laid a prominent stress upon the field of perception, though it was extended to the spheres of behaviour (human and animal), learning and intelligence, and made also excursions into the domain of psychology, biology and physics.

The animal experiments of the *Gestalt* school were carried out on apes and other animals. Dr. Murphy said: "Eagerly prosecuting such studies of higher mental processes, Max Wertheimer and two of his experimental subjects, Wolfgang Köhler and Kurt Koffka came upon a radically different ways of viewing the whole problem. It was Wertheimer's formulation of what occurred that led Frankfurt in 1912 to the formal inauguration of the *Gestalt* psychology—the psychology of form". Prof. Spearman said regarding the *Gestalt* psychology that mind is creative in its nature, and it creates new mental content according to the three qualitative laws of 'apprehension of experience', 'education of relations', and 'education of correlates'. The new school of the *Gestalt* psychology proved on one side a valuable counter-weight to *Behaviourism,* and on the other, brought a revolt against the traditional psychology.

After *Gestalt* psychology, Prof. Kurt Lewin's investigations into the 'field theory' and 'social psychology' are worth-mentioning. "Lewin's influence on social psychology", said Dr. Murphy, "is huge, on child psychology very large, and on general theoretical psychology considerable". In fact, Lewinian experiments gave "the field theory the vitality and productiveness it achieved".

The growth of biological sciences in the nineteenth century was something like a struggle between the physical conception and the developmental conception. Profs. Bechterev, Povlov and Watson mainly worked on the doctrine of *Behaviourism*. The rise of the behaviouristic thought was, in a sense, a protest against the *Gestalt* school, or as Dr. Murphy said that "the enthusiasm over Watson's behaviourism as system

was a factor challenging all his opponents to discover a counter-system which had the same vitality". When this new doctrine first appeared, "it seemed a lonely island; but like all such islands, physical and intellectual, it proved to have many relatives, both visible and in hiding". Prof. Watson decided to throw overboard the entire concept of the mind or consciousness, so as to make both animal and human psychology a subject of study of behaviour. He emphasized "the right of the behaviourist to think of 'mental' processes as *internal* forms of behaviour, the relation of language to thought being especially stressed. Indeed, one of Watson's most important theoretical contributions is the *suggestion*, and, as time elapsed, the insistence that all the phenomena of 'inner' life are, in reality, the functioning of mechanisms which are as objective, though not as observable as gross muscular contractions. In particular, imagination and thought have been stated in terms of 'implicit' muscular behaviour, especially the behaviour of the speech organs and other mechanisms which symbolize lines of overt conduct. The study of language is, therefore, of paramount importance for the formulation of behaviourist theory".

Prof. McDougall said that the behaviouristic psychology is the positive science of conduct of living creatures. Prof. Pillsbury defined it as the science of behaviour, and it is to be studied through the consciousness of the individual and also by external observation. Regarding this school, he said: "The most important avenue of approach to *behaviourism*, however, was through animal psychology, where introspection in terms of consciousness is bound to be precarious". Swami Abhedananda has also dealt on the theory of behaviouristic school in his discussion on the mind and its modification in a beautiful manner (vide chapter V). The Swami has said: "Modern behaviouristic psychology may be called a phase of the anatomy of the nervous system and also of the cerebral hemispheres. After vivisecting the brains of frogs, pigeons, sheep, and monkeys, and dissecting the human brains, they have traced the grand terminus of the nerves in the grey matter or the cortex of the brain, which is supposed to be the seat of the mind". However, both the behaviouristic and modern schools of psychology have explained everything by automatic reflex actions of the brain. It is also a fact that the doctrine of

behaviourism lays stress first on the nervous system and the physical organism and then on the subjective mind.

Gradually the conditioned-response method of psychology come into process "to be widely applied to human psychology with profound consequence for psychological theory, both within and without the behaviourist movement". Prof. Lashley demonstrated that the conditioned salivary reflex could be elicited in human beings through the sight of chocolet candy, a small cup against the parotid gland collecting qualities of saliva which varied with the nearness of the stimulus. At the same time there began a movement in the field of neurology and brain psychology, and this movement was, in truth, an experiment in the province of modern physiological psychology. Prof. Franz, Holmes, Sherrington, and other talented scholars were the pioneering psychologists of that modern school. In the twentieth century, Prof. McDougall appeared with his 'harmic' psychology, and proved that "a realization of the role of instinct is all important for the understanding of behaviour. Instincts are hereditarily determined channels for the discharge of nervous energy—they are psycho-physical dispositions".

Prof. Sigmund Freud appeared with his new doctrine of psycho-analysis, and laid stress upon the mystery of the unconscious or subconscious. He was occupying himelf in the late seventies with such orthodox medical investigations as the embryology of the nervous system. He made contact with Prof. Breuer, who was engaged in the study of hysteria and kindred complaints. Shortly thereafter he went to study with Prof. Charcot at Paris and finishing his study he returned to his practice in Vienna, and collaborated further with Breuer. Afterwards he proceeded to develop a new method—the psycho-analytic method. Gradually he stood squarely for his original thesis that sexuality, in its various aspecrs, is the central problem of all life and all adjustment. He divided the mind into three main parts, the (conscious) *ego,* the *Id* (the unconscious reservoir of instinctual urges), and the *super-ego* (the moral elements). He regarded dreams as the expressions of wishes. He said: "The dream is a dynamic expression of forces which, though repressed, are struggling to regain a place in consciousness". In dream, instinctual tendencies, in conflict with the *ego,* are manifested. The *ego* is a group of tendencies

which have been strengthened by social—especially ethical indoctrination. He published his thesis on the theory of wit, and expounded strongly the *libido* theory. In fact, the theory of sexuality was fundamental in the Freudian psycho-analysis. His pupils Profs. Adler and Jung differed from him in attributing less importance to sexual factors. "Rejecting root and branch of the entire Freudian conception of basic musculine and feminine psychology, Adler pointed out to the fact that biological differentiation is relatively unimportant, until it has been exploited for the purpose of Power". Profs. Erich Fromm and Karen Horney also cotributed their new theses on the psycho-analytic process with some new changes and modifications. Freud's sexual factors were then seen in a new vision, and for this change or modification, Profs. Adler and Jung were mainly credited. Adler's departure from Freud, said Prof. McDougall, "takes the form of restriction and elimination of much that in psycho-analysis was considered essential. Jung's revolt made use of the opposite method of extension. Thus, the *libido,* which in the psycho-analystic sense meant the sum total of the 'component instincts' entering into the sexual urge, means in Analytical Psychology the sum total of all impulses—the equivalent of Bergson's *élen vital*".

Prof. A. G. Tansley made an experiment on *New Psychology,* which considers the human mind as a highly evolved organism. The *New Psychology* obtains its material from the whole field of mental life, normal and abnormal, from external observation, from introspection, from the study of behaviour and conduct, from mythology and history, from the habits and customs of primitive peoples, and from those of the most advanced civilization. Dr. E. W. Scripture of the Yale University made substantial research on the *New Psychology* long before Prof. Tansley (in 1897), and he said that his thesis on *New Psychology* was not a brain psychology, not a spiritualism, and not even a new kind of metaphysics, but was mainly based upon the fundamental ideas of science and methods of careful experiment in psychology. The province of *New Psychology,* therefore, deals with the methods of systematized observation, statistics, measurement, experimenting, standards of time, standards of space, and sources of new science. But, truly speaking, the *New Psychology* may be considered as "an utterly

new method of investigation or a *starting principle of mental* life", as it cannot dissect the innermost core of the mind, nor it can discover the real status of the soul or *Atman,* which is the prime mover of all the organism of the animals as well as of all the systems of the world. And not only the *New Psychology,* but also all the schools of the Western psychology practically failed to unveil the mystery of the soul, and their failure was due to the fact that their investigations proceeded from the centre to the circumference. The cause of their failure, says Swami Abhedananda, is simply because the soul is beyond the reach of the senses, and the aim of the Western psychology is only to know the nature and depth of the mind, and not to transcend the limits of the mind. But the soul or *Atman* is absolutely the supra-mental essence, and, therefore, cannot be reached by the methods sought to be evolved and employed by the Western psychologists, who are concerned only with the problem or mystery of the mind.

Swami Abhedananda has said that mind and *psyche* or soul cannot be included in the same category, as mind borrows its shinning light from the all-intelligent soul. According to Vedanta, mind has been considered as an internal organ (*antahkarana*), and is subject to change for its manifold modifications (*vrittis*). It is limited by the adjuncts (*upadhi*) of time and space, which are the essential categories of the contingent phenomenal world. But the Indian *psyche* or soul is absolutely raised from the limiting adjuncts of time, space and causation.

It has already been said that Western psychology is mainly concerned with the problem of the mind, and does not recognise the mind as the intelligent *psyche.* But the attitude of the Indian psychology or the Yoga system of Patanjali is quite different. Indian psychology teaches to bring control over the mind and to come in contact with the pure consciousness. Indian psychology or True psychology says ; *yogaschitta-vritti-nirodhah',* i.e. 'the Yoga connotes the idea of suppression of the modification of the mind'. Here the word *suppression* can be taken as an act of *purification* or *transformation.* The mind, in both Vedanta and Yoga, is known by its modifications like *samkalpa* (positive willing) and *vikalpa* (negative willing), and when these modifications are controlled or calmed, the mind

shines as the pure consciousness (*chit*). It becomes then the pure *psyche* or *Atman*. The Western psychology has not gone so far as to consider the mind as the all-intelligent *Atman*. So Swami Abhedananda has called the Western psychology as the *psycheless* psychology i.e. psychology which does not recognise the existence of the *psyche* or soul as the background of the mind.

To make this idea more explicit, Swami Abhedananda has said that Western psychology teaches psychology "not in the sense of science of the *psyche* or soul, but in the sense of physiological origin and ordering of the mind". In his lectures on *Ideal of Education*, the Swami has stated that in the West, "there is psychology without a *psyche*, which means the soul. There is the study of psychology, but the existence of a *psyche* is not admitted ; but the Hindu psychology is far better". The Hindu psychology is "the Yoga system of Patanjali. * * There is no other system of psychological psychology in the world so complete as the psychology of Patanjali. The modern psychology of Europe, strictly speaking, is not true kind of psychology, because it does not admit the existence of *psyche*, the soul ; as Schopenhauer says: *The study of psychology is vain, for there is no psyche.* It may be called the physiological psychology or *sometology*". The Swami has also dealt on this theory in his monumental book, *India and Her People* (p. 29).

The Swami has further said: "True psychology recognizes the existence of body, mind, and soul. * * But the modern physiological psychology admits the existence of body only, and nothing else. True psychology tells us that what we call the physical body, is the dwelling house of the soul. It is manufactured by the soul which is the source of intelligence and self-consciousness". It has already been said that body and mind are the instruments of the soul, and they are, therefore, controlled by their prime mover, the soul. The higher soul or *Atman* is permanent, and it does not suffer the degrees or changes like increase and decrease, beginning and end, outside and inside, evolution and involution. Such is also the contention of Prof. F. H. Bradley, though he admitted degrees of truth and reality or of the Absolute on the basis of temporal facts. While discussing degrees of truth and reality in his book, *Appearance and Reality* (chap. XXIV), he said: "The

Absolute, considered as such, has of course no degrees; for it is perfect, and there can be no more or less in perfection (chapter XX). Such predicates belong to, and having a meaning only in the world of appearance". But still the status of the Absolute, as maintained by Prof. Bradley, is not free from criticism. Vedanta says that the soul or the Absolute is the quintessence of man's spiritual *sadhana,* and is the highest achievement of the human progress.

Swami Abhedananda has said that we should know and realize what the true nature of the soul is, and that we should also ascertain our relationship with the Absolute. The *psyche* is the pure ego or individuality "which is not a thought, not a function of the mind, not a function of our intellect, not a sensation, not a percept or a concept, but which is the unifying element of all and which makes each one of them related to us". So the soul or *psyche* is not the mind, not a state of the mind, or not a faculty of the brain, but is the pure consciousness itself—*'svaprakasha chaitanya'.*

It should be remembered that pure consciousness is not produced from and not illumined by any other thing, but it is self-illumined and self-contained (*svayam-prakasha* and *vastu-tantra*). All other things, material and mental, are illumined by the soul. So the Swami has said in this connection: "Suppose you say that matter has produced consciousness. That would be an idea or a conception; and that means a state of consciousness, a state of the mind. It does not say that you have gone behind the consciousness to find out its source. We can only find out the source of a thing, by going beyond it, by transcending it, and by going behind it. But can we go behind the state of consciousness?" No, we cannot go even behind the consciousness, because consciousness is the ground and prime source of all kinds of knowledge, and so we cannot leave it, and cannot transcend it. Again "when we are studying our states of consciousness, the very act of studying the states means we are ourselves the new states of consciousness. So we are not going behind the states of consciousness; and we cannot find the source of consciousness, because we have it; we cannot leave it; we are one with it". In fact, the pure consciousness is not an entity, separate from our being and individuality, but it is our abiding reality, in which we move, live and have our being.

So "these states of consciousness, when properly understood, will help us to understand our relation to the Infinite or the infinite existence, which is beyond time, beyond space, beyond causality; and which is the Absolute".

This statement of Swami Abhedananda fully agrees with the conclusions of the modern science, psychology, and philosophy. By 'consciousness', he means 'the recognition of the subject and the object as one and the same'. He says that consciousness is not the motion, but is that which gives us the knowledge of motion. So he differentiates consciousness from knowledge. He says that knowledge comes by comparison, which is the function of reason, but consciousness is not the result of the function of thought or reason. He further differentiates consciousness from understanding, illusion, delusion and hallucination, and considers consciousness as the fundamental, as well as the substratum of all the modal consciousness (*vritti-jnana*).

Some of the great scientists of the ninteenth century have subscribed to this similar view. Scientist like Prof. Max Plank has admitted the same truth, when he has said in one of his lectures in 1931: "Consciousness, I regard as fundamental. I regard matter as derivative from consciousness. We cannot get behind consciousness. Everything that we talk about, everything that we regard as existing, postulates consciousness". The renowned Indian philosopher Dr. Hiralal Haldar has also said in connection with Lord Haldane's philosophy: "Do what we may, we cannot go behind knowledge itself", because Reality lies as the foundational character of knowledge.

Swami Abhedananda has further dealt with the problems of existence, God, religion, Absolute, apperception of the Absolute (*brahmanubhuti*), etc. He has said: "In the midst of all changes, the only thing that does not change, is existence". This existence or *sat or satta* is not the spatiotemporal imparmanent existence, but is permanent, immutable, intelligent and eternal. Although it appears somewhat like Immanual Kant's matter that 'suffers no change amidst all the changes of the appearance', yet it is different from that matter, because Kant believed in an existence of a permanent substance like matter, but yet he identified this permanent substance that represents time in consciousness with matter. So Kant's matter, as a

permanent substance, fails to transcend the limitations of time and space, and is, therefore, impermanent and phenomenal.

Kant said that Thing-in-itself (*Ding-an-sich*) can be apperceived by thought or mind, but its real essence remains for ever unknown and unknowable. He observed: "It (Thing-in-itself) cannot be known at all, it can only be conceived or thought". But Kant's statement about the realization of the Absolute appears contradictory, because a thing is known as well as unknown at the same time, which is illogical and absurd. If a thing is known or revealed by the light of knowledge, it cannot be said to be unknown. For this reason, Prof. Höffding and Dr. Otto Pfleiderer have criticized Kant's position. Prof. Höffding has said that Kant's unknown and unknowable Thing-in-itself "is itself in the grip of becoming, of evolution ; it may possibly suffer changes....". Dr. Pfleiderer is also of the same opinion, while he has said: "He (Kant) himself is still too deeply sunk in sceptical empiricism and dogmatic mystical dualism". From the standpoint of non-dualistic Vedanta, Kant's view, regarding the realization of the Thing-in-itself, is also subject to criticism. Because non-dualistic Vedanta maintains that if for a moment there dawns the light of realization upon a man, he is at once turned to a man of realization. So, if the Absolute is known or realized, it is known for ever and ever. So Kant's statement about the unknown and unknowable Absolute seems to be anamalous. Swami Abhedananda has stated in the chapter VIII of this book: "A room that has held darkness for thousand of years, a cave where darkness has been for thousands of years, is instantly illumined by the stroke of a match-stick—the darkness of thousands of years is dispelled".

In this way, if we compare the status of the Absolute, as maintained by Spinoza, Bradley, Hegel, and others, we shall find that they also fall short of their fullness. As for example, Bradley's transcendental Absolute is no other than the 'undifferentiated unity' of Spinoza, and for that reason, Prof. Pringle-Pattison has criticized Bradley as the neo-Spinozist. Prof. Ruggeero has also called Bradley as a veiled sceptist, because Bradley maintains the philosophical doctrine of absolute idealism, that reduces the Absolute into the high watermark of the neo-Hegelian thought. Prof. Bradley's vision

of Reality is like a harmonious undivided whole of experience in which all aspects of infinite experience are included and transmuted, but not parted and related, and, therefore, Bradley's Absolute resembles also the Hegelian Absolute, which appears as a unique undivided whole, but contains in it the duality of transmuted everything other than it. The Indian Vedantic viewpoint is clear in this respect. The non-dualistic Vedanta states that the absolute Brahman is one without the second, and it is unique and universal, and is raised from all dualities. The Brahman can only be realized in an ecstacy of unutterable feeling or experience (*anubhuti*). "It is the feeling. It is the realization, the divine realization", says Swami Abhedananda. And this realization does not involve any intellectual process of thought of the Ideal, but the Ideal is harmonized with our daily life".

Swami Abhedananda has further said that existence and consciousness are one and the same. The *Upanishad* has described the Brahman as *sat-chit-ananda*,—existence, consciousness and bliss. This existence or changeless absolute *satta* underlies all the changing phenomenal existence. So the changeless existence can be said to be the basic existence or basic consciousness. Philosopher Hume called it an unceasing eternal stream of existence or consciousness, as the Buddhist Madhyamika philosophers have designated consciousness as the fleeting one (*chalamana-jnana-santana*). But Kant gave a death blow to Hume, and roused him from his dogmatic slumber, by proving that there is something permanent amidst all the impermanent things. But Prof. Kemp Smith has even criticized the permanent something, as maintained by Kant, because Kant's persisting something also represents time in consciousness with matter. Here Swami Abhedananda's stand is quite firm and faultless. The Swami has said that the real existence (*kutastha satta*) is raised from all tints of time, space and causation, and is the changeless immutable substratum, upon which all the materials of the changing phenomena take their shelter, play their role, and at last disappear. So the pure existence is like the bed of the river, upon which the restless streams of the water pass. The Swami's statement or rather conclusion has given, therefore, a death-blow not only to the passing consciousness of Hume and the Madhyamika philosophers, but also

to the perpetual change or aimless time-flux of Heraclitus, Bergson, and S. Alexander as well as to the primal vortex of the Greek philosophers, Empidocles and Anaxagoras. Swami Abhedananda has said that Vedanta clearly maintains that pure existence is the self-revealing (*svayamprakasha*) permanent essence that dispels darkness of all duality and delusion, and brings immediate awareness of the Absolute.

Again the Swami differentiates intuition from intellect, and says that "intellect is one of the powers of the mind, but intuition is just the other pole of reason, that is, knowing without conscious reasoning". In truth, intuition is "that power by which our subjective mind can perceive the result without reasoning, without questioning". In this respect, Swamiji's view is different from that of Immanual Kant, because the Swami raises the status of intuition above all kinds of sensuous tinge, whereas Kant made his intuition sensuous and phenomenal. In fact, the Swmi maintains the Advaitic viewpoint of Indian philosophy as regards intuition.

Swami Abhedananda has also dealt with the problem of the mental functions like attention and concentration. He says: "Of course, concentration, in its simplest form, is known as attention, but modern physiological psychology does not explain what attention is". Concentration means the act of controlling the energy or the modifications of the mind, and will power plays an important role in that act of controlling. Attention and will-power are again inseparably connected, and they develop the power of one-pointedness of the mind, and thus bring the power of concentration or concentrated attention unto a man. By concentration, men acquire right knowledge, revelation, inspiration, and realization, which are the disclosures of the higher self.

Swami Abhedananda further discusses the questions of individuality and personality in a very logical and novel way. He says that among the writers of higher thought and even among the philosophers, you will find that the word 'personality' has been used in the sense of individuality, and the word 'individuality' in the sense of personality. But personality may change, and may be diverse, whereas individuality never changes, but is constant, and permanent. The philosopher like Hegel also overlooked the real status of individuality, as he main-

tained that individuality being the false self, separates us from it, whereas personality being the true self, unites us. The Swami refutes this view of Hegel from the Indian Advaitic viewpoint, and proves that individuality is basic and permanent, whereas personality is impermanent.

According to Tantra philosophy, Siva is the changeless static energy, whereas Sakti is the dynamic one. Sakti as Kali dances upon the breast of Siva Mahakala, and it means that the dynamic play of the divine energy takes its ground (*adhisthanam*) upon the static unmanifested energy. Ramakrishna Paramahamsa has said that the moving serpent (*chalamana sap*) and the motionless (*sthira sap*) are essentially one and the same thing, because motion is the manifested phase of the motionless unmanifested one. The *Sankhya* philosophy also maintains the same view. The *Sankhya* states that the dynamic phase of the *Purusha* is no other than *Prakriti,* as the *Prakriti* itself is inert and motionless, and becomes dynamic, being contaminated with the all-intelligent *Purusha*:

As regards the Absolute, Swami Abhedananda says that the Absolute is the immutable permanent reality. It is our very existence and essence. It can be realized by our deeper experience or feeling. Some of the Western philosophers like Spinoza, Schelling, Hegel, Lotze, Bradley and others believe in the intellectual apprehension of the Absolute. They say that through the transparent mirror of intellect or thought the transcendental luminosity can be fully grasped. Kant also maintains the similar view, as he says that to eatch the glimpse of the Noumenon, pure intellect is necessary. But Swami Abhedananda has refuted this view of Kant as well as of those other philosophers, and has said that the Absolute can be realized only by the divine feeling (*anubhuti*) and not by thought or intellect.

Swami Abhedananda has further said that divinity in man is the higher consciousness, and it is the one stupendous whole that knows no part, division, or degree. It transcends also the denominations of *one* and *many;* because *one* and *many* are the forms of thought, and, therefore, they are inadequate to express the transcendental nature of the Absolute. It can, therefore, be described by the negative thought like *neti neti*— not this, not this. Some are of opinion that transcendence of

thought means the disappearance of thought, and that implies that the Absolute, being transcended from the world, becomes unconscious and blank. But the Swami says that this apprehension is also incorrect. The absolute Brahman, being intelligence or consciousness in itself, cannot be blank or void. So, when the Brahman is transcended, it transcends the limitations of time, space and causation. In essence it shines always in its full luminosity and surpassing glory.

The leading American idealist Prof. J. Royace and some other neo-Hegelian thinkers maintain a quite different view, regarding God's qualities or denominations. Prof. Royace is of opinion: "God cannot be *one* except by being *many*. Nor can we various selves be *many* unless in Him we are one". From this it appears that God, according to Royace, shines somewhat like the 'higher synthesis' of Hegel and the 'inclusive whole' of Prof. Whitehead. But Swami Abhedananda has refuted both the views of 'one-in-man' of Hegel and the 'united pluralism' of Whitehead. The Swami has proved that though God or the Absolute shines in and through the world of becoming, yet it is free from the discripancies of *one* and *many*.

Swami Abhedananda considers the Absolute as the backgrounds (*adhisthana*) of the world, so long the world remains as separate from the Brahman. Regarding it, he has said: "The only thing that does not pass away, is the Absolute, and that Absolute is like the background of all phenomena. It is the substratum. Plato also made the 'Ideas' the ground of the world of sense, but he did not consider it as cause. Spinoza also recognized the Substance as the ground or substratum of the modes, thought and extension, but he refused to accept it as the cause of them. But the Swami has recognized the Absolute as both material and efficient cause (*upadana* and *nimitta karana*) of the world of appearance, and there he has maintained the Advaitic viewpoint of Sankara. In fact, the *nirupadhika* and *nirvishesha* Brahman is known as the cause (*karana*) and the substratum (*adhisthana*) of the world from the standpoint of projection or *srishti* only, but, in essence (*svarupa*), it is neither the cause nor the substratum, but transcends the ideas of both cause and ground. Regarding it, the Swami has said: "The term 'cause' can be applied to a thing, when it is related to the effect, and from this standpoint

the causeless cause or uncaused cause is also an anomalous term. It does not refer to the Absolute". God, the *sopadhika* Brahman may only be regarded as the cause and the ground of the world.

Thus we see that Swami Abhedananda's philosophical viewpoint, throughout his discourses on the True psychology, is free from the doctrine of dualism, qualified non-dualism, monism, and even from that of immanent transcendentalism, as it imbibes the air of transcendentalism or the transcendental non-dualism of the Vedanta. But yet the Swami does not deny the apparent value and reality of the empirical world like Sankara and Kant, rather he admits the apparent existence (*vyavaharika-satta*) of the world of appearance. He negates it only in the transcendental ultimate Reality. In the highest apperception of the Absolute (*brahma-sakshatkara*), the permanent existence (*paramarthika satta*) of the Brahman is realized, and that is the only reality.

Swami Abhedananda says that selfishness is the cause of ignorance or nescience (*ajnana*). It "is ignorance that makes us selfish..., but the light of knowledge will dispel the darkness of ignorance". He has also discussed about religion. He has said that religion is the means or medium for achieving the knowledge of the Absolute. Doctrines and dogmas are the non-essential parts of religion, whereas the realization of the Absolute is the essential part of it. The attainment of God-intuition is the true religion, and that God-intuition means to see God face to face, and to realize God as the innermost essence of the world. (God is used here in the sense of the transcending Brahman). Swami Abhedananda denies the doctrine of the eternal progress for the achievement of the highest goal, as Herbert Spencer and other evolutionists maintain. Regarding it, he says: "We are evolving and progressing everyday, until we reach the goal which is the idea. Before we understand what the Absolute is, we must pass through the different stages of evolution in our spiritual progress, but, in truth, the grades of evolution are the forms of thought or imagination.

The Swami maintains that every man, nay, every creature will commune with God sooner or later, and this communion means to be one with God the Absolute. The American philosopher, Boodin somewhat differs from this view, Prof. Boodin

is of opinion that God is both transcendent and immanent: "He is immanent in His activity, in His pervasiveness and control, but He is transcendent in quality with reference to nature and evolution, as nothing rises equal to the quality of God". And 'to have communion with God it is not necessary to be God. To commune with light it is not necessary to be light. But in the communion with God, we live God as we are able. The kingdom of heaven is always at hand.....But to live God absolutely means to have the quality of divinity". From this it is clear that Prof. Boodin believes in the doctrine of qualified monism (*visishtadvaitavada*), and, therefore, he differs from the doctrine of non-dualism or Advaita, as maintained by Sankara, Vivekananda and Abhedananda. Swami Abhedananda has said that being and becoming are one; and a man realizes the Absolute means he becomes one with the Absolute.

Being a man of realization, Swami Abhedananda does not forget to turn his benignant eyes even towards the suffering and wailing millions of the world with his unbounded love and sympathy. He pines for their solace and relief. He says: "So, we must not live for ourselves, but we must live for the rest of the universe. We are here to help in the onward progress, not only for our own individual self, but of the whole humanity, of the whole race and of all living things". So we see that Swami's love for his people, and love for his nation and country, nay, love for the freedom of the whole humanity, are intense and burning, and this has been vividly expressed in his *India and Her People,* delivered under the auspices of the Brooklyn Institute in America in 1906. His has no selfish anxiety for his own emancipation or *mukti,* but he comes down to the common ground of his fellow beings, and even to the socalled down-trodden animal and plant-world, and thus appeals to all: "We must not stop simply after doing something that will help our own people and our own nation, but we must go on doing things that will help not only our own nation, but also all nations; not only the human beings, but also all the living creatures, lower animals, even plants". How great and all-embracing is the heart of the beloved child of Sri Ramakrishna! He received his spiritual training and knowledge at the holy feet of his great Master, Ramakrishna, and so it has been

possible for him to make his philosophy and religion quite living, loving, and practical!

Now, we owe our debt of gratitude to Srimat Swami Pratyagatmananda (formerly known as Prof. Pramathanath Mukhopadhyaya), who is well-known for his ripe scholarship in Tantra and other systems of philosophy, for his kind help and valuable suggestions in revising the manuscript of the first edition, before they were sent to the press.

We have added in this volume some valuable footnotes for making the subject explicit. The book has been re-edited for the Complete Works. The book is undoubtedly a unique contribution to the field of philosophy, and specially to the domain of psychology. Most of the scholars generally go deep into the study of the Western psychology, neglecting the valuable teachings of Indian psychology. But that is not correct, as Indian psychology, which means the Yoga psychology, has many things to contribute in the field of psychology, which are very essential to all who live in this world of activities and who struggle for existence for making their life worthly and fruitful.

SWAMI PRAJNANANANDA

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CHAPTER I

TRUE PSYCHOLOGY

The study of psychology must be of great interest to us all, more so than a study of any other science, because we are interested to know something about what our own mind is, what the source of our mental functions is, and what the various states of consciousness and their causes are. These subjects are interesting to us, because they relate to our own self i.e. to our own being. Other studies on different sciences like physics, chemistry, botany, physiology, or biology, astronomy, etc., would lead to other results, which might be considered as of secondary value, but the study of our own mind should be regarded as of primary importance.

In modern colleges and universities, the psychology is taught as a natural science, like any other natural science, physics, chemistry, physiology, or anatomy. Its scope is to describe and explain the various states of consciousness, such as sensations, emotions, ideas, volitions, reasoning, and so on; and also to trace the physical causes which produce these states of consciousness and the physiological conditions under which they arise.

Modern psychology of this kind tells us that all these fluctuations of the mind are caused by the stimuli that we receive from the external world. In fact, they are the changes of the brain and the nervous system. It also tells us that there is no such thing as a soul or a mind as separate from the functions of the brain. All the teachings, regarding the true nature of the soul or of the mind, are discarded by modern psychology, because it is under the influence of physical science and it has, accordingly, confined itself to specialization of the nerve physiology and cerebral anatomy. It has adopted physical methods of research, and, most earnestly and diligently starting from the materialistic hypothesis that mind is produced by the mechanical process of insentient matter of the brain, governed by mechanical laws, and it has collected some facts and reached

certain conclusions. These facts and conclusions are studied under the name of psychology.

We have almost forgotten that the word 'psychology has been derived from the Greek word *psyche,* which means the soul. We use this word *psychology* not in the sense of science of the *psyche* or soul, but in the sense of physiological origin and ordering of the mind. Now, *psyche* or soul has been discarded out of psychology which is taught today in colleges, and universities. Like all other natural sciences, physiological psychology describes different modes of motion of unintelligent particles, which make up the brain-cells in terms of consciousness and locates every state of consciousness as an activity of some sort in the cerebral hemispheres. In other words, the molecules of the cells of the brain produce a certain vibration or motion, and that vibration or motion is called a state of consciousness or sensation and thus every state of consciousness or sensation is regarded as an activity of some sort in certain lobes or convolutions of the brain. For instance, when we see colour, the optical convolutions are active ; when we hear music the temporal lobes are active, etc. So it is based entirely upon the conclusions of physiologists and medical men, who trace the influences of pathological conditions to the disorder of the brain and the nervous system. Therefore, the working hypothesis of physiological psychology is that every mental activity is caused by the function of the brain and nothing more or less. This we learn in schools and colleges, but by this we do not understand anything about our mind or mental powers, or the origin of thought, or the nature of our soul. As all brain actions are governed by mechanical laws, so the rise of a thought, or an idea, or a feeling, is a result of the same mechanical process. This we gather from the modern psychology.

Furthermore, the physiological psychology teaches that, in order to study the states of consciousness, we should study their corresponding relation with the probable neutral conditions in the nervous system and in the brain. Then it goes on classifying the afferent and efferent nerves, through which the nerve currents run into and out of the brain. They are known as the sensory or motor nerves. The physiological psychology does not define what sensation is, but it leaves that as a mystery of

nature. We cannot solve this mystery by studying modern psychology, for, it does not explain how a particular mode of the motion of the molecules of the brain-cells can become a state of consciousness, such as an emotion, an idea, a feeling, or a thought, or a conscious entity. It tells us that a sensation is myteriously caused by this motion (which is absolutely mechanical) of the unintelligent particles of matter, which make up the cells of the brain and of the nervous system.

Psychology, as a natural science, however, does not, in its last analysis, stand on any solid ground. On the contrary, its foundation is very shaky, and the whole structure is ever ready to fall to pieces. Because these states of consciousness, which are only brain activities, are not continuous states. They last only for a moment, and they rise and fall. But why should such passing and unstable conditions produce a lasting and stable parallel feeling or thought or sensation or a percept or a concept in the mind substance ? It cannot be explained. But it is left as a mystery.

Secondly, motion produces nothing but motion. How is it possible for the mechanical activities of the brain-cells to produce consciousness which is not motion, but is the knower of motion ? There are books, written on analytical psychology, neutral psychology and history of psychology, but they are nearly based on the same materialistic or quasi-materialistic foundation, which is extremely fragile. The *New Psychology* by E. W. Scripture, Ph.D., Director of the Yale Psychological Laboratory, is the result of the mechanical experiments which were started by Prof. W. Wundt of Leipzig, in Germany. It tells us how to measure the vibrations of the nerve currents at the time of a pleasant or an unpleasant feeling, or of any particular pain, or pleasure, and contains the minute description of the various sensations, as regards their time and place that can be known through mechanical methods and by the help of fine instruments. Such being the case, we inquire what will be the foundation of True psychology ?

This question naturally rises in our minds. The True psychology will not only inform us of the phychological conditions of the brain, nerves and nerve centres of individuals, but also the true nature of the mind, our psychic existence, its scope, its relation and its continuity. It is neither metaphysics, nor

would never be advised of this physical existence, and, consequently, it would have no knowledge of the objective world. The knowledge of the objective world is only possible for the soul through its contact with the mind substance, which is both the subjective mind and the objective mind. For this reason, it is called by some the objective mind, by some the active mind and by others the environmental mind, and so on. The objective mind gets informations from the external world through the senses, and presents them to the subjective mind; while the subjective mind is that part of the mind which receives intelligence from the soul, and determines the nature of the objective impressions by deduction or direct perception, and decides what kind of sensation or feeling has arisen. Such is the function of the subjective mind. Although there is one mind, still, on account of these two distinct functions, it is classified as the subjective and objectives ones.

In somnambulism and hypnotic sleep, it has been discovered that the subjective mind is capable of acting independently of the objective mind; it has distinct powers of its own. Furthermore, the subjective mind can be influenced and controlled by suggestion. Here I must say that auto-suggestion is stronger than any external suggestion. A number of boys were hypnotized, and suggestions were given that one was a monkey, another was up on a hill and a third one was thrown in a lake. You would laugh to split your sides if you saw those boys. An infant is at first purely subjective in mind. The objective reasoning develops gradually in him, through education and experience.

The subjective mind possesses most marvellous memory. The latent memory of a very wide range comes out, when the objective mind is in abeyance or in sleep. The memory of the past lives may be possible[1]. Col. De Rochas hypnotized a girl, who remembered some of her previous lives.

But the subjective mind is never asleep. Most of the productions of a genius are but the outpouring of impressions of the subjective mind. Talent, however, is the result of the objective reason. Abnormal passions and appetites are in the subconscious mind, which can be cured by giving suggestions to

[1] Patanjali has described in the *Yogasutra* how the memories of the past lives can be called back.

the subjective mind. Most of the healing powers come from the subjective mind. The healing power of the *prana* comes through faith, which connects with the subjective mind.

The attributes of the human mind indicate limitation, and that is subject to the laws of physical being. The first attribute, which our mind possesses is imagination, and that is the power to conceive the existence of a set of circumstances which may exist, or may not. With the help of this faculty, all other attributes will come.

Another attribute is reason or comparison. Reason consists in taking that which we know, and comparing it with something else we know that. When reason is aided by imagination, it becomes an induction or inference. As for example, when we see smoke on the hill top, we imagine that there must be fire, and it becomes an induction or inference. Because our previous experience taught us where there is smoke, there must be fire. Thus induction or inference involves reasoning or comparison, aided by imagination. All scientific knowledge also depends upon induction, and that means imagination is based upon comparison and also upon reasoning. It is like a means or sign for tracing the unknown cause from seeing the effect.

Another attribute of the mind is deduction, which is different from induction. It is a means or sign for tracing the effect from the known cause. After watching a heavy rainfall, when we trace its effect in the swelling of the river, we call it as deduction. But when we see the swelling of the river and trace its cause to rainfall by reasoning, it is an inductive method of reasoning. If our senses are in a normal condition, we are not apt to make mistakes, and we have deduction of direct perception of the objective mind. But the direct and immediate perception of the subjective mind is called intuition. This faculty proves our mind's relation to the soul, which is all intelligence (*chaitanyaghana*) or the source of intelligence.

In the True psychology, the word 'soul' means 'pure intelligence'. There is no thinking, or reasoning, and no feeling of any other kind in the soul. But thinking, reasoning, feeling, etc. are various attributes or functions of the mind substance, both subjective and objective. Of these, reason and imagination are imperfect attributes of the mind. So, neither reason

nor imagination can be perfect, as they have a limitation. We cannot perfect them. Reason is a mental faculty that involves the process of comparison. When shall it be compared with in the last analysis? If knowledge is the nature of the soul, there is no possibility of comparison in perfect knowledge. So, in the perfect knowledge, there is no comparison, but reason exists in comparison, and when reason is perfected, it will kill itself. Therefore there can neither be reason nor imagination, because imagination as such will never lead to or become knowledge. Imagination will be that dubious, inquiring and explaining state, while soul always knows. In fact, the soul does nothing but knowing. The soul does not also reason. It is the mind that reason. It has been said before that the soul only knows. The soul is intelligence. It does not inquire, but it is self-evidence and self-assurance. Therefore, it has no imagination. That which inquires and tries to find out the source or cause, is not the soul. Because an enquiring is the action of the mind. And so long as there is no enquiry in the soul, there cannot be any induction. An induction is in the mind; because it depends upon reason and imagination.

The soul cannot be destroyed. We cannot think of the destruction of the soul. Because it has no imagination, and, consequently, it cannot imagine its own destruction. The soul is immortal and eternal. It exists all the time. It cannot know its beginning. It cannot even imagine its beginning, because it always knows. Its nature is absolute presence. Try to think of your beginning in consciousness. You will not be able to do that. You might think of the beginning of your body, brain, mind, and of everything else, but you cannot think of your own beginning as intelligence. Similarly you cannot think of your death. Try to think of your death as knower. You cannot. You can only know your eternal presence, and that presence is the window of the soul. There are imposed subjective and objective limitations, which appear to restrict the presence of the soul and make it speak through the window. But it has presence inside the window and even outside and beyond the window. Therefore, it is potentially omnipresent. When this presence is perfected by taking off the limitation, it becomes omnipresent. Now, through this we can explain why it is possible for one mind to send thoughts to another, which we

call 'telepathy'. I will come to it later on, when I will describe the powers of the mind, telepathy and thought transference. There is a cosmic omnipresent mind, and our individual minds are but little eddies in that cosmic mind. Our individual minds are connected through the cosmic mind. When I think, I can send that thought to your mind through the cosmic mind. I can send my all thoughts through the mental space, like the wireless telegraphy through the physical space. In fact, the wireless does not touch the mental space. The wireless sends a vibration or electrical current in the physical space, but the same condition, when produced in the mental space, becomes telepathy or thought transference.

The soul has power, and that power is another attribute of the soul. But the soul is potentially omnipotent. The power of the soul can be made an unlimited power, and can be perfected, and then we become one with the omnipotent. Next, the soul has knowledge, and there it is potentially omniscient. Next, the soul has love, and it has the potentiality of perfect love. The soul has the creative power. You may say that our mind has also the creative power. But mind cannot do anything without being in close touch with intelligence or source of intelligence, the soul (*Atman*). It might be possible for the intelligent mind to be creator. We have that love in us, which is the creative energy of the universe, when that is perfected, or becomes perfect love, and that perfect love is the creator. So, when these attributes are perfected in an individual, the individual becomes one with the universal soul.

There is a great universal soul, and our souls are the parts of that great soul. Each man has a soul, and if you take it collectively in other spheres and planets, there will be infinite individual souls. The infinite individual souls are again included in one stupendous eternal soul.

The True psychology, when properly applied, will explain the power of suggestion, telepathy, hypnotism, mental healing, and other powers, which cannot be explained by the physiological psychology. The physiological psychology, which we study in schools and colleges, describes all these powers as impossible. It never teaches them; it never tries to explain them. So it leaves those things aside. But the True psychology

embraces them all. The True psychology has not been taught in the West. It has been taught in the East. The True psychology explains all the psychic phenomena, which are recorded by the Psychical Research Societies. It will also explain all truths in connection with spiritism, and such truths relate more or less to psychic powers of the subjective mind. The True psychology embraces that science, which has been called by some as 'mentology'. But those who use this term 'mentology', give the name of the mind to that which we have called soul. According to them, mentology is the science of the mind, which is behind matter, behind atoms. and behind electrons. They hold that mind creates electrons, and produces atoms, molecules and germs of nature. Thought is in and behind the vibration of electrons, and thought forms existed before matter has aggregated. Thought forms are caused by the force of the mind, which is the same as the soul or the subjective mind, and before any external form is made, there is a thought form. Most sensitive photographic plates will take a picture of the thought form. They are materialized as electrons in vibration, although outwardly we do not see them with one eyes. The electrons produce atoms and then molecules and different elements, and gradually they produce the forms of the material objective world. In that way, the thought forms have been materialized through the power of the mind. So, what you see today in the universe as earth, moon, stars, planets and everything, they are nothing but the materialization of the finer thought forms, that existed in the cosmic mind from the beginningless past. The finer thought are the *Ideas* of Plato, and these pure *Ideas* existed eternally in the past, and will exist eternally in the future as patterns in the cosmic mind.

Now, for instance, you have seen a horse, but you have not seen a perfect horse. You have seen a red or a white or a black horse, but is that a perfect horse ? No. The perfect horse cannot manifest itself on this material plane, because there are limitations. The thought form of a horse exists in the cosmic mind, and that form will never be fully manifested on this earth. In fact, the horse will never be a perfect horse on this material plane, but the perfect pattern remains in the cosmic mind from eternity to eternity. When this earth is destroyed and another planet would be inhabited by horse, then that

pattern will work and materialize the horse through the natural laws of the environments.

Now apply the same thing with human beings. We are human beings. You have seen a red, a white, or a black man, but you have not seen a perfect man. The perfect man is in the mind of the cosmic being. The perfect man is a pattern, a thought form, and that pattern will never come down to this plane, but we are approaching that pattern and trying to become perfect, and that is what we expect to be doing on this plane. We may not ever be able to reach it, but our attempt is to manifest that pattern on this plane. Christ is that type. It is in the cosmic mind. It is the same as Logos, and is the same as Word. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God". That Word was the Logos, and the Logos was the perfect man in thought pattern in the cosmic mind. Jesus was the human man, and Christ was the perfect man. So Jesus became Christ afterwards.

Buddha became the perfect type, and we are also approaching that type. The mentologists claim that mind is the force, which directs the finer particles of electrons, and creates them from its own being, as it were, and then produces atoms, and that atoms, when drawn or attracted together, become molecules, and molecules, when brought together, become the elements of nature. The elements of nature create the whole gross physical universe. So the gross physical universe is the materialization of the thought forms that exist in the cosmic mind.

True psychology has been taught in India from very ancient times, but that True psychology has not been taught in the West, as I have already said. If we study the Hindu psychology, which is as old as the Vedas, we find that it admitted the existence of body, mind and soul as well as their relations. Body is the physical organ, the senses are the special organs, and the brain is the internal organ, co-ordinating and controlling the sense organs. The mind is in touch with the brain, which is its chief organ on the physical plane. There is the subjective mind, which is called the *buddhi* in Sanskrit. We may call the subjective mind that body, which is in closer touch with the source of intelligence or the all-intelligence. The *buddhi* or the reflected consciousness is ot the reasoning faculty,

but is the faculty of the intuition. It is nearer to the soul. It is practically the first or highest manifestation of the mind substance. The mind substance evolves, and produces various modifications or faculties and attributes. They are known by different names as different states of consciousness. These different states of consciousness are again no other than the feelings and the ideas. So, by studying the Oriental psychology, especially the Hindu psychology, we get a clear idea of what True psychology is[1].

[1] The True psychology is no other than the the *Yoga psychology*. The *Yogasutras* of Patanjali is also known as the *Hindu Psychology*.

CHAPTER II

THE CONSCIOUSNESS

The physiological psychology, like any other natural science, tells us that consciousness is produced by the activity of the brain cells. In other words, it is the function of the brain. In all the modern schools and colleges and also among the medical practitioners, scientists, anatomists, and biologists, it is said that mind, thought, intelligence, and consciousness are different terms of the same thing, and that they are produced by the combination of the material particles, which make up our nervous system and the brain. When we see any sight, some parts of the brain, like the optical convolutions, are acting. When we hear a sound, the temporal lobes are acting, and so on. The followers of the physiological psychology believe in the *production theory.*

There are different theories that have been advanced by materialistic thinkers, who consider that matter is the origin of all mental functions, thoughts, ideas, and so on. One of these theories is the *production theory.* The *production theory* teaches us that mind, thought, intelligence, consciousness, or whatever you may call it, is produced by the nervous system and the brain. The *production theory* also tells us that the mind is conterminous with the brain activities. When the brain activities stop, the mind also stops, and if the brain is in disorder, the mind also is in disorder, and when the brain is destroyed, the mind, consciousness, intelligence, and everything are destroyed. The upholders of the *production theory* try to explain how consciousness is produced. Of course, many of them regard it as a mystery, but this mystery when they try to solve, they make different hypothesis. One of the hypothesis is that the sensations are like things which, when entering into our brain, are metamorphosed into thoughts and ideas, just as, in the same way, when we eat something, the food-stuff is metamorphosed, i.e. the food-stuff, after entering into our system, goes through a chemical change. They say that as the food-stuff falls into the stomach and goes through a chemical

change, so the sensations, falling into the instrument of brain, are changed into thoughts, ideas, emotions, volitions, and so on. From this it is understood that as if the sensations are something like the food-stuff, which, falling into the brain, is metamorphosed into various mental states of consciousness.

But this theory does not explain the real cause of the mind or mental functions and all the different psychic phenomena, which we have noticed perhaps in our lifetime, or which have been recorded by the scientific thinkers, as for instance, by the Psychical Research Society and other philosophers. But these facts (which are admitted as facts) cannot be explained by the *production theory*. Truly speaking, the brain does not produce consciousness, as it is something absolutely different from the activity of the brain.

Percival Lowell is one of the materialistic scientists, who explains that consciousness is nothing but a nerve glow. He says that when we get sensations, the molecules of the nerves become agitated i.e. are vibrated, and when these vibrations of the molecules of the nerves (for instance, the vibrations from the eyes, or through the optic nerve, or from the ears through the auditory nerves) are carried into the brain, they come in touch, or are in face to face with another set of molecules, which are not in accordance with this particular mode of vibration, and there something, like a friction, takes place, and that friction produces a kind of glow i.e. nerve glow, and that is our consciousness. That is a *materialistic theory,* which explains that consciousness is produced from the matter[1]. Percival Lowell says: "When we have, as we say, an idea, what happens inside of us, is probably like this: the neural current of molecular change passes up the nerves, and through the ganglia, reaches at last the cortical cells". "* * When it reaches the cortical cells, it finds a set of molecules which are not so accustomed to this special change. The current encounters resistance, and in overcoming this resistance, it causes the cells to glow. This white-heating of the cells we call consciousness. Consciousness, in short, is probably nerve glow".

Another materialist, J. Luys also maintains the same materialistic theory. Prof. Luys says that consciousness is just

[1] Swami Abhedananda: *Life Beyond Death,* pp. 12-13.

like the red heat or white heat, of a piece of iron, when put into a furnace, and it is a kind of glow, and that glow is consciousness[2]. Prof. Luys' theory also does not give us anything further. It should be remembered that the very nature of consciousness is to know, and the riddle of consciousness is how this nerve glow will produce knowledge. But the materalistic theory cannot explain it.

Even Herbert Spencer also believed in this theory of metamorphosis of the physical, material and unconscious vibrations of the particles of matter, producing consciousness in a mysterious manner. But that mystery he could not solve. Herbert Spencer was an agnostic. He did not believe in the existence of a soul as separate from the activity of the brain. He could not positively assert that there was such a thing. He could not explain positively, as a cerebralist or a mentalist would do, but he explained the states of consciousness as something like a metamorphosis[3], which has taken place in our brain in an inscrutable way. He says: "Ideas are like the successive chords and cadences, brought out, which successively die as the other ones are sounded, and it would be as proper to say that these passing chords and cadences, thereafter, exist in the piano, as it is proper to say that passing ideas, thereafter, exist in the brain". He compares the brain with the piano, but he makes a mistake, in so far as he assumes that the piano produces the chords and cadences by itself, without the help of the mind of the musician. This illustration would have been a correct one, if he had explained that the brain was an instrument like the piano, but that it required a musician and a mind, outside of the piano, to produce the music, and that the music is not in the piano, but in the mind of the musician. The music is also in the mind of the one, who hears it. In the piano, there are only vibrations of its strings, which are not the music, but they are the material causes of music. But, as he explains it, he does not give any satisfactory answer to the question, what consciousness is, nor does it solve the other problems, which arise in our minds, regarding the nature of the soul and the nature of consciousness.

There is another theory, which is called the *combination*

[2] Ibid., p. 12.
[3] Ibid., pp. 13, 94.

theory. This theory tells us that there are two lines, running parallel: one is the neural current, and the other is the stream of states of consciousness. They are running parallel. Prof. W. K. Clifford is one of the advocates of this theory, and it is called the *combination theory.* Prof. Clifford says: "Consciousness is a complex thing, made up of elements, and a stream of feelings. The action of the brain is also a complex thing, made up of elements and a stream of nerve messages. For every feeling, in consciousness is, at the same time, a nerve message of the brain. Consciousness is not a simple thing, but is complex. It is the combination of feelings into a stream. Inexorable facts connect our consciousness with this body that we know; and that not merely as a whole, but the parts of it are connected severally with parts of our brain action. If there is any similar connection with a spiritual body, it only follows that the spiritual body must die at the same time with the natural one"[4]. So it is considered like an emanation of the brain action, which is running simultaneously with the nerve messages. These nerve messages are received from our sense organs in the form of light, colour, sound, odour, taste and touch. All these are the nerve messages, or, in other words, they are the primary sensations, and these primary sensations produce streams of consciousness as separate and parallel. But why a nerve message would induce a parallel state of consciousness these upholders of the *combination theory* do not explain. They do not know why an elementary function in nature should thus present two as parallel. The inexorably connected or parallel phases are a nerve message and a feeling. Of course, there is sush a thing as a stream of consciousness. We know that there is also a change in the flow of consciousness.

First of all, we shall have to understand the different conditions of our consciousness. For instance, when we are conscious of a thing, we feel that it is a part of our consciousness. Then I am conscious of the chair. It should be remembered that this consciousness of the chair is not the consciousness of somebody else, but is my personal consciousness exists in all states of consciousness. When you have a thought, that thought is of yourself. For instance, in a room

[4] Vide Swami Abhedananda: *Life Beyond Death,* p. 14.

we are sitting. There are so many people, and each one has a thought. Now, that is not a common thought, as that is floating in the air. But each mind has a thought of his own that he claims as 'my thought'. Your thought will not be the same as that of another person. It is not coming at random, but every thought, or idea, or emotion, or conception, that rises in my mind, has a particular connection with myself. And that is inevitable. Under all conditions you will find that it is my will, my desire, my feeling, my thought, my idea and my consciousness. How that is so, is not explained by either of these two theories, the *production theory* and the *combination theory*. The *production theory* is concerned with that which is produced by brain activity at random. But why should it be my thought, these theories cannot explain. What will determine this inevitable reference to me. These theories cannot answer that question of personal ownership of any and every thought. In the modern psychology, or rather in physiological psychology, you will, at every turn, be confronted with that great question. But that question has not been answered. These theories cannot answer that why is it that any thought, which is a function of the brain, would be called a particular state of my personal consciousness.

For instance, when two persons, John and Henry, go to sleep, they go with certain ideas in their minds, and the ideas, which John has in his mind, differ from the ideas, which Henry has. But they are sleeping in the same room. When both of them wake up, John takes up the thread of his ideas, and he does not think of the ideas which Henry has. And Henry takes up the thread of his ideas independently of the thoughts and ideas which John might have in his mind. That will give you a particular idea of the different states of the mind, and you will know that one mind is distinct from the other mind. John claims that it is his thought, his idea, or his feeling, distinct from the feelings of others. Of course, John and Henry have, in this case, two distinct brains, asleep under nearly similar conditions. But the two never mix their threads. In sleep as well as in the waking state, each one does not merely keep its thread apart, but offers it, each distinct item of it, to be exclusively owned by one person and not by the other. It is either John's or Henry's. Thus the facts that the threads are

kept separate all along, that they are apparently never broken, that they obey the laws of an ordered succession, coupled with the facts that each is recognized, remembered, reconstructed and owned by a distinct person, John or Henry, who functions as a continuous *self* or *me,* will never be completely covered by a cerebral explanation, either of the one kind or the other.

Surely these things are not happening at random, but are coming in a systematic way or order, rising in our consciousness and creating what we call states of our consciousness. These states are changing within my personal consciousness. The thought or idea or feeling, which I had yesterday, has gone for ever. It will never come back in the same way. You may feel a similar sensation by the repetition of the contact of the object to the sense organ, but it would not be the same sensation, and you will feel that difference very clearly, if you pay your attention to the difference that exists.

The physiological explanation of this would be that the sensations are caused by the vibrations of the molecules of the external objects. Now our brain, before it has received the particular vibrations of light, may be called a virgin state of the brain. The impression that would be produced in the brain, which has not received a sensation of light, will be different from the impression which will come later, because the first impression has already got a tinge, and that tinge remains in the brain ; but the second time or third time or after a hundred times, when the impression comes on the brain, it comes not on the pure brain, but on the brain that is already impressed by some ideas. So every time you have an impression, and it is not the same in intensity, and in its nature, as it was before. So you may eat the same thing again and again, and you will find that after a while you get tired of that thing. You may hear the same music repeatedly, and after a while you will find that you become so tired that you do not want to hear it again. The same experiences that you have gone through and have realized as ideal experiences, the time may come, when the same experiences would make you feel disgusted. Why is that ? That shows that it depends upon the changes that your mind is going through. The idea is not the same. Apparently we call it the same feeling, but when you observe minutely, you will find that it is not the same feeling. It seems similar, but yet there is a

great deal of difference on account of the changes that are going on in our consciousness. So our states of consciousness are constantly changing.

The personal consciousness seems to be continuous. Although there are changes in our consciousness, still we feel that there is a continuity and an undercurrent of the same consciousness. I was conscious yesterday, and then I went to sleep, and I am conscious now. But there seems to be a continuity, as we cannot imagine a gap in our consciousness. When you go to sleep, you might think that at the time of your sleep, you have a gap of consciousness, that is, you have gone into oblivion, and your consciousness is cut off. But that is a mistake. Our consciousness is not entirely cut off. The stream is running, but the particular state of consciousness, which we have at the time of our waking state, is not perhaps so strong, so vivid, so coherent and consistent at the time of our dream state or when we sleep. It is weaker and more plastic, but still the existence of different dream states is as true in a dream, or while we are sleeping as are the waking states when we are awake. So there is no gap of consciousness. It is continuous.

The continuity of consciousness cannot be broken even after death. According to True psychology, the continuity of consciousness can never be broken, and we cannot think that this will go into nothingness[1]. If consciousness is something, the law is that *something has not come out of nothing, and it can never go back to nothing.* If consciousness has come out from a particular combination of matter in the brain, then we will have to admit that matter contains consciousness also. Otherwise, consciousness would be a thing which has come out from matter, where there was no consciousness. But it would be an absurd idea. Because, when you say that consciousness, that existed once, has gone into non-existence, it would be similarly absurd. We cannot imagine such a thing. So, if consciousness is a unique reality at present, *i.e.,* if consciousness be not resolved into the modes of matter and motion, it has been such a reality from the beginningless time, and it will continue to be such a reality throughout endless eternity. And this will be in accordance with the scientific principle of conservation.

[1] Prof. Hobhouse maintains that continuity of consciousness rests ultimately on identity of character.

But consciousness of the particular things may be different in one person from that of another person. It chooses some parts in exclusion to other parts of knowledge. Suppose you go to a strange city,—say, four people go to Paris. They never saw Paris before. When these four persons, after remaining in Paris for some time, come back and give their conceptions of Paris, the four descriptions would be entirely different. One person has noticed perhaps all the gay quarters and how the Parisians live and how frivolous they are. Another would simply pay attention to the beautiful architecture, and his mind is running along all the beautiful architectural points that are unique. Another will go to the Louvre and go to see nothing but all the collections, and he will remember those things. And another will perhaps see something that the other three have not seen, that is, their freedom and independence and how they live the life of freedom. A moralist will see vice and wickedness and hypocrisy, and so on. Now you see, the consciousness of each individual will pick up certain things from the mass of the environment, and that is the peculiarity in our states of consciousness. It picks up certain things and rejects others. But consider what the case would be like, if consciousness, instead of being a chooser, were only a passive product or recipient. There would not be any choice of picking up among the whole mass, but it would be a kind of friction or bombarding of those multifarious vibrations, which we must know or photograph at once, and we could not pick up one thing from many hundreds of other things.

Now these theories have explained that consciousness is a complex thing; and some say, it is a compound thing. Each sensation contains an atom of consciousness, and when these sensations are brought together, these minute atoms of consciousness will form a compound, and that will make our whole consciousness. So it is understood that the whole consciousness consists of parts or atomic consciousnesses. But that will require a kind of division in our consciousness, which is very difficult to make. We cannot divide and pulverize the states of consciousness, because one state lapses into the other, and we cannot separate them, as we can separate grains of matter. Imagine that a wave rises, when we think of *A, B, C*. Suppose there is a horizontal line, and *A* makes a curve like that, and *B* makes

another curve. Before the *A* curve is finished, the *B* curve rises. Then the *C* curve rises, including both. So one lapses into the other. Therefore each state of consciousness has a fringe, which lapses into another state of consciousness. And this we cannot deny, because every thought or idea is like a surging of a wave, which has, behind it, a similar wave or vibration of thought or whatever you may call it. But, as we cannot cut one curve of the wave as distinct from the other curves, so we cannot cut out one state of consciousness, which is a curve as distinct and separate from the other curves, which preceded and are following them.

So cause and effect are like the waves. If we count the first wave, which is preceded by another wave (call this first wave as an effect), then the wave that preceded it, is the cause, and the wave that follows it, will be another effect. So this wave that I have already called an effect, will be the cause of the next wave. So that which is the cause of a future wave, will be the effect of the previous wave. In this way, you can understand that cause and effect are the same; only we are looking at it from the two different viewpoints. From the viewpoint of the previous cause, it is an effect, and from the viewpoint of a future effect, it is a cause.

So the mental states cannot be separated and cut into units of sensation, as some people think. Of course, there is a theory that each cell in our body has consciousness, has a mind, and has thought and memory, and these minute cells, with their units of consciousness, make up the individual consciousness of a person. But that theory seems to put the cart before the horse, because who knows, imagines, or theorizes about the conscious state of a cell? How do we know? It is by our own consciousness.

When you study through a microscope the activity of a minute brain cell, which is moving perhaps or showing some signs of mental activity, then who is studying? It is the observer's mind which studies the activities. If the observer's mind were not there, then all the activity would not be interpreted in terms of consciousness by any one. We cannot surely enter into the mental state or state of consciousness of that minute cell which possesses mind, or soul, or whatever you may call it. It would be a secondary knowledge, that is, then we

can only infer. It is an induction by reasoning and not a direct perception. Therefore, John Stuart Mill said that when a man dissects the brain and does not find any soul, consciousness or mind, he denies it. But the very fact of denying the existence of soul, consciousness or mind presupposes another mind which is denying. If you deny and say, 'no, it does not exist', that means you admit the pre-existence of a state of consciousness. So our state of consciousness is the most primary thing or the first thing. You cannot go behind this state of consciousness. Now, if you say that you will go behind it, then it will be asked as to by what and how will you go behind it. This idea has been given by one of the great scientists, G. J. Romanes. He said: "We cannot think any of the facts of external nature, without presupposing the existence of a mind which thinks them, and, therefore, so far, at least, as we are concerned, mind is necessarily prior to everything else. It is for us the only mode of existence which is real in its own right, and to it, as to a standard, all other modes of existence which may be inferred, must be referred. Therefore, if we say that mind is a function of the motion, we are only saying, in somewhat confused terminology, that mind is a function of itself. Such then I take to be a general refutation of materialism". Now the idea, you must remember, is that mind is prior to everything else. So when we are studying our states of consciousness, the very act of studying the states of consciousness means we are ourselves the new states of consciousness. We are not going behind the states of consciousness; we cannot find the source of consciousness; because we have it, we cannot leave it, and we are one with it. We can only study the different states of consciousness.

Suppose you say that matter has produced consciousness. But that would be an idea or a conception, and that means it would be a state of consciousness or a state of your mind. It does not say that you have gone behind consciousness to find out its source. We can only find out the source of a thing, by going beyond it, by transcending it, and by going behind it.

[1] The Madhyamika Buddhists (nihilists) say that there is only the void or *sunya*, But the question is who knows the void? The knower of the void is, therefore, distinct from the void. and this knower (*jnata*), says Sankara, is the Brahman which is the eternal source of knowledge, existence and bliss.

But can we go behind the state of consciousness ? No. First of all not by going into unconsciousness, can we find consciousness ; but all our knowledge will depend upon the comparison of certain states of consciousness with certain others, and everything that will come to us as knowledge, will be secondary. The primary thing would be our state of consciousness.

Then what is consciousness ? Is it the same as knowledge ? That is another question which is very puzzling. It is the knowledge of a primary kind. It is not the knowledge of particulars. The knowledge of particulars will come afterwards. First of all we become conscious, before we know the particulars. We can be conscious of a thing without knowing the particulars. For instance, blindfold a man and take him out to a strange place,—in a room, decorated with rushes or anything or Chinese furniture, which he has never seen, or take him to a new landscape and open his eyes there. He at once is conscious of himself and his surroundings, but he does not, at that instant, know anything particularly. He is conscious of everything that surrounds him. That is consciousness. But, in order to know each thing particularly, he will have to reason ; and he will have to compare before he knows what it is. It might be all plaster of Paris, or a kind of card-board, or scenes painted upon canvas as on the stage. When you go on the stage or see the beautiful scenery, which is represented on a stage, say of an opera or Wagner's opera, the most wonderful spectacular sight there, everything will appear to you as real. You are conscious of that, but you do not know what it is. And that consciousness is a kind of knowledge, which gives the foundation of all our knowing states. It is the substratum. So consciousness is not knowledge.

Knowledge comes by comparison, and that is a function of reason. So you will know the difference between the knowledge and the consciousness. The consciousness means the establishment of relations between the subject and the object. It is instantaneous. We do not require any thought or calculation to become conscious of a thing. It is at once instantaneous. There has no time elapsed between the linking up of the subject and the object and the state of consciousness, which apprehends it. As soon as our eyes are open, there is the consciousness of light, and we do not have to think over the different states

before we become conscious of the thing. So, that will be the definition of consciousness. It is the establishment of relations between subject and object[1]. It knows nothing of time. Time comes in the review or representation of this primary relation. It has nothing to do with liking or disliking. Whether you like the sensation or not, that has nothing to do with your consciousness. Like or dislike is secondary to the consciousness itself. For instance, if you are blindfolded and taken into a den of thieves, then have your eyes uncovered and you will find yourself in the den of thieves. Before you feel that you do not like it, you are conscious of the situation. You are conscious that you are in the den of thieves, and that consciousness may make you feel that you do not like it. If you have nothing to lose and nothing to fear, the consciousness of that situation will not make you uneasy. Like or dislike does not count there. As far as your consciousness is concerned, you simply know where you are. The thief in you might be asleep, therefore, you did not like the thieves. When the thief in you might be awakened through association, you would like the thieves. You do not like those who are not in us. Find out what you like and dislike. Anything that you like most, you have in you. Like attracts like, but anything that you do not like, is not in you at that time. It is latent or potential, but when that same thing will be aroused in you, you will seek the company of such people. Therefore it is said that a man is known by the company he keeps. Because it is that which he likes. It is already in him ; otherwise he would not like it. It is the attraction of two things of a similar character.

The understanding also is not the consciousness. We may understand a thing, or misunderstand a thing, but the consciousness of a thing is different. The illusion, delusion, or hallucination is also not the same as consciousness. This latter as such involves no question of validity or value. It has nothing to

[1] Consciousness, according to the American realists, is "not any distinct subjective existence, but only a particular grouping of objects, defined by the specific response of the nervous system". Prof. Holt defines consciousness as the *cross-section* of the universe, defined by the *specific response* or *behaviour* of the nervous organism. So the definition of consciousness differs from one standpoint to another. Swami Abhedananda defines consciousness from the viewpoint of the non-dualistic Vedanta, and so consciousness (*jnana*) as a modal manifestation connects the *jnana* and the *jneya*, i.e. the subject and the object.

do with whether the object is correct, true, real, or false. For instance, when you see a piece of rope in the dark, your consciousness is, that you have seen something. It is your second perception or 'apperception', as some call it. That gives you a snake. That might be an illusion. But you are conscious of something, and when, for some reason or other, you project the idea of a snake, which you had in your mind, upon that something, of which you are directly conscious, you make a mistake, and get frightened. But your consciousness of that thing is that it is something there. You do not know whether it is a rope or a snake. You see something, only which you take as in the form of a snake, but that sensation of form comes afterwards by association of ideas or actual touch. You do not get it through eyes. Eyes only give you the sensation of colour and extension or form of the colour.

Now, another thing I will bring here that will be a *propos* of what I have already said, that is, that which we like, is already in us. But how do we become conscious, or how do we adjust ourselves in consciousness to so many objects, which are outside of us; as we believe? Is it possible that consciousness, which is immaterial and which is not the product of motion, produces motion? No; because motion only produces nothing but motion. The consciousness is not motion. But consciousness is that which gives us the knowledge of motion. Now, is it possible that we can adjust ourselves with so many varieties of objects that exist in the world, if consciousness were immaterial and in no way related to the objects from the very beginning? That question is raised by the True psychology. But in physiological psychology, you do not find that question, raised at all, because they drop the whole subject of consciousness, as I have already said, being only a function of the brain, and being only conterminous with the activities of the brain cells.

The subject recognizes the object, because the subject is one with the object[1]. The consciousness means the recognition[2].

[1] It is somewhat like the *Sankhya* theory of knowledge which inunciates that the effect is no other than the cause. Such is also the view of Leibenitz, when he says that in every true proposition, the predicate is contained in the subject.

[2] Prof. Whitehead explains consciousness in a different way. He says: "The awareness of an object as some factor * * * is what I call *recognition*. Recognition is an awareness of sameness",—*The Concept of Nature*, p. 143.

We cannot recognize anything unless that thing is in some way within us. And whether it comes after, or has existed in us from the beginning, is a question that will be answered afterwards. But we must admit that if we have no thief in us awake, we would not recognize the thief. To catch a thief, set a thief. A thief can recognize a thief. But a saint would not recognize a thief, because he does not know what the character of a thief is. A saint would recognize a saint. Similarly a thief would recognize a thief.

That brings the illustration in my mind which will explain to you how we project our own thoughts and ideas. A man was lying in a state of Godconsciousness or superconsciousness on the roadside. It was early in the morning. He was in a trance-like condition. He was in the superconscious state and that means he was communing with God then. A thief was passing along the road, and he looked at this man who was lying on the roadside. He thought that he too was a thief, and had been running as fast as he could to save his life. The thief was delighted in heart that the fellow was a thief, and was exhausted and so lying on the roadside. He thought that the man would be caught by the policeman. So, with that interpretation he ran as fast as he could. Then there came a drunkard who was quite intoxicated. He looked at the fellow, and said: "Oh, you have taken a peg more than I have taken, and you are in the gutter and I can walk". So he was delighted to know that he was better off than the other fellow. At last a saint was passing that way. The saint looked at the man, and said: "He is in the divine communion". He knelt down before him, and began to kiss the dust of his feet, and rub his feet gently. "What a great privilege it is that I have found a saint in a state of Godconsciousness," he said. Now you see, these three men looked at the same object, the same man, and had three different conceptions. The thief projected his own thought, and recognized the thief in the saint. The drunkard projected his thought, and he supposed that he saw a fellow like himself. The saint recognized him, because he understood what the man was.

So when you do not understand a thing, you must not blame the thing. You must not blame yourself either. Perhaps you have not got that thing in you, and, therefore, you do not

understand. Sometimes you criticize a person for his spirituality. You have a conception of spirituality that may not be the standard of the universe. It might be your own standard. You might think that a man, who is eating no meat as a strict vegetarian, is the most spiritual man. Another man might think that if that is the case, then a cow is the greatest spiritual creature in the world, because she eats nothing but vegetables and roots. Then again, if you consider that certain actions will determine the character of a spiritual man, you may find that those actions might not determine. A great saint will perhaps give us a shock, and make us realize that our ideas or ideals are not the standard of spirituality. A man who can heal others, will be regarded as a spiritual man, or a man, who possesses good health, will be regarded as a spiritual man. But you go among the savages and you will see that though they are brutal, yet they enjoy perfect health. But we do not call them spiritual. A man can heal, but he may be the worst hypocrite in the world. The healing power does not determine the spiritual quality. Because Christ healed, then everybody that heals, is Christ—is a false logic. Christ might have healed, but there are other persons that heal who are not Christ. So they argue as Christ healed and Mr. or Mrs. So-and-so heals, so he or she must be a Christ. The healing power is not the standard of Christhood. There you are mistaken, and if you argued correctly, you would find the truth about it. If you see their life in other spheres, outside of healing, you will find there is no Christhood in them.

The individual man realizes as well as recognizes the objects of the universe, because the objects exist in the man. The phenomenal objects exist in the mind of man in the form of ideas, like thoughts. Individual man is potentially universal. He is the whole in quality, though not in actual quantity; otherwise, he could not adjust to all environments in consciousness. He could not recognize anything that is outside of himself. There is some touch of that everything in our own mind already from the very beginning. We have not received it from the outside. We could not receive it, because anything we receive, presupposes a predisposition in us to receive that thing; otherwise, it would be an impossibility. The fact that we are conscious of all objects, proves that we have within us

the potentiality of all objects. It is the most wonderful thing. It would bring a new system of psychology to the world in a new sense, not as an experimental psychology in a mechanical way, but as the True Psychology.

Then there comes another theory or hypothesis that every force, when it remains in a potential state, is asleep in the mind. This force, when it is in a kinetic or active state, means that the mind is awake or conscious. Force itself is conscious, but when it is potential, the consciousness is potential. Force creates energy. Now it evolves and now it involves, and from this it is understood that every evolution requires involution. The force that you give, must be involved within you. It must react and go back into the centre. Every thought, that you send out, is a consumption of energy, and it must come back in some form, and react upon the centre, whence it started. This is the law of action and reaction. It can also be said as the law of rhythm.

The whole universe is like a gigantic magnet, and the law of potentiality produces mind and matter from the same thing. In fact, there is one substance in the universe, which is neither mind nor matter.[1] The potentiality of mind and matter, of subject and object, comes from the same substance. The one pole of the magnet is positive, which is mind, and the other is negative, which is matter. The positive pole is the subject, and the negative pole is the object. But both the poles exist in the same substance. Therefore, where there is mind, there is matter. The mind can be said to be the invisible side of matter, and matter is the visible side of mind. This law of potentiality, therefore, proves that mind and matter are contrasted. What we can posit on the one pole, we cannot posit on the other, and they must be diametrically opposite. So the potentiality is the essence of rhythm of action and reaction. It is the surging and receding of the tide. This process is going on eternally as evolution and involution. Standing by the ocean on the shore, you will see that the water rushes against the shore, and it goes back again, and again it returns. That

[1] This subject has been beautifully described in the author's *Self-knowledge*, pp. 17-18.

Prof. Whitehead also admits God's mental and physical poles, and these two opposite poles are like an actual existence to Him.—vide *Religion in the Making*, p. 144.

is the rhythm of action and reaction, which we call the law of *karma*, or the law of evolution and involution. So, when we are throwing out the objects from the centre, we are receiving them back again from outside, and this is the play of the mind and the matter. This is the universe. This play of action and reaction really creates the mystery of the universe.

Now, if the matter is unconscious, the mind must be conscious, because the matter is the other pole of the mind. In one pole, it is the consciousness, and in the other pole, it is the unconsciousness. In the one pole, there is the feeling, in the other pole, there is no feeling. So, that will explain how this universe is built up. The individual can find God in the ego or the individual soul, which is potentially the whole in quality and a part in quantity. In fact, we are whole in quality. We have the seed of presence, of omnipresence, of omnipotence, and of omniscience, but, in quantity we are parts, and in quality as the Godhood. Therefore, we can know God, because we are potentially God. The potentiality of the whole is there, and, therefore, we can realize the whole. If that were not there from the beginning, we could not realize it. It also explains unity and variety. It also explains the relation between monism and dualism. That is monism, when we look at the neutral point of the magnet, and at that time, we do not see the positive end and the negative end. But dualism would admit the positive end and the negative end, and, consequently, it does not pay any attention to the neutral point. So, neither monism nor dualism is correct, because they are only different standards as we interpret. Of course, there are the different states of consciousness. By different states I mean different planes of consciousness. These different states of consciousness are known as the subconsciousness, the consciousness, and the super-consciousness or the Godconsciousness. But, in truth, all these are different names of the one consciousness, which is known as the Self-consciousness. The subconsciousness is larger than the ordinary consciousness. It is a vast field.[1] In all our different experiences, we find that this subconscious state is below the threshold, and contains the germs or powers infinitely greater than the mind, which is

[1] Swami Vivekananda calls the subconscious mind as the great boundless ocean.

working on the conscious plane. It is only the crest of the wave that we ordinarily call our present conscious state. In the superconscious state, we transcend the limitation of time and space, and go beyond the causality. Then we enter the realm of the Absolute, which is known as the superconsciousness. We are conscious of God in that higher plane, not indeed as anything of variety as *this* or *that* object, but we are conscious of the all-total unity. And, therefore, it is the greatest and the highest. It is also called the Godconsciousness.

There are the normal as well as the abnormal states of consciousness. The abnormal states of consciousness is found in an insane person and also in a person with mental disease. They get the feelings in a different pitch of vibration. Those vibrations are different from those, which we get in a normal state. There might be infinite gradations in the vibrations of sensation. We only catch certain degrees of vibration, as I have already explained in the case of light. There might be ultra-violet rays which our ordinary eyes do not grasp. But in the case of clairvoyance, the ultra-violet rays will be realized. In the case of insanity or any other mental derangement, these minute shades of difference between the different notes, that we cannot perceive, will be realized, and perhaps that will make the individual appear as abnormal. Sometimes some sound will strike. That sound might be absolutely inaudible to us, because in our normal state, our organ of hearing can catch so many vibrations in a second, say forty thousand ; but if these be a noise, produced by the vibration of air, say thirty in a second, our ears would not hear them.[1] But in an abnormal state, the organ of hearing might be quickened, and the individual might hear a tremendous noise, which is absolutely inaudible to us in our normal state. We might be frightened, and say: "I am hearing that terrible noise". It might be

[1] (a) According to Helmholtz and others, vibrations under 16 or over 38,000 in a second are quite inaudible, though for most persons the range is much less, not exceeding 16,000.

(b) In the musical tones, say the psychologists, the vibrations are periodic, or succeed each other at regular intervals. The musical tones begin to be perceived at about 30 vibrations in a second, but a determinate musical pitch is not perceptible till about vibrations are reached.

(c) Prof. Helmholtz says: "The musical tones, which can be used with advantage, and have already distinguishable pitch, have between 40 and 4,000 vibrations in a second, extending over seven octaves".

there, and we might not hear it. So, in the cases of the diseased minds, the pathological conditions of an insane person are a great mystery to us, if we follow the physiological psychology. But if we study the True psychology, which will explain all these phases in cases of abnormal mental diseases and disorders, it will explain these things. Otherwise, they remain an insoluble mystery. The True psychology tries to explain all these states as well as difference between the states, normal and abnormal, from the hypothesis of the pulsation of the same substance, which produces the mind, the consciousness, or the subject at one end, and the matter or the object at the other.

CHAPTER III

THE POWERS OF THE MIND

The man is an epitome of the universe. Whatever exists in the macrocosm, exists also in the microcosm. All the forces that are manifested in nature, are to be found also in the human body. The gigantic forces of nature, such as attraction, gravitation, electricity, heat, light and various other kinds of motion, are also to be found in the microcosmic world of the human body. These forces that are manifested in the human body, are not different in kind from those that we see in the external world, but they are the same, only the difference is in degree of manifestation. As on the physical plane, so it is on the mental plane. All the powers that are manifested by human beings, are also to be found in the universal mind. The universal mind is the source of all the powers, which have been shown by different individuals on the human plane. The universal mind is also called the cosmic mind. There is one eternal current of the cosmic mind, which is flowing from eternity to eternity. The individual minds are related to this cosmic mind, as the eddies and the whirlpools are related to the current. The eternal current of the cosmic mond, if flowing and producing eddies or whirlpools, is called as our own individual minds. These eddies of the individual minds are connected with the other eddies through the cosmic mind.

The waves of power that are manifested in different forms of the psychic forces, rise from the cosmic mind, which is below our ordinary conscious plane. It is the subconscious mind. They rise up to our conscious plane from the unconscious, or subconscious, or subliminal self. Then we become conscious of them. Then afterwards they go down again to the subconscious realm. It has already been said that the subconscious realm is a vast realm, greater than our conscious plane. Our consciousness lies on the crest of these waves, which are rising from the subconscious or unconscious plane and going back again to it. All the powers that rise in our conscious plane, practically belong to the subconscious realm.

They are unknown to us at present, but in time, under certain conditions and circumstances, they manifest themselves on the conscious plane. Then we know their existence.[1]

Ordinarily a man or a woman exhibits certain powers, like the powers of thinking, volition or will, reasoning, and intellection. All these are the common powers of the mind substance. We do not regard them as wonderful, however marvellous their origin may be, because we see them almost everywhere to a certain extent. We consider that it is a natural gift, or the natural property of every human mortal. But whenever we find any expression in an extraordinary manner of the same powers, we look at them with awe and reverence. There our knees bend. We look at those as geniuses and prodigies, because they manifest those powers of reasoning, intellectual and other talents, which are uncommon and rare. There is a natural tendency in the human mind to appreciate that which is uncommon and rare. Do you not see how we value those things which are antique, because they are rare? We put up the price of rare metals and even of ancient postage stamps. That is the natural tendency. Anything that is rare or uncommon and antique, either jewel or a gem or a furniture, we consider it as of great value, because we do not find it at every place. For that reason, these geniuses and prodigies are regarded as great, because they manifest those powers, which we too possess, perhaps, only in an extraordinary manner. They rise above the dead level of ordinary mortals, and the majority of people recognize them as gems, like diamonds in the coal mines. Nevertheless the diamonds are products of nature, as are the coal deposits, in which they may be found. The geniuses manifest these powers which they draw from the cosmic mind.

But, if we study the characters of those geniuses and prodigies, we find that they are the prodigies under various conditions, and they manifest different talents. There might be the prodigies and the geniuses in art, music, painting, and other branches of knowledge and artistic talents. What one genius will do, another will not be able to do. For instance, what Mozardt did, Pascal could not do, and what Pascal did,

[1] The psychologists as well as the scientists have compared the subconscious mind with a piece of ice which floats under the surface of the water with its $\frac{3}{4}$ part, whereas the quarter part floats on the surface.

Mozardt could not do. But both of them were geniuses. And again, what Mozardt did, perhaps another genius could not do. Zerap Colburn, under 8 years of age, was regarded as a machine in mathematical calculation, although untaught. What he did, others cannot do. They are all prodigies and geniuses. So you will find that there is a difference in the expression of different powers among different geniuses and prodigies. As all these geniuses and prodigies manifest psychic powers at a certain degree of development, so there are other powers which are also recorded in the human history among all nations.

Take, for instance, the power of hypnotism. We all know how the mind of an operator in hypnotism would work upon the mind of the subject. The powers of suggestion is the most wonderful power. It depends upon the act of suggestion. In this act of suggestion, the power is exerted by the words or thoughts that are sent or directed to the mind of the subject. I do not wish to go into the details of this power of hypnotism, because most of all are already familiar with them. I will only mention one instance that would perhaps give you an idea how this power works. Doctor Wiggs of Leyman in Europe, gave a suggestion to a girl, his subject, after she was put into hypnotic sleep, that every Friday she would develop a red cross on her chest, and this would last three months every Friday. The subject did not know anything about this suggestion, but she, true to the suggestion, developed that red cross on her chest on Friday. Every Friday for three months that red cross, a red blister with congested blood, would appear in the form of a cross. Now think of the power of the suggestion over these minute cells of the body of the patient. That suggestion worked like a miracle upon the organic functions like blood circulation and cellular activities of the body, the nerves, and the whole nervous system of the patient. That can be done.

Certainly you have heard of other instances of stigmata in the hands. Saint Francis D'Assisi had that, and there have been many instances of stigmata in the hands and feet of Catholic Saints, both of men and of women. Now, by the concentration of the mind upon those parts and holding the thought, one can produce those stigmata in one's own hands and feet. There is no spiritual power necessary. It is the power of the mind over the body. It is known as the auto-suggestion, or the self-

hypnotism. One can put one's objective mind into sleep, and then give a suggestion to it, and it will work like a miracle. So there have all over the world such instances. You can produce a blister in any part of your body by your thought, and that will prove to you the power of the mind over the body as well as the power of suggestion. So hypnotism is a name that has been given to that particular power of the mind, which can be brought out from the subconscious of this subjective self to the conscious plane. The real meaning of hypnotism is sleep. The hypnosis means 'sleep'. So, when you go to sleep at night, you hypnotize yourselves only unconsciously through habit. You give a suggestion, and the very position of the body makes you feel that you are going to sleep, and this is the time for you to go to bed, and that kind of suggestion you hold in your mind, and then you go to sleep. But, in the hypnosis, there is a volitional effort, made by either the individual himself or herself or by the operator, and there is an intention or a motive, and that is just a similar kind of sleep, which can be produced by the auto-suggestion. Of course, there are conditions under which that sleep of hypnosis can be brought about with which you are familiar.

Like hypnotism, there is another power of the mind, which is known as the telepathy or the thought transference. Now the telepathy, or the thought transference is another power of suggestion. That is, intelligence can be transmitted from the one subjective mind to another subjective mind by the power of suggestion, and it is not only mere transmission of intelligence from one mind to another. but has a different quality, and that means the subjective mind of one, who is transmitting the message to the other mind, will go down below the conscious plane of the other party and deliver the message and take all informations that can be gathered from the subjective mind of the patient. Bring it back, and then bring it up from below the threshold of the subjective self to the conscious plane of the operator. That is possible. One can get certain information from the person, who may not know anything about it, or who may be asleep, and can bring that message to one's subjective mind, and can raise that before one's objective consciousness and be conscious of it. Such things can be done, because the subjective mind or the soul of each one of us is omnipresent.

It can go and reach the other mind irrespective of distance or location. The external space relations do not exist in the realm of the subjective mind or the soul.

Again, when you go to a clairvoyant or any psychic or fortune-teller, the mediums more or less go into their subjective state. That is, the objective mind of the mediums goes to sleep as it were. The objective mind being put in abeyance, their subjective mind begins to work, and they get all the informations from your subconscious self. Bring those up to their conscious plane, and then begin to tell you your future what is going to happen, because it is all there in your subconscious mind. The impression of what was left there, is also the foreshadow of what will be. They do not get it from any other spiritual being, outside of the subjective mind. It is ordinarily believed that they have miraculous powers and spirit-communication, and the spirits know everything and give the message. That is the popular belief. But, in reality, we know scientifically that it is not necessary to have the intervention of any spirit outside of our own selves. The powers of the subjective mind will produce those effects. So, when anybody foretells anything about yourself, you know that that person has got the information from your subconscious mind, which has all that information. And it is there below the threshold of your consciousness.

The telepathy has been practised by different people for experimental puropses, and if you have any friend or relative, or any one whom you love, or a sweet-heart, you can send your message to that person on the other side of the globe, and the person will receive that message telepathically, if that person is ready to receive it. The transmitter and the receiver must be on the same plane and in the same phase of vibration. When the mind of the individual, who is going to receive the message, is positive or pre-occupied, then there might be a little difficulty. But, in many cases, in our ordinary daily life, the mother sends telepathic messages to her son or daughter at a distance, and the son or the daughter feels it. Anyone, who is strongly attached to another through the power of love, will receive such messages.

The thought-reading is another phase of that telepathy. In the telepathy, we are feeling at a distance, and that is the real meaning of the telepathy. If your objective mind is sub-

dued and if you become a little passive, you will receive the thoughts of another person easily, and if you are able to read those thoughts or impressions that you receive, then you are reading the thoughts of another mind. It is very easy to develop that power. There is nothing extraordinary about it, except that it is not to be seen under ordinary circumstances. Some are born with this power well-developed, and others have this power latent. But each one has the possibility of developing that power and manifesting its proper results.

The thought transference may be practised by anybody in his own home. You sit in your room and tell your friend or relative to sit in another room at a certain hour, and both become passive, and hold the thought with intense desire to send the message, and direct that message to the subconscious mind of the other relative or friend, who is sitting to receive it, and, if the receiver be passive, he will receive that message, and it will be a proof to you.

Then there is another power of the telepathy or the thought transference, which is known as 'telekinesis'. It is a wonderful power. It is the power of the mind, by which heavy objects can be moved externally from one plane to another. You have heard of cases of the table moving or being moved. There have been many instances which have been recorded in the annals of the Psychical Research Society, and many of these instances have been experienced by different individuals privately in their own lives. So there is no necessity of having any supernatural intervention for their explanation. It is the power of the mind. I remember at one time that I was in Boston and I was invited by a noted physician, who was interested in this line of thought. I dined with him, and after dinner, we were seated in the parlour, and *a propos* of other things he said that he wanted to know my explanation of the power which he could manifest. I said: "What kind of power do you mean?" He said: "I can move a table, and I am not a spiritualist, nor a medium. I do not believe in spirit manifestation or spirit powers outside of ourselves". I became quite curious and said: "Could you do it in my presence? I should like to see it before I can give you any explanation". He said that he could not tell whether he could do it at that moment, but he would try. So we went to his dining room, and there

he had a dining table with big heavy legs, which four people could hardly move. It was a long oval table. I sat at the head of the table and he sat next to me, and his wife sat in the room, not at the table, but was knitting on a chair. Then we put our hands on the table. We were chatting, and we were not thinking of the moving of the table. Then, after a while, there were raps, and the table began to creak, as if the bolts were going apart, and I was quite anxious to know what was all about. I had never seen an occurrence like that, though I had heard and read about it. Then, after a while the table began to move towards us, as if somebody was pushing that table, and we had to move backward, pushing our chairs backward. Then the table began to move with such a force that we were forced against the wall and the table was pushing against us. We had to stand up, keeping our hands on the table in the corner. The table moved straight. It was not going in a circle. Some people say that they always move in a circle. But it came straight without making a curve. That was an experience which I had personally. And there were no fraudulent methods that were taken by anybody. There was no medium, and it was a kind of experiment by this man, who was thoroughly scientific. He asked me how could I explain that. I said: "It is the power that we all possess. It is the power of the mind which works through matter; and the same power can be manifested in a spiritualistic sense, or in a private home of any individual". He was satisfied in my answer. So you must remember that you could also develop that power in yourself. It can be acquired by the practice of concentration, and can be developed.

You certainly remember Palladino, the Italian medium. She possessed that power to an enormous degree. Of course, people believe, and perhaps she herself also believed that the spirit moves the table, and moves those heavy objects like a piano and so on. But scientific researches have proved that it is the power of the mind, and it is called 'telekinesis'. If you read Dr. Meyers' *Human Personality,* you will find all such phenomena recorded, and the records were taken scientifically under test conditions, as of positive facts.

Then there is another power. which is known as the clairvoyance, or the clairaudience. These are also the powers of the

mind. The clairvoyance is seeing at a distance, and that has been proved to be a scientific fact. There is a good record which has been kept of an extraordinary case of clairvoyance, and that was recorded by Emanuel Kant, the great German philosopher, in the case of Swedenborg. Swedenborg was a clairvoyant. In the book, *The Dreams of a Spirit Seer,* we find the case of Swedenborg. He could read the mind of the Queen of Sweden, and he communicated with her departed husband. He was clairvoyant in an extraordinary degree, and it has been tested as a historical fact, and that fact is this:

On one Saturday in the afternoon in 1759 at about four o' clock, Swedenborg went from England to Gotenborg. There he was invited by one of his friends. After a couple of hours, Swedenborg was very agitated and disturbed in his mind. He went out and looked around, and afterwards came back to his friends, and said: "There is a big fire there in Stockholm, a terrible fire ; it is destroying everything". Stockholm was fifty miles away from there. But he saw this big fire in his vision or psychiç eye. He described exactly how the fire was started. He said: "This terrible fire is destroying my friend's home (he mentioned the name of his friend), and it is coming to my home". His home in Sweden was in danger, and he was very disturbed. Then he went forth outside, and about eight o' clock he went out, and he said: "Now this fire has been extinguished. It has been brought under control. It has been stopped at the third door from my home". And that was a great relief to his mind. This created a great commotion among the people. This news was spread all over that town of Gotenborg. There was no telegraphic message at that time. So, next Sunday morning, the Governor summoned Swedenborg and asked him what he saw and how the fire was started and how it was stopped. The next day, on Monday evening, the messenger was sent from Stockholm by the Board of Trade with letters, describing the cause of this fire and how it was stopped and how far it spread, and everything. That letter was delivered to the Governor on Monday evening, and it was exactly the same description, as was given by Swedenborg at the time of that fire, fifty miles away from the city. And this is a recorded fact. This will prove to you how the power of mind can see at a distance, without having any connection with the sense organs and without

being dependent upon the organ of the sight.

In case of clairaudience, it will be hearing at a distance, without being dependent upon the organ of hearing. Joan of Arc had a wonderful power of clairaudience. She could hear at a long distance. She heard the voices, and it was she who heard that there was a sword behind the altar. Then that made her go for the sword, and she found it was there, and that made the people believe that she was a witch, possessed of demoniac spirits or evil powers, and she was condemned. But only a few years ago, she had been canonized as a saint by the Catholic Church. Now the people had almost forgotten the history of Joan of Arc. But she was condemned, punished and burnt at the stake.

There is another power, which is just as wonderful as the power of the clairvoyance and that of the clairaudience. It is called the 'psychometry'. That is also the power of mind, by which one can read the contents of a sealed letter and diagnose the conditions of a writer of his home life and of his character. In this city of America, such cases of psychometry have been exhibited. I went to see the other day a good psychometrist, John Slater. He was exhibiting this power. Give a letter into his hand, sealed at a distance, at your own home, and he will take up that letter and read the contents without opening the letter, right before your eyes. He never knew you, and so he does not know any of the circumstances. Then he would tell the characteristics of the individual, who wrote the conditions of his home and almost his whole life. That is a kind of clairvoyance. It is very wonderful.

There was another case of a psychometrist, who picked up a piece of stone which was brought by one of the travellers from Europe. It was taken from the Villa of Cicero, but this psychometrist did not know anything about the Villa of Cicero. But she described where the Villa was situated and from what place the piece of stone was taken. She could see clearly in a vision. This power is also very wonderful. It can be developed by any individual. We do not need any spiritualistic theory to explain these facts. The spiritualists would believe that the spirit is showing all these wonderful things, but it is not the spirit of any disembodied individual, but it is the spirit of the psychometrist who has developed that power and manifested

that power, because the soul of every individual is omnipotent. Therefore we possess all the powers.

It has also been seen that in some persons these powers are developed and in others they are latent. Then the power of healing by suggestion and various methods, is also the power of the mind. There are in India the Yogis who are known as psychics. They have developed a great many wonderful powers. There is a science about it, which explains the particular methods, by which any individual could develop these powers, and that is called the science of Yoga. The Raja Yoga is one of the best descriptions of this particular method of developing that power. There are psychic Yogis in India, who can read the minds of others. Swami Vivekananda met once a psychometrist in Madras, and his answers were ready. So, when you were writing the question, the psychometrist was giving the answer. He did not know your question. You were writing and he answered before you finished writing. If you gave him any sealed envelope, he would read it.

So this power can be developed by anyone, as I have already mentioned. There are other powers which these psychic Yogis can manifest. In India, they send messages by telepathy. Even at the time of the great political revolution in India, i.e., at the time of the Mutiny in 1857, when there were no telegraph wires and other way of communicating at a distance except by the letter-carriers, the messages of the movements of the soldiers were correctly sent at a great distance by the method of the telepathy, or the thought transference; and what happened in one place was known to everybody through telepathy. These Yogis have also developed that power of communicating at a distance. They do not make any claim about it as a wonderful power, but they take it as a matter of course or as a natural gift. Anybody ought to have it. There are Yogis, who can foretell their time of death, exactly to a minute or to a second. There was a Yogi in India, with whom I was acquinted. He invited his friends and all his relatives, and said that he was going to pass out of the body in the presence of every one, not by committing suicide, but at his sweet will. It happened that he sat in meditation and withdrew himself at the same hour and the same minute, as he had predicted beforehand, because he could separate himself from the body. Those who have

understood their own nature and the power of their own mind, can connect themselves with the brain and can also disconnect from the brain at their will, whenever they desire, just like taking off the switch of the electric light or telephone wire and connecting it again. It is possible. In the Raja Yoga, it is described that a Yogi can connect his own mind, with the brain, and thus they sometimes use the body of a dead person. That is, when a person is dead, that person could be revived by another mind or soul. It is possible for those who understand that law.

Then there are other powers, manifested by these Yogis in India, such as the power of disappearing in the midst of a crowd. People are standing all around, and he disappears. That is a power, and that can be developed by concentrating upon the form of the body and withdrawing the luminosity of the body. That is a peculiar method, and the Yogis give a peculiar explanation for it that when that luminosity of the body is withdrawn, nobody can see the person. They can make their bodies as light as a piece of cotton wool. They can pass through the air. It is not necessary for a spirit to carry the person through the wall. They claim that it is the power of the mind, by which the body could be brought under control. That is, they can dematerialize as well as rematerialize the body. But such instances are very rare.

Then they can make their bodies luminous and fiery, just like the blazing fire under the skin. They can make their bodies like that. There are eight different powers (*siddhis*), which are described in the *Patanjala-darshana*. But these are all psychic powers of the mind. The Yogis can make their bodies as small as an atom (*anima*), and can make it as light as cotton (*laghima*). Then, under that condition, one can walk over thorns and fire and also over the surface of water, just as Jesus walked over the surface of water. There are other instances of the same kind. A follower and disciple of Buddha exercised that miraculous power five hundred years before the birth of Christ. His name was Ananda. He had crossed the Shravasti river to do some errands for the master. When he returned, it was quite late. The ferry boat had stopped, and he could not get any ferry. So he was very anxious to come to his master. He thought that he would try to swim across that muddy river

with a tremendous current. To his great surprise he found that he did not have to plunge into the water. He tried to plunge, but his body was so light, it went through the air without touching the water, and he was surprised at his own power. However, when he went to his master, Buddha, Buddha was surprised how he could come so late in the evening, when the ferry-boat service was stopped. Then he explained that by his grace he came across the water without touching the water. Buddha told him not to say anything to any other disciple about his power.

There was another instance of a disciple of Sankara, who lived about six hundred years after Christ. His name was Padmapada, which means the 'Lotus Feet'. He walked across the river, as if he stepped on the lotus flowers without touching the water, and therefore, that name was given to him. So you see that the description of Christ's miraculous power of walking on the surface of the water is nothing new to a Yogi. The Yogis of India count that as one of the powers of the mind (*bibhutis*), and that can be developed by anyone, who is advanced in the knowledge of psychic laws, and who has gained control over this power.

There are other powers. The power, by which one can make his body heavier than a ton, so that no one can move the body. That is possible too. There are other powers like the power of commanding control over nature, stopping the rain, and other natural conditions. The Yogis have that power of creating a storm, controlling a storm, and bringing all the conditions under their control. That is another power, getting whatever they desire. If the Yogis hold a thought in their mind of getting something, the thing comes to them. By their power of attraction, the thing appears towards them, and so whatever they wish they get[1].

Such are the powers of the mind, and these powers can be developed through steady practice. The best method is to go into a peaceful state in meditation. It is that state of mind which you would have at the time of prayer, for instance, holding a desire, but at the same time your external sense powers are in abeyance, as if your objective mind is asleep. That state is

[1] All these powers have been described by Patanjali in the *Yogasutras*.

called the superconscious state or *samadhi* in the *Patanjala-darsana*. It is, in reality, the superconscious state. The yogic powers are regarded as obstacles in the path of spiritual progress, because people get fascinated with these powers, and they do not try to get beyond them. For that reason, the great teachers like Buddha, Christ and Ramakrishna forbade their disciples to demonstrate such powers, or to seek them either.

There is an instance, described in the lives of the disciples of Buddha. One of the disciples wanted to reach a begging bowl that was at a great height, and he thought that he would extend his arm and reach it without a ladder, and at last he reached it. But how he reached it we do not know. It is described that he extended his arm and thus reached the thing. Seeing this, all the other disciples who were nearby, became so jealous that there was a great schism among the disciples of Buddha during his lifetime, and Buddha had to chastise that disciple who demonstrated that power. He said: "You must not do such a thing. It is a great obstacle in the path of spiritual progress".

I will give you another illustration of another psychic, who developed this power of walking across the river, over the surface of the water. There was a young man in India, who wanted some psychic powers. So he went to different places in search of a great Yogi, who had control over the forces of nature. He hunted everywhere for a great psychic. At last he went to the woods, and there he found a Yogi, living in a cave in the deep recesses of the forest. He was all alone, without any food or anything and was living in a cave unnoticed, so that no one would come to disturb him. This young man found him, and began to serve him and wait on him. And that Yogi, who was a great psychic, saw in this young man the possibility of developing some of his powers which were latent in him! So he took him as his disciple, and kept him for a long time. For fourteen years this young man stayed with him, and learned the various methods, by which he could develop the different powers. Now, after fourteen years of hard practice and asceticism, one day he went to take a bath in the river, and he found that his body was lighter than water. He could float or walk across the river, and he was quite astonished at that power. He wanted that power, and now he found it in

himself. He came to his master, and told him what he had experienced. The master was very pleased, and he sent him away to his home. So he came home, and spoke to his elder brother about the wonderful power he had developed. His elder brother was very curious to find out what kind of power he had developed after fourteen years. He asked his younger brother to show it. His younger brother smiled on hearing, and said: "Just come along with me. I will show you". The younger brother went to the river, and also to the great astonishment of the elder brother, that his younger brother walked over the surface of the water, and crossed the river. That is a very wide river too. Then the elder brother took a ferry boat, and met his brother on the other side. He could not walk across the river, so he had paid a penny to the boatman for crossing the river. And, afterwards, when he met his brother, his brother said: "Did you see my wonderful power?" He said: "How did you develop that power?" The younger brother said: "Oh, by hard practice, which lasted for fourteen long years". He had to do so much asceticism and severe struggling, serving the master for so many years. The elder brother said: "I am very sorry for you that after fourteen years of hard asceticism and struggle, you have developed a power which is worth a penny".[1]

From this it is understood that the psychic powers are regarded as inferior to spiritual truths. The psychic powers are the powers of the mind. They are the source of greater bondage to us than our ordinary powers. Suppose that you had the power of thought-reading. What a terrible state of your mind it will be, if you come in a street car and you read the thoughts of everybody that is riding with you. Your mind would be in a hell, if you realized the situation. Suppose you develop the power of clairvoyance, and whenever you try to sleep, you see some things at a distance. Now let me give an example of it. There was a man who lived in Brooklyn. He came to me, while I was in New York. He was a clairaudient, and he could hear at a distance the terrible noises, shrieks and whistles of the steamers and railroad engines, and so he could not sleep at all. His mind was going crazy, and he said to me: "Now, Swami,

[1] Ramakrishna Paramahamsa used to give often the illustration of this story.

can you help me?" He told me his condition: "I am going crazy. I cannot sleep, and at the same time I cannot stop this. It is a terrible state of the mind. I want to get out of it".

So you see, some people may develop this power without knowing how it will end and what result will come afterwards. For that reason, it is better not to possess these powers. It is better for us to go straight to the centre of spiritual realization first. Then all these powers, that are latent in the soul, will come to pass, and we should not be in bondage, but we should remain like a master, and these powers will serve us as their master. That should be the ideal of all those, who are struggling for the attainment of spiritual perfection even in this life. For that reason, the highest teachings of Vedanta give us this ideal that we should not gain anything by manifesting these powers.

There is another instance of a power that was developed by a psychic Yogi in India, who became very famous. People used to come to him from all parts of the country, and regard him as a wonder. He had the power to do anything. Whatever he wished, he could do, and so he became very famous. There was a great sage, and he was a spiritual master. He heard about that psychic Yogi and his powers. So he came to him to awaken him from this state, and gave him a higher conception of truth. He came to him, and asked him what wonderfur powers he possessed. At that time, a huge elephant was passing along the street, and he said: "There is an elephant. You say you can do anything that you wish. Could you kill that elephant?" The sage wanted to see whether he could do what he wished. The Yogi said: "Yes, that is possible". So he went out and took a little of the dust from the road and held it before him, and threw it on the elephant. Instantly the elephant trumpeted and began to cry very loudly. Then he fell and rolled on the ground and died. The sage was outwardly marvelling at this sight, and said: "What a wonderful power you have! Could you revive him?" The Yogi smiled and said: "Yes, that is possible". So he held another handful of dust and murmured some *mantras,* and he threw it on the dead elephant. The elephant then stood up on his legs and revived and began to walk. And the sage said: "What a marvellous power you possess! You can do what you wish.

But one question I should like to ask you. You killed the elephant and made the elephant come back to life. What did you gain by it ? Did you gain anything? You have manifested that power, but that power does not belong to you. It belongs to the cosmic mind. But you have not realized the highest truth by manifesting that power. You have not realized the God-nature. You have simply developed one of the psychic powers". With this the sage disappeared.

That is the attitude which all the great spiritual teachers have taken towards these psychic powers. They do not deny the existence of these powers, but, on the contrary, they say that all individual souls possess such individual powers, and that everyone could develop them sooner or later through certain practices, and chiefly through the concentration. The concentration is the secret key, by which the subconscious mind can be opened. All these powers can be brought to the conscious plane by every individual, but the best way is to the highest first. "First seek ye the Kingdom of Heaven and everything else will be added unto you". That is what Christ meant by that instruction. It is not his original instruction, but it is the instruction of all the great spiritual leaders of mankind, who lived before Christ or after. All of them taught the same thing. You read the teachings of Krishna. Krishna manifested the same powers, like feeding the multitude with a handful of bread or a few morsels of food. Read his life and descriptions as I have given in my book: *The Great Saviours of the the World.*

These powers have been manifested by the great saints; but for us I should advise, as it has been advised by all the great teachers, that we should try to emancipate our minds from the bondage and slavery of the physical body and the physical organs. Make ourselves free first, develop the power of knowledge, and then communion with the Supreme. Our individual soul is a part of the great Soul, nay, it is one with the *Paramatman.* It possesses all the powers which are in the cosmic mind. So, if we first realize the oneness with the supreme Soul and make ourselves the receptacles of the divine powers, then we shall have no more trouble, no more worry, but we shall understand all the laws that govern our spiritual lives as well as the psychic powers.

CHAPTER IV

THE MIND AND ITS MODIFICATIONS

We have learnt that the physiological psychology teaches that the states or various modifications of the mind are absolutely dependent upon the brain conditions. These functions of the brain are described as the same as states of consciousness, which are no other than the modifications (*vrittis*) of the mind stuff. The modern behaviouristic psychology may be called a phase of the anatomy of the nervous system of the cerebral hemispheres. After vivisecting the brains of the frogs, pigeons, sheep and monkeys and dissecting also the human brains, the followers of the behaviouristic school have traced the grand terminus of the nerves in the grey matter of the cortex of the brain, which is supposed to be the seat of the mind. All these nerves end in the grey matter of the brain. Every cell on our skin, for instance, has a minute nerve like a very fine thread, and that is connected with the main nerve centres of the spinal column, and they are all traced back to the grey matter of the brain. So when any sensation arises, it comes through these nerves, and by certain stimuli the nervous matter is agitated. This agitation flows in the form of a current through the nerves, until they reach the cortical cells of the brain. The sensations or vibrations of the external objects, which come through the nerves, are nothing but the suggestion, and these suggestions are carried by these nerves to the brain. But the hemispheres of the brain act from considerations, that is, expectations of sensations, which will be felt in one way or another. There are lower centres in the brain, which act from the present sensational stimuli alone. The lower centres receive these sensations of vibrations of the nerve currents, but the hemispheres or the grey matter, the top, has a different function. It is psychological. It is not so much of the physiological conditions. These hemispheres are regarded as the seats of emotions, instincts and intelligence, which do not exist in animals without the hemispheres of the brain. They have made vivisections and have cut out the hemispheres of the brain of

pigeons and frogs and sheep and monkeys. All the activities of the body and the senses would continue, when the hemispheres were gone, but there would be no emotion, or feeling, or instinct. A pigeon, after the hemispheres were removed, would go on moving and eating, but it would not have any feeling. If its mate appears, it would not have any feeling. Then, if it sees another pigeon, it would not be able to discriminate it from a stone or any other object. It would have no feeling of discrimination. If there be any cause of fear or danger, it would have no fear. Because fear is an emotion. It would not be able to take any precaution to protect itself for the self-preservation. Those are the activities or the functions, which are located in the hemispheres of the brain. These pigeons and animals, without the hemispheres, would live the life, but it would be an absolutely impersonal life. So, if the hemispheres of our brain are taken out, we would live the life, but no personality will be manifested. Then we will live like the machines of the states of waking and sleeping in a kind of impersonal way. That is the conclusion which the modern psychologists have arrived at through the study of the brain and its functions.

The behaviouristic school also states that the hemispheres of the brain and the cortical cells are also the chief seat of the memory. So when the hemispheres of the brain of a pigeon are taken out, the pigeon would have no memory. But it would go on living, because there are other centres, which, through the muscular actions of the legs, the heart and the lungs will continue to work. It would have no consciousness as it were.

The modern psychologists try to explain everything by the automatic reflex actions of the brain. Now, what do we mean by a *reflex action?* We have experienced that when a mosquito sits on our cheek, suddenly our hand will go to that spot, and we will slap our cheek to remove the insect. Now what has happened there? It happened that the afferent nerves, that are connected with the cells of the skin, would carry the sensation of a bite to the brain. Then there would be some currents or communications, which will go through the brain, and they will produce a kind of image in the conscious entity, and that image will be a kind of feeling of bite or pain or sting, and

immediately the message to remove that cause of pain will be sent out of the brain through the other set of nerves which are called the motor nerves or efferent nerves. Those nerves come out from the brain to the muscles of the arms and also to the different parts of the body. So, instaneously, as it were, without any volition on the part of the individual, the hand will move, and the muscles will work and strike on the spot, where the mosquito is biting. That is the *reflex action.*

So all the activities of our bodies as well as the organic functions are described as the result of the *reflex actions.* When you hear the whistle of a train, or when the conductor says, 'all aboard', that sound will enter into your ears and will produce an impression. That impression will again be translated into a kind of feeling, and immediately the mind will react, and through the reflex activities, you will be running to catch the train. That is a *reflex action.* Then the legs will run. So you can understand that whenever suggestion comes like that, all that follows is the *reflex action* of the brain, or of the mind. And that is automatic, according to the modern psychologists. They do not consider that there is any consciousness or intelligence in that action, but it is mechanical. Now, whether it is really mechanical or not that is a point, but they come to the conclusion that they are mechanical. In reality, they are not mechanical, but they are conducted and governed by intelligence. According to the *theory of automatism,* we learn that, given the environmental conditions of Shakespeare and assuming that we know his nervous system, we can tell exactly what each and every step in the writing of a play like *Hamlet* or *Macbeth* will be. We can tell too, automatically, how he wrote it, and how he made even a mistake in writing and scratched off a word. According to the modern psychologists, that was all automatic action. That far you can learn ; but it would be very foolish to accept such a theory for explaining all the actions of the mind, which are governed by intelligence. But the modern psychologists tried to explain it in that way. It is just like a machine working, you touch a button and the whole thing moves in this way ; just as in an automobile ; you touch the button and the electric starter works, and then the machine moves. That is a kind of an automatic action. And when they see anything mechanical in any part of the human mechanism,

they mean like that. It is the *theory of automatism,* which has been accepted by the physiological psychologists to explain these things, and that is what you learn in schools and colleges. The analytical psychology and even James' psychology in the main[1] are like that. It is all automatic like a machine. The human body is like a machine. The analytic school of psychology teaches that the sensations, the ideas of sensations and all motor activities are in turn the elements, out of which the mind is the sum total of these sensations, according to the modern psychologists.

By 'sensations' we mean those suggestions that come through the eyes, ears, and other organs. Those suggestions are not in the states of consciousness at first. They are merely the molecular changes, *i.e.,* the changes of the molecules, of the atoms, of the nervous system, and of the brain.

Then come the ideas of the sensation. Those are called apperceptions, or perceptions, or conceptions, in the modern psychology. They come afterwards. At the root they are nothing but the motions. The ideas of motion are the elements, out of which the mind substance is built. I have already described about the afferent and the efferent, or the sensory and the motor nerves before. Now these currents, according to modern science, pour into the brain the sensations by the afferent nerves, that is, those sensory nerves that are scattered under the surface of the body, carry the sensations to the brain. Then the currents or the stimuli strike. If you press any spot on the skin that pressure would be the cause of a stimulus, and that the stimulus will be a kind of suggestion, which will create a current in the nerves, and that current will be poured into the brain, and, in reaction, the brain will send another current. That current, which pours into the brain, will disturb the arrangements, existing there. The brain cells are connected by the fibres, and the fine fibres have a passage, through which the nerve current flows, and they are all connected. Each, in turn, excites others. Now, if the sensation comes in one corner of the brain, it would be connected with the other corners, or other cells in some way. But they cannot exactly tell how they are connected, and how the association of ideas takes place.

[1] Cf. W. Jame's explanation of habit, emotion, etc.

They try to explain by the automatic or mechanical theory, but they cannot describe perfectly, because they do not know what is happening in the brain of a living man. Then these currents will explode, as it were, in the brain, and a discharge of downward nerve current will begin, and will reach the muscles. Then the whole process is done automatically. That will be the *reflex action.* The psychologists say that when these currents will carry these minute atoms of the cells into the brain, they will produce a kind of electrical explosion, and in that explosion, there will come what we call the consciousness. Then it will begin to react, and send another discharge of electrical or nervous current, which will reach the muscles automatically. This theory has been held so long as the only solution of our mental actions from the physiological and anatomic standpoints. But there has come a question which upsets this whole theory, and that question is the question about the Aphasia.

The Aphasia is a kind of disease. It is not paralysis of the organ of voice or tongue or lips. It is a disease which produces a loss of speech. A man, who has this motor Aphasia, has lost the power of speech. He might use a few words, but he has not any conception of the meaning of those words. But, in most cases, he cannot use words; he cannot also use the articulate sounds with a meaning, as you would say. Now that is a disease, which has upset all the mechanical theory of modern psychology. Now, why it happens? Because broach is located in the speech centre in the brain, and this speech centre is located on the right side of the hemisphere of a man, who uses his left hand, and it is located in the left hemisphere of the brain of a man, who uses his right hand. Now, when this disease attacks that centre in the brain, the individual loses the power of speech. Suppose a man, who is right-handed, has got a stroke of the paralysis, and has lost the power of speech, that is, Aphasia has attacked him. Such cases have been recorded in the medical journals and medical statistics. Now, if that same individual would be trained to use his left hand, he would create a new centre of speech on the other side of the brain just the opposite by his will-power or thought force. Then he will regain his power of speech. Now, how can he theory of automatism explain such? The theory of automatism cannot explain such cases, as also other cases. There has been recorded

the instance of a man who lived for years, and one-half of his brain was pried up and dead, and he did all his works with the other half of the brain, without showing any symptom of change. After death, the post-mortem examination proved that he had only one-half of a brain.

You may read the interesting book on *Brain and Personality* by Dr. Thomson. He is the great consulting physician and surgeon in the Roosevelt Hospital, in New York City.[1] He came to my lectures many times. He is now an old man. He has kept these statistics. He has proved that the brain does not produce personality, but personality uses the brain as an instrument. He calls this personality the soul. The soul and the mind both work on the brain, and if one centre or portion of the brain is destroyed, it can manufacture another portion of the brain, and make it perform the functions of the dead portion. That fact has upset the theory of automatism of the modern psychologists. The theory of automatism cannot also explain the cause of emotion, instinct, will, desire and intuition.

Now, what is an emotion? Who feels the conditions of the mind? Does the brain feel them? No, the brain does not feel them. But the individual or personality feels certain conditions, such as, joy, grief, love, hatred, anger, fear and pride. All these are the emotions. Now, these emotions are left as the states of the mind which are known as the modifications of the mind stuff. But how they are produced the modern psychologists do not explain it at all. They say that it must be some kind of reaction or reflex action of the sensations which come through the nerve currents, and they complete the circuit through the loop of the cortex of the brain, and produce these changes that will produce emotion in the body. Of course, the emotions have physical expressions. The physical body is affected by any emotion. When you have anger, you see the eyes red, and the face flushed, and the whole system will be vibrating with rage, and the circulation will be increased, the temperature of the body will also be higher, and so on. Now again, another emotion like hatred would produce a kind of poison in the system. The jealousy too produces a kind of poison in the system, and that is a very deadly poison. A

[1] When the Swami was lecturing this chapter in 1920, Dr. Thompson was alive.

mother, who suckles her baby while in a rage of anger, hatred, or jealousy, is nursing the baby with poison. She might not know it, but it will produce the effect in the system of the child. That has been experimented upon, and recorded as a fact.

The fear again will produce a wonderful change. When you see anything that will cause fear of death or fear of injury in our mind, your heart will begin to palpitate, your breath will be quick and short, and sometimes perhaps the breath will stop. In your nervousness, you will lose your sense of right and wrong. You will begin to scream perhaps, and cry and shed tears. All these things are the expressions of an emotion, as if a cyclone has blown upon the brain cells, and has upset the whole thing. Now what causes that? The modern science cannot explain it.

An instinct cannot also be explained by the modern psychologists. The theory of automatism does not explain how instinct is caused. Instinct is defined as the faculty of acting in such a way, as to produce certain ends without foresight of the ends. As emotion is a feeling,[1] so instinct is a faculty of acting i.e. acting without knowing what result will come. Of course, modern science says that this instinct has nothing to do with memory and experience. But that is a mistake. They describe instinct as a complex nervous impulse, or as an organised sense impulse.

The desire, or the wish, or the will, is another modification. How desire will arise, they cannot explain by the theory of automatism. We cannot also define what desire is, but we can say that we desire something, we wish for something, and we will have to do something. These three words we use with three different meanings. We generaly use the term 'desire' for such things, as will give us pleasure, or will produce agreeable feelings. We wish a thing, the attainment of which is rather uncertain. We are not quite sure whether we will get that thing, but still we wish for it.

[1] The psychologists have classified feelings into the *sense-feelings* and the *emotions*. The *sense-feeling* is agreeableness or disagreeableness attaching to a sensation, and hence is presentative in nature. * * The emotions, on the other hand, are the feelings directly associated with the ideas, at least in most cases. Prof. MacDougall says that the two words, *feeling* and *emotion*, are used almost inter-changeably. The famous Lange-James' theory of emotions also asserts that the emotions are essentially of the same nature as the sensations *i.e.* the feelings.

The will is connected with the physical movement. I will to move my hand. So, in these three senses, these terms are used. But, according to the modern psychology, we do not know why the desire arises, why we wish for a thing, and why should everyone wish for an agreeable sensation? What do we gain by it? The utilitarian theory does not explain it. It might increase the lifetime, or might help in gaining more knowledge, or something of value. The mechanical theory is not also clear about it.

So, we have learned what the physiological psychology tells us about the mental states or modifications, and we are all in the dark. We do not know where we stand. We have not learned anything. The physiological psychology has described a machine, but one thing, that governs the machine or rules the machine, is left in the darkness, or in the background. So we cannot tell anything about it. But the True psychology teaches something different. It tells us that desire is at the root of our conscious life. The divine is at the bottom, and that desire is a creative power in the individual soul.[1] It is the desire that produces suitable instrument or organ for the fulfilment of itself. That is, we would not have eyes, if we did not have at the beginning the desire to see. We would not have any ears, and all the fine nerves that are connected with our organ of hearing, would be impossible, if there were no desire to hear at the bottom. If there were no desire to eat, there would be no teeth, no alimentary canal and no digestive organs. So, the desire is at the root of everything. The desire to see has brought the eye; the desire to hear has created the ear; the desire to eat has produced the teeth, the alimentary canal, and the digestive organs. The modern psychologists put the cart before the horse, while the True psychology traces the origin of these instruments to the proper cause. Now, who has created the brain? There were no mind in the primitive cell of the protoplasm. If there were no intelligence, the creation of the brain would be impossible. If there were no desire at the root, the most complicated instrument of the brain would not come into existence. So desire is the creative effort of the

[1] Dr. Freud calls the desire as a sexual instinct or *libido*. Dr. Jung refutes this theory of his beloved master and describes this desire as the 'creative energy'. —Vide *Modern Man in Search of the Soul.*

mind, and that desire is at the bottom of all other functions. It is called in Sanskrit *vasana* or *kama*.[1] It is the first impulse in the living substance or living soul.

We read that before beginning of evolution there was one cosmic mind in a latent state, and at that time it had no desire. Then it had the first desire awakened, and at that time it realized that it was alone. It wanted to be many; it wanted to be conscious of itself, and then came the differentiation between the ego and the non-ego, between the spirit and the matter, i.e. between the subject and the object[2]. So consider very deeply what is at the root of your whole conscious life? Why are you doing all these things that you are doing today, if you do not have the desire for something? It is the desire that guides you and all. That desire has various expressions, which you may call by different names; but the motive or creative force, that is in you, is in the form of desire.

The will is another name for the desire (*vasana*). So the will cannot be separated from the desire. Or the desire is a better expression than the will. The will is a force that operates externally, and the desire is the positive pole of all mental actions, and has always the connection with pleasure. We do not desire anything that gives pain. The opposite or negative pole is the aversion for the pain, which we hate and do not like. We try to get away from the pain. The desire leads to that thing which produces a pleasant and agreeable sensation, and the aversion leads to those things which are just the opposite. So the desire and the aversion are like the two opposite poles of the same mental state. The desire is the father of all causes, and all other causes of any action, that we can think of, are produced by the desire. But, when the desire is absolutely gratified or fulfilled, it is killed, and there is no more desire. The death of the desire comes at its fulfilment or perfect gratification. But if all the desires are killed, we would not live on this plane at all. We shall be dead, and there will be no incentive for life. Because a life without

[1] This *kama* is not the sexual desire or *libido*, as is maintained by Dr. Freud, but it is the divine will of the First-born Lord, Hiranyagarbha-Isvara. This *kama* or divine desire is symbolized by the prime sentiment, *shringara*.

[2] Compare the similar passages in the *Brihadaranyaka-Upanishad*. 1. 3. 3; 1. 4. 17.

desire may be a kind of mechanical or automatic life. It will be a life of a stone perhaps, which has no desire to express, but it lives and it has life. The fulfilment of desire again is dependent upon the amount of energy, available for this purpose. The energy is attracted by the desire. So all desires are not fufilled of course, and not even are gratified to our expectation, because we have not had sufficient energy under our control, which we could use for the purpose. First of all, when we want to fulfil a desire, we must have a storage of the energy, and when the energy is there, then rises the desire which attracts that energy towards a certain direction, and then the result comes. If the energy is not sufficient to reach the climax, the desire is baffled and unfulfilled. It is a failure. So the success and the failure would depend upon the amount of energy that we possess. Even in mental activity, we require the energy. You must not think that the energy is only physical, for when you spend your time in thinking, you spend more energy that you would spend in lifting a heavy weight. The mental activity uses up the energy more quickly, because it is the finer kind of work, or the finest kind of motion or activity. Lifting a heavy weight, or doing any manual labour, of course, would require the physical energy, but thousands of times stronger and greater quantity of the same energy would be necessary to do deep intellectual work. But people do not realize that.

Now a great artist will produce his masterpiece, and after he has produced his masterpiece, he cannot produce anything better. There his desire is killed or exhausted. A musician, who has produced the ideal music, has finished. His mission in life is also finished. So, in the cases of great geniuses and in every department of mental or intellectual life, you will notice that when they have reached the climax, they have finished their mission. Take for instance the life of Christ or Buddha. Their life is short. They reach the climax, and then they go down. They have no more energy to give anything new, and so they are finished; and that is to be found in every line of the geniuses and the prodigies.

Of course, the desire works in every field. When you sow a seed, the seed gathers the energy to produce the tree from the environment, and that energy is manifested, and as soon as it

is exhausted, the tree will be dead. That will explain why some individuals die within a few years in their childhood or youth. Because at the time of their birth, they have not the power in the soul to gather enough of the energy, which is necessary to continue the life to its normal span. These souls have not learned the method by which they can replenish the storage. It is just like a storage battery. That is, when the electricity is exhausted, the machine stops. That will give you an idea of how much energy you have to gather in order to spend. You are already spending it, and, therefore, you can draw or gather so much from the atmosphere, or from your surroundings. So there is a limit in each individual. You cannot draw as much as I would, because your machine or whole thought life is different. But, of course, you can improve, and you will be able to do perhaps more than I can do, if you put your desire in that line. But, at present, while you are living like a machine on this earth, doing these routine works in all your daily life, you will feel exhausted, and, consequently, you will soon die before accomplishing much. But if you know how to store more energy, you will be able to spend more, and will do greater work. But the root of all these is the desire. A man, who has a strong desire to live, perhaps will draw from all sources this energy, and direct it towards the one end. He will get the gratification of that desire, and then he will die. It is a fact that if desire is gratified, death is sure to come.

Everything has its polarity. In the material world, we see nothing but motion. But this motion is external in the material world ; and when it is in the internal or mental plane, the same motion would appear as the emotion. It would be a subjective expression, and that is the polarism. Every motion will have its opposite polarized effect in the expression of emotion, or in the forms of activity of the physical body and the sense organs. The intensity of action forces reaction. If any emotion be very intense, there would come into operation another law i.e. the law of action and reaction, and that emotion would bring its result in the reaction. When love is intense, it will turn into hatred, or worry, or anxiety. If you love anything most, the more anxious you are. That is, you are sowing the seed of pain, and there is suffering. So love, until it reaches

a certain point, will be very agreeable, but as soon as it goes beyond that point, it will begin to produce pain and suffering in the form of anxiety, worry, and hatred. Love will turn to hatred, not for the same individual, but for others, who are trying to tane away your love. It will produce a fear of losing

What do you mean by love? Love is nothing but an attachment, or a strong desire to keep something that produces an agreeable feeling or sensation. It is nothing but the expression of a strong attachment, and that the attachment or clinging to life is another expression of our mental life. That is, we do not want to lose it, while it is agreeable. That is the nature of the desire.

By pleasure we mean the agreeable feeling or sensation, which we desire to continue. Anything desired is pleasure. Analyse your love whether you love to eat or drink or dress. If you have nice jewellery which you love, you might have some cause for holding on to it for showing the gratification of some kind of desire. You want to show to others that you are rich, which you possess something that they do not possess. Analyse your feeling, and you will find that there is something like this. When you dress smartly, you try to beat upon your fellows in dress. When you have succeeded, you cling to it, and hold on to it. That is love for your dress. Then it becomes attachment, and then you are afraid of losing or spoiling it.

It reminds me of what my Master Ramakrishna Paramahamsa did. Somebody gave him a very expensive and beautiful Kashmere shawl to put on. Immediately the thought came to his mind: "Oh, I must not sit there. It might be spoiled. I must not go near any oil or anything; it will get a spot". Then afterwards he said again: "It is a course of bondage". So he threw it in the rubbish, because there he noticed how his mind was getting into attachment. So everytime when we like a thing very strongly, we are sowing the seed of attachment. Then why should we not have attachment? Because it will end in suffering. As soon as it would come to a climax, it will produce pain. If you want to avoid pain which you foresee as coming, you get rid of your attachment. Then you are free. In everything in life, you will see that it is so. So love and hatred come from the same cause. The same cause will produce an agreeable feeling up to a certain pitch, and

then it will become disagreeable. The experimental psychology has proved this fact. For instance, you hold an electric needle on the skin, and produce a certain vibration. At first it is a kind of different feeling, then a point will come, and you will begin to like it. If it is increased a little more, it will give you pain, and then you will dislike it, and want to get away from it. The same vibration, which is more intense than what you like, would produce pain and also a disagreeble feeling. Eat something and you will like it, and eat it continuously, you will dislike, or hate it. You will hear beautiful music which you like, and it would be fine and first-class. But hear it continuously hour after hour and do nothing else, you would not hear it. What is the cause of it? Because the repeated hearing of music makes you tired, and so you become indifferent to music. For the same reason, a thing is agreeable to a certain point, but when it reaches beyond that point, it produces indifference and pain. That is the reaction. Reaction will produce just the opposite feeling. Courage will instantly turn into fear. A man, who is very courageous on the battlefield, fighting with intense bravery, suddenly runs as fast as he can to get away from the battlefield. Because bravery will rise to a certain point, and then it will take an opposite turn, and react upon the individual. This opposite pole would be the fear. So pleasure and pain would arise from the same thing. Similarly love and hatred, and courage and fear, would arise from the same thing. They are the opposite poles like life and death. A desire, as I have already described, continues so long, as it is not gratified. But when it is intense and gratified, the fulfilment brings its death. Take it in your whole lifetime. You are living for a certain purpose, and you are born with a certain amount of energy which you wish to spend, and as soon as you have spent that energy, you have the desire to get away from it. Then you have finished.

I will give you another illustration of a man, who spends his energy to become rich. A man wants money. He has a certain amount of energy, and he gathers all the energy he can. and spends it towards accumulating wealth. He tries to be a millionaire. He gets all his money by fair means or foul, and by cheating or robbing. He wants to be rich, and that is his sole aim. So he does not care whether his health is gone,

or even whether his wife and children are starving. His only aim is that he must be rich. So he spends every small particle of energy that he has towards accumulating wealth, and he succeeds. His desire is then gratified. Then there comes another desire in the form of a nice home, or the nice companions and social life. He is not satisfied with his own life, and he must have social companionship. He must climb the ladder. Then he spends more energy, and he gets a position in the society. Afterwards he has spent all his energy, and has ruined his health. His position does not amount to anything, because he is a sick man. Every dollar that he saved, is now going to be spent to save his health. So he is going in another direction. The bank account is getting very small, and he cannot get back his health, because he has lost his fund of energy, and has sacrificed his health for money, which does not bring any more pleasure to him. Do you not see this condition right around yourselves? Such things are happening every day. But we do not pay any attention to them. The same thing that he thought would make him so happy, has turned out to be a source of great pain. His wealth does not amount to anything. At first he liked wealth to have some ease in life, to live a luxurious life, and to get everything at his command, but when everything is at his command, he cannot enjoy it. Then it is a course of agony to him.

For that reason, a true philosopher will say: "Why do you waste all this energy for that which will never bring real happiness to your soul, but will end in pain or unhappiness?" Therefore we should learn to discriminate. The discrimination is another faculty which is extremely desiraole.

I have described to you all the different modifications of the mind which have not been described clearly by the modern psychologists. The last thing is an intuition. An intuition is another modification of the power of the mind. It is a direct perception. The word 'intuition' is derived from the verb 'to intuit', which means 'to look upon'. An intuition is neither doubtful, nor undecided. We cannot even argue it, because it is a direct sensing of something by the subject. An instinct and an intuition are the two names of the same faculty. It is an instinct in the lower animals, and it is called

an intuition in the human beings[1]. It is connected with the memory and the past experience. So, if we do not have any memory of the experiences that we have gathered, we cannot have any instinct. So every instinct is the result of a habit, or of the repeated previous experiences. Just as we begin to ride a bicycle, at first we use all the muscles with our conscious efforts, and train our muscles. Then afterwards the muscles will move automatically, and that automatic activity may be called 'instinctive'. Now every instinct presupposes the conscious efforts, which is somewhat akin to the pre-established harmony. And an intuition is that power, by which our subjective mind can perceive the result without any reasoning and questioning. It sees the thing, as if picured before its mind, and if you intuitively know anything and anyone asks you the reason, you would say 'because'. That is a 'woman's because'. That means because she knows it. There is no reason in it. There is no reasoning in an intuition. It is the negative aspect of the reasoning faculty, and it is at the same time, the source of our knowledge. This knowledge is bound to come. Whenever we get an understanding by the positive method, that is the action of the intellect. An intellect is one of the powers of the mind, but an intuition is just the other pole of the reason, that is, it is knowing without any conscious reasoning. These are the powers that produce the various modifications of the mind. Our mind substance is like the finer matter in vibration which is thrown into different whirlpools or eddies by these stimuli. We get all sensations from the external world, and they are all known and are governed by the intelligent soul, which is our subjective self or being. This subjective self possesses the instrument of the mind, one-half of which is the subjective mind which contains all the emotion, will, desire, and intuition, and the other half is the objective mind which is closely in touch

[1] An intuition (*Anschaung*), according to Kant, "is knowledge (*Erkenntnis*) which is in immediate relation to objects (*sich auf Gegenstande unmittelbar bezieht*)", says Prof. Kemp Smith. In fact, by intuition Kant means to say the immediate perception. Kant says: *"Intuition is the immediate apprehension of a content which as given is due to the action of an independently real object upon the mind"*.—Vide A Commentary to Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*, pp. 79-80.

In the *Prolegomena*, Kant also says, "that everything which can be given to our senses (to the external sense in space, the internal in time) is intuited by us as it appears to us, not as it is in itself" (p. 37).

with the brain and the nervous system. It receives all the impressions, and presents them to the soul (conscious ego). Then the soul or ego discriminates through the subjective mind which cannot be described by any other internal being, and which possesses all these powers. The mind and its modifications are all governed by different laws, and they are known as the law of rhythm, the law of polarity, the law of action, and the law of cause and effect. These laws really govern our subjective conditions. But the soul or ego is the ruler of all.[1]

[1] The soul (*jivatman*) is the prime mover of the mind, both subjective and objective. So soul is not the mind, but is the source and director of the mind.

CHAPTER V

THE POWER OF CONCENTRATION

When we study the physiological psychology, we do not read anything about concentration. It is generally considered that concentration is a part of what we call attention. Of course, concentration, in its simplest form, is known as attention, but the modern physiological psychology does not explain what an attention is. It simply describes this as a faculty of the mind. It says that this is also a mysterious power. But why is it that all sensations, which are getting into our brain through different powers of the senses, are not perceived by us? That is a great mystery. To say that it is one of the faculties of the mind is to narrow the field of the consciousness. We may receive various kinds of vibrations of sound, of light, and of others, which are known as the sensations, but we do not pay attention to all that we receive. The focal field of the consciousness is very narrow, and why this is so, is not given in the modern psychology. But, if, on the contrary, we consider that the mind is not a function of the brain, but is something distinct from the brain, then we understand how the soul or ego, whose power is manifested in the form of mental functions and also in the form of mind and intellect, which, in their turn, are in some mysterious way connected with our brain, has the power to control the various kinds of functions which are nothing but the results or expressions of the mental energy. But that power of control is not to be found in the brain. The brain does not control the various functions of sensations, thoughts, and ideas, that constantly rise in the form of vibrations of the brain cells. In truth, the brain is unintelligent. Intelligence is not produced by the activity of the brain, and there lies the greatest difficulty that the modern scientists or the physiological psychologists have encountered. They consider that the brain, which is unintelligent by itself, can produce intelligence. But that does not seem to be logical.

On the contrary, it seems to be absurd, when we know that intelligence is not something that can be produced out of unintelligent substance. That difficulty is never removed in the modern psychology. But, in the True psychology, that difficulty does not arise, because we consider that intelligence is not produced by an unintelligent substance, but that it is always distinct from the motion of the material particles. The motion produces nothing but the motion; but an intelligence is quite different from a motion. An intelligence is something that knows the existence of the motion. It is the interpreter of the motion. So even if the vibrations of the molecules of the brain be the sole explanation for all sensations and feelings, then those vibrations must be in some way translated by some intelligent entity into a mental state, or into a state of the consciousness. Then that state would be no longer a part of the brain, but it will be in the field of the mind substance. It has already been said that mind substance is the finer matter in vibration, and that finer matter may be like our electrons. When we speak of the finer matter, we refer by way of illustration to the fine particles of those corpuscles or electrons which are finer than the atoms. And these electrons are in a constant state of vibration, just as if they are in a whirlpool. Some are revolving around a common centre. The centre is the positive pole, and these fine particles of the electrons or the corpuscles are revolving around the central sun, in some cases, myriads of them. Consequently, that produces a kind of motion or vibration, and the field of vibration may be the medium through which the soul or ego works upon the gross matter. But that energy is said to be the energy of the mind. So the mind substance may be called the finer particles of atom, which are in constant motion or vibration.

Next we come to the discussion of concentration. What do we mean by the word 'concentration'? Concentration means the control of energy of the whole mind substance by the will-power and also the method, by which this flood of energy can be directed toward one object. Ordinarily our mental rays are scattered in all directions. It may be called the dispersed attention. Our mental energy is dissipated or scattered, and this scattered state of the mind does not produce any result. But, if the attention be fixed upon one object,

we can know the true nature of that object. Without fixing our attention to one particular object, we cannot know the various phases or conditions. We cannot know also the various workings of that particular object. For that reason, the concentrated attention is the most important thing to have, and without the concentrated attention we cannot gain any success in any line. It is said by Ralph Waldo Emerson that one prudence in life is 'concentration' and one evil is 'dissipation'. In concentration, consists the secret of strength and success in politics, in war, in business, and in all the avocations of our daily life. Without exercising this power of the concentrated attention, we cannot make any headway in any line of work or study, or even in business, or in the professional lines. In order to have the success, we must have a definite object in view, and our mind should be fixed upon that object so strongly that we shall be able to see all the minute details that are connected with that object. If there be any obstacle in the path of acquiring the ideal which we are striving to obtain, we should find what those obstacles are, and then those obstacles must be removed ; and so long as they are not removed, success is not near at hand. So we may say that concentration is the means by which we can get hold of the necessary ideas and the different conditions under which success can be achieved. A man, who has not the power of concentrating his attention upon the object or the ideal of his business, or in any other particular line, cannot gain any amount of success in that line. Think of the man who, for instance, is studying the movements of the stars and the planets, and imagine the wonderful concentration that is necessary to watch the movements of these heavenly luminaries. Day after day, night after night, he would be watching the movements and studying and calculating and computing the mathematical problems, and the result would be his wonderful discoveries. He is the best astronomer, who has been able to devote all his attention to that study.

Think of the wonderful method of concentration of a man, who is studying the various conditions, connected with the micro-organism under a powerful microscope, studying for days and nights in the laboratory, watching the movements of the animalcule, and studying everything carefully. The result of this study is the discovery of the various relations that pertain

to different germs and causes of disease of our health and physical conditions.

All discoveries in science are due to concentration. So also in arts, in mathematics, in poetry, in painting, in music, concentration is necessary. In every line of thought and study, you will find that the power of concentration is absolutely necessary. This power of concentration is ordinarily known as 'attention'. That attention is involuntary at first. It is not an acquired habit, but is natural. We may say that it is a substantial gift of the nature. We find this attention as manifested in a child. We have noticed that after a few days after the birth of the child, the child fixes its attention upon any bright object, or upon the face of its mother, or upon the eyes of the nurse. That is the beginning of attention of the child, and that attention is involuntary. The child does not exercise the volition or will-power, because its will-power is not yet developed ; but at the same time, the expression of the power of attention is to be found in that child.

In the lower animal plane, we also find that the power of attention is manifested by different animals. In the tigers, in the cats, in the birds, and in almost all animals, which depend for their living upon other animals as their prey, attention is manifested. For instance, when those animals try to catch their prey, they will have to fix their attention upon the prey. Think of an eagle soaring high in the sky. His eyes are fixed upon an object on this earth, and he swoops down with a fixed attention, and catches the object of prey, and that is the way he can sustain himself. Now, when a cat catches a mouse, you could notice how its eyes would be fixed, and its whole motion of the body would be arrested. Then it would be all alert, and believe me that it has a hypnotic power, applicable through the eyes. It exercises the power of control over the mouse, and the mouse cannot get away. Sometimes you will notice a cat is trying to catch a pigeon. The pigeon may be on the cornice of a building, or on a branch of a tree and the pigeon might be resting, and as soon as the cat would catch the attention of the eyes of the pigeon, the pigeon would begin to feel its presence and be hypnotized as it were. Then it would not be able to get away. There have been cases, where these pigeons would fall right near the

mouth of the cat, as if hypnotized and unable to run away. That shows that the cat has the power of concentration or fixed attention, and also it has a kind of hypnotic influence upon its prey.

A crane has that power. A crane might be standing near the brook and intently watching the fish that is in the water. The fish is moving rapidly on the surface of the water, and the crane must concentrate its attention so strongly that it ceases to notice anything outside of that fish, and the crane would succeed in catching the fish. How does it do it? The fact is this that its muscles and sense powers are concentrated on that one object, and the stronger the power of concentration of that attention, the quicker would be the result. If any noise or any kind of disturbance would disturb the attention, the object will disappear, and it will not be brought within the range, and the effect will not be successful.

If we study the lower animals we find that this involuntary attention is exercised a great deal by them. The same attention is also exercised by the human beings. First of all, this involuntary attention is exercised for food and clothes i.e. for the sustenance of the body, because nature has given that tendency in each one of us. But this simple involuntary attention can be developed into a voluntary attention through the force of habit and the practice. Then voluntary attention will help us to direct the energy of our minds towards the abstract ideas and the objects. The voluntary attention will help us to direct the energy of our minds not only towards the food, clothes and other material things which are necessary for the sustenance of the body, but also towards intellectual objects, the objects of study, of music, and of the scientific objects. These things are not attractive to us naturally, so a little culture is necessary. We must cultivate our minds to make ourselves familiar with the finer laws that are governing our intellectual, mental and spiritual realms. Ordinarily, people do not pay attention to those things, because their minds are not developed in those lines. Their minds are working on the material sense plane, but there are other persons, in whom these powers or higher qualities of the mind are developed. They would not be satisfied with merely material gain, but they would want to spend

their time and energy in other pursuits of higher knowledge and realization. For instance, a moral man would neither be satisfied to live like an animal, simply eating, drinking, and sleeping, nor be contented with observing merely the moral laws and realizing the peace and happiness that comes through self-sacrifice and helping others, and so on. His mind, on the contrary, would be longing for such realization and happiness. But, if you ask an ordinary man who is living on the animal plane, to have such kind of pleasure, he will say that he does not care for it; and really his mind will not be attracted to such things.

So, if we study carefully, we will find that everything the modern civilized communities possess, is more or less the expression of one power of concentration, or the concentrated attention. All the discoveries of science, all the things that we enjoy, and all the objects of art, beautiful furniture, and lovely things that we possess, are nothing but the results of the expression of that one power of concentration.

Now, conceive how a chair can be made without the power of concentration. Ask an idiot to make a chair, but he cannot do it. Every action that we do and perform with our senses, in order to produce any ordinary or remarkable result, must have something as its foundation, and that something is the power of concentration or the concentrated attention. Without this power of concentration, you cannot cook your meals. If you put something on the stove and your mind is distracted to something else, the thing is spoiled and burnt and is not fit to eat. You cannot walk in the streets, without exercising some portion of the power of your concentrated attention, and you will otherwise be run over. Ninetynine per cent of our accidents are the results of inattention, which is no other than the lack of concentration.

All diseases that come through the violation of hygienic laws, are also the results of inattention to the laws of health and strength and also of the physical laws that govern our lives. So, if we wish to be proficient in any particular line, we must have the power of concentration, because without the power of concentration we cannot do anything. But this most important faculty has been neglected and overlooked in our modern times.

The Hindu psychologists divide the mental conditions into

five different parts.[1] The first is the scattered state of the mind (*kshipta*). In that state, the mental forces are running through the different gates of senses in all directions. Just like the scattered rays of an electric lamp, it is going on in all directions. In this state, there is no rest and no peace in mind. Therefore, think of a man whose attention is scattered. Early in the morning, he is sitting in his room, he is putting the chair from one place to another and picking up a newspaper, poking the fire, trying to read a few lines from the paper, then dropping it, and taking up some other thing, or he looks at a flower. Now, that is a miserable condition of the life. You will find perhaps some of your acquaintances who are in that condition. That is the scattered state of the mind without any end and without any control over the activity of the brain, the senses and the sense organs. That is the typical example of an extremely scattered state of mind, or of inattention.

The second is the stupid condition (*mudha*). The scattered state (*kshipta*) is one extreme, and the stupid state (*mudha*) is the other. Then the mind becomes wholly idotic. Then it cannot think, and cannot see anything clearly. Even when a man hears a sound in that condition, he cannot distinguish or differentiate one thing from the other. The mind is then slovenly and sleepy, and the intellectual faculties are covered, as it were, or veiled. It has not the power to understand anything, and it fails to grasp any meaning. It might be reading a book, but it does not produce any impression upon the brain. The brain is too thick and solid, as it were, to be impressed upon. That would be the other extreme. There are some people living, who have that kind of mind. That is, his mind reaches the extreme point of stupidity.

The third state is the scattered one (*vikshipta*). In that third state, the mind swings between the two extremes: sometimes tremendously active and sometimes wholly stupid. You will find amongst all the people in ordinary affairs of life of those who go from one extreme to the other. During their business hours, they are busy in their mind. Their mind is restless, planning and scheming and counting and trying to get every-

[1] Vyasa has described in his commentary the five states of the mind as: *kshipta, mudha, vikshipta, ekagra, and niruddha,* Vide the *Yogasutra*: *'atha yoganusasanam'*, 1. 1.

thing in a short time. Then in reaction, their mind becomes blank or empty. At that time they do not know what to do with it. They go to sleep, or remain stupid.

The fourth state is called the one-pointed state of mind (*ekagra*). That is the concentrated mind, in which all the faculties and various expressions of the mental energy focussed as well as are governed by the will-power. In this state, the mind is directed towards one object. This is what is called the 'voluntary attention'. That attention of the mind is directed and governed by our will-power. Will-power of course is also very intimately connected with attention. That is, first of all we desire something, and if our attention is fixed upon the object of our desire, then the will or the force of the will is generated. So attention helps the will-power, and the will-power again controls the attention. They are like two expressions of the one force or the energy. They are inseparably connected. If you study psychology, you will find perhaps that the will-power is the result of the concentrated attention, or concentration. Some other psychologists would say that the concentrated attention or concentration is produced by the highly developed will-power. So they are looking at the same thing from two different standpoints. From one standpoint, we find that the will-power controls attention, and from another standpoint, we find that attention develops the will-power. But both are simultaneous and inter-related. The concentrated attention, or the one-pointed state of the mind, is the most important thing to have. But that state is not described very much in the modern psychology. The modern psychology tells us that our mind i.e. attention can be fixed on the one subject only for a very short time, and we cannot think of the one subject for more than a few seconds. That is true, because naturally our mind is restless. Our attention requires, therefore, a constant change. If you try to think of one object for a long time, you will be bored, your mind will become disgusted. Then you will want to have a change, and that wanting a change is exaggerated in the lives of those, who wish to have a constant change of amusement. Most of the fashionable people like to have a continuous change like a vaudeville performance. A vaudeville performance is a thing that attracts those minds, because they cannot fix their minds on one object. The moving picture-shows are attractive

to such minds. We also like to have a continuous change. Like attracts like, and the companies are trying to cater to the weakness of the human minds, and that is how they make their fortune. What we like most, is given to us, because they know our weakness. If you hold your mind on one object, they will give you a steady painting. In that way, you can study your own mind, by considering the different things that you are attracted to. The mind of a Yogi would never care for these continuously moving or changeable objects, because their mind is different. They have controlled that tendency. A great many people will not be able to read or study one particular subject every day. They would like to have a change. They would like something that is light and pleasant at the same time, and does not tax the attention very much.

In order to develop the power of the one-pointedness of our attention, we must practise every day. That is, ordinarily we cannot hold our mind on one object for any length of time, but through the practice (*abhyasa-yoga*), the power can be acquired. It can be developed to such an extent that we can shut off all other objects and all other vibrations of the senses which are constantly pouring into our brain through the gates of our senses. If the will-power is developed, the power of control will come. But it can be asked as to how is this power of control manifested. To this it can be said that it can be controlled by the ability to shut off these different vibrations and sensations that are constantly knocking at the door of our consciousness. Stop them, and let them remain down below the threshold of our consciousness. That is the will-power. That is the volitional effort. It is the effort of attention, governed by will-power. It will produce most marvellous effects.

Now, how can you discover the highest moral and spiritual laws, if you have not the concentrated or one-pointed state of the mind ? What is the nature of the soul ? What is the nature of our true being? Whether we shall exist after death or not? All these questions often rise in our minds. How can we solve these problems, except by concentrating and holding our minds on those questions or points, until we get the answer to them ? The ordinary scientists might tell you that by the vivisection, we can catch the soul, if there be any. We can weigh and measure it. But, to tell the truth, they have been trying for

years after years, but still they have not succeeded. Because it is the most imperceptible and invisible something. By dissecting the brain, you cannot find anything. You find only the instrument. No more than you can find music in a piano, when you take the instrument apart. Why is that? Because the music is not in the piano, but it is in the mind, or in the soul of the musician, whereas the piano is the instrument. The man who is dissecting the brain, is doing like taking apart any musical instrument, and when he does not find it, he says that there is no such thing as soul. But the one way, by which we can understand the nature of the soul, is by directing our attention, or our whole mental energy towards the mind. Ordinarily the mind is like the electric light, but when the mind is fixed and when all the mental energy is focussed in one direction, it becomes like a search-light. So we need a mental search-light, and this mental search-light is expressed by that term, *ekagra*, or one-pointed state of the mind. Focus it towards the one object, and let your whole energy go there. That will reveal those minute deals, connected with that object. There is no other way of learning anything about it.

Suppose you are using an instrument, and that instrument would require the same one-pointed state of your mind. If your mind is distracted, you cannot look through that instrument, say a microscope or a telescope. If you are constantly disturbed by these little thoughts and ideas that are surging up in your mind and attacking your consciousness, you will have to shut off all the sensation. That will require the development of the will-power and the concentrated attention. In one word, it is the one-pointed state of mind which is described by the Hindu psychologists as *ekagra*. That state of mind is the most valuable thing to have, because without it no knowledge can be acquired. So concentration is at the root of all knowledge.

What is a genius? A genius is one who has tremendous power of concentration. A genius can concentrate his mind so forcibly that he can go to the root of things, and can find out the minute details, and know them instantaneously. That power of concentration would make an ordinary mortal a genius. If a genius would lose the power of concentration, he would be regarded as an ordinary mortal of ordinary talent. He is no longer a genius, but may be an idiot. But, on the contrary, if

an idiot can develop that concentrated state of the mind through practice, he can hope to be counted among one of the best geniuses of the world. So wonderful is the power of concentration. By the power of concentration, we cannot only discover all the laws that govern the psysical world, but also all the laws that govern our mental world, our intellectual, moral and spiritual world. Buddha re-discovered this wonderful ethical law: "Hatred is never conquered by hatred, but by love". This is the ever-lasting ethical law. How did he discover that? Was there any outward sign in the external physical world? Nothing at all. But it is by the consideration of the finer forces of the nature, or finer forces of the mind, which are working in the form of hatred and love and also in the form of different emotions. So, if we practise the power of concentration, we shall be able to realize that one form of emotion can be overcome by another form of emotion. Through concentration or the concentrated mind, all the mysteries of the subjective and the objective mind can be exposed.

Christ discovered: "I and my Father are one", and the moral law: "Love thy neighbour as thyself". How could he discover that? You may say it is all by the revelation. Now what is revelation? Revelation does not come to one, unless one has that one-pointed state of the mind. The revelation is coming all the time to us, but who is going to catch it? The revelation is pouring all the time into each mind, but the mind is not able to receive it. It is dissipated for want of concentration of the mind. Make the receiver ready to receive that revelation. But how can you make it ready? You will be able to make it ready by stopping all the disturbing elements as well as by focussing and conserving your energy. So by conservation of energy we can keep our mind quiet and peaceful, and can realize the law what Christ realized, and did. Christ received the revelation. So you must go into silence, and if anything disturbs your mind, you must shut it off by your will-power, and then you will understand all the revelations, that Christ, Buddha, and other prophets received. Then the inspiration will come to you.

What do you mean by an inspiration? An inspiration is nothing but the disclosure of the higher self within us. That higher self cannot be realized in a disturbed state of the mind, when the attention is scattered. What would you do, if there

be fine music? You would say: "Listen, listen, there is some noise". You are putting your hand to your ear to catch the vibrations, so as to fix your attention. That is the way to catch the finer vibration. Why do you not do that to hear the voice of the Lord speaking constantly within you? That is what you have to do in silence. God is speaking all the time to the ears of your heart, but you are not ready to receive it. You do not care to hear it, because you are too busy. You say: "Let Him speak, we have other things to attend to. We have to go to the movies, and have some fun". That is the way you are living. Do you wonder why you have not realization here and why you have not learned anything that is worth-learning? But you are learning all this trash. What are you gaining? You might say that you are becoming smarter, and you are getting smarter every day. But that smartness would not be worth two cents, because you are neglecting the real thing which is beneficial to you all. Concentration will explain all the problems, and give you the right knowledge. You are neglecting that, and studying this trash, filling your minds with worthless things, which will produce no good, either here or hereafter. Therefore the Yogi says: "Make your mind one-pointed, through the practice, and then you will generate a mental search-light. Then whatever you wish to know, throw a flood of search-light towards that object, and everything will be revealed to you. All the higher spiritual laws, the relation of soul to God as well as to the universe, relation of your life to the universal life-force, and everything, will be known. There is no other method". The true psychologists of ancient India discovered these wonderful powers which are described in the Raja Yoga by Patanjali. The Yogis did use of them simply by the power of concentration, and they had no other instrument. All that they realized and discovered through the mental search-light, they developed through concentration.

Now the fifth state is that of the mind which is held under restraint, or absolute control by the will-power, and that state is *niruddha.* In this state, the avenues of the senses are completely closed, and nothing can get into the mind. It is possible to cut off the connections entirely in that state. The vibrations may be pouring into the brain, and sensations may be going in constantly, but they fail to attack the plane of the consciousness.

Everything is entirely cut off. The brain itself cannot do it, and that proves that the brain is not all in all. The brain does not produce the consciousness, the intelligence, the mind and the soul. The modern psychologists do not know it, because they do not go into that state. They would consider perhaps that this is an abnormal state, and so it would be considered as a disease. But why should it be considered as a disease? Why should not our normal state be a disease? Because there are so many people in the normal state. Well, in the lunatic asylums, there are a great many lunatics, and that would not prove that the lunatic state is normal. Imagine a city which is inhabited by the lunatics. Will that be the standard of a normal state? Not at all. Similarly this world is a lunatic asylum. People are crazy for clothes and wealth and for this and that. They never think of God ; they never think of anything else. They are just crazy. Go to the street, and look. It is so contagious that if we go and stand there for a while, we must be running too. Have you not noticed that if a man looks up in the street, everybody passing must do the same. We are just like a flock of sheep. We follow the sheep that goes first, and whatever he does, we like to do. That is the human nature. If one person were to stand on his head and say: 'this is the healthiest state, the perfect state ; I am getting all the wonderful powers by it', then everybody will try that. Because they have no discrimination (*viveka*). They cannot discriminate what is right. We have that same thing in India. The human mind is everywhere the same. A man will be hanging with his legs upward on the branch of a tree with his swinging head downward, and he says that he has attained to realization. He can control the blood circulation, and the blood will not run to his head. He can perform various miracles, and everybody looks at him. But probably he can do nothing what he is saying.

In that way, let us find our weakness. What we ordinarily call our normal state, is normal. Because we think so. But if we rise on a different plane and find handful of people there, that may yet be in a more normal state perhaps than those who are in a different state, in which the majority are thinking. Therefore the perfectly controlled state of the mind, which is the ideal state, can be acquired through the yogic practice (*sadhana*). This can be acquired, and it is possible for every

man. But all the disturbed conditions of our mind which are known as passions and desires, should be entirely controlled. We would remain like a witness (*sakshi*), and in that witness-like state, the true nature of our soul is revealed, and then it shines in its own glory. At all other times, there is the reflection of the mental conditions upon the soul or ego. The soul or ego may be compared to a pure white crystal ball. If we hold any flower or coloured substance near the crystal ball, the colour of the object will be reflected upon the ball. An ordinary mind may not be able to distinguish the real colour of the ball from the reflected colour, i.e., the colour which is reflected on account of the object, being near it. The only way that can be realized, is by separating the object and taking it away from the crystal. Then we can see the purely white colour which is the natural colour of the crystal. In the same way, we can know exactly what our true self is, by separting the mind substance which is continuously throwing the reflection of its various states of emotions, of sensations, of feelings, and of other mental conditions, upon the crystal ball of our true self. And for that reason the states of the mind are called the *vrittis*. At that state of perfect control of the mind, the true self dwells in its own glory (*'sve mahimni'*), and then we realize that our mind is only an instrument.

It has already been said before that mind is not the same as our true self. The mind which is constantly moving and changing and which has all these different functions, activities, and vibrations, is not our true self. Our mind is like the medium, through which the true self or intelligence of true self is permeating our whole being. That true self has presence, and, therefore, it is a part of the omnipresent. It has knowledge, therefore, it is a part of the ominiscient being. So our true self is one with God in quality, but, in quantity, it is a part. At present, we can only connect our true self (*jivatman*) with the universal self (*Paramatman*), in quality. It has the same all-knowing nature as God possesses. It has the same omnipresence. It has all the power and all intelligence. Therefore, in quality 'I and my Father are one'. I have made it clear to you how we are like Christ, and how we are in the same state already as Christ was when he said: 'I and my Father are one'. We are one with God in quality.

I have explained that our individual minds are only the parts of the universal or cosmic mind. The universal mind is like an eternal mental current, in which our individual minds are like the eddies. So we are connected with each individual mind through the cosmic mind, and that mind is one and universal in quality, but in quantity, is very small. Just as our body is one in quality with the cosmic body, but in quantity, it is infinitesimally small like a grain of the sand. The universal body is infinitely large. The same forces which are working in the universe, work in a miniature form in this human body. By the power of concentration, we can know all this. But the highest result which can be attained on the spiritual plane, is the attainment of the Godconsciousness. The Godconsciousness comes through concentration upon our true self, which is a part and parcel of the universal Being. The universal Being is eternal, birthless and deathless.

So our study of the True psychology will produce the highest benefit in us, when we have attained to that realization of our absolute oneness with the universal Being, and when we have made our body and mind like the streams, through which the universal Being and the Infinite will be working all the time, without having any attachment to the psysical conditions, and without any sorrow, suffering, and disease, but all the time enjoying the divine glory of peace and everlasting happiness.

CHAPTER VI

INDIVIDUALITY AND PERSONALITY

The words 'personality' and 'individuality' have been used indiscriminately by different thinkers, without defining the distinction that exists between them. Even among the writers of the higher thought and even among the philosophers, we will find that the word 'personality' has been used in the sense of individuality, and the word 'individuality' in the sense of personality. Often I have heard qustions like: 'Shall we lose our individuality ? Shall we lose our personality ?" All such questions disturb our minds, and we try to find out exactly whether we shall continue to exist as persons, or as individuals, because we take a great deal of interest in ourselves.

It should be remembered that the love of self is at the root of all. Everything that we do, we do on account of love for ourselves,[1] and that self-love is at the very foundation of our existence, and we cannot help it. We do not wish to be lost or lose anything that we possess. The feeling of possession is very strong in us.

The personality of an individual is an idea or a concept which is very difficult to describe. We may think that it is very easy to think of ourselves, but when we try to analyse ourselves, or try to find out who we are in reality, we will discover that we are in a sea of troubles. We have this body, the senses, the mind, the mental functions, the intellect, the intellectual powers, the reasoning, the emotions and the feelings. All these we have, and call ourselves as Mr. So-and-so, or Mrs. So-and-so, or Miss So-and-so, but we never go to the bottom of these things, which I have just described to find out who we are in reality, and where our this personality lies? When we say that we are persons, what do we mean by that? Do we mean that we have the bodies, or the material possessions, or the feelings, or the sensations, or the perceptions, or ideas, or the thoughts, or our particular characteristics, or the talents? What do we

[1] In the *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad* it has been said that as the *Atman* is at the root of everything, so we love everything.

mean? We just try to find out what we mean by Mr. or Mrs. So-and-so.

What do we refer to the idea of our personality? Do we refer to our personality of this very moment, or of yesterday, or of our childhood, or of our youth, or of what we will be tomorrow? What is our idea about it? We will find that it is very difficult for us to explain we mean by our personality. But when we think about it and try to find the proper description of personality of ourselves, we find that our personality is double. It is of two kinds of things or idea that we have in ourselves. The one is *me* and the other is *I*. Now these two terms we often use, but we do not distinguish the difference between them. The words *me* and *I* make up our personality. The *me* refers to something that is objective and that I know, and *I* refers to something that knows. So *me* and *I*, in reality, are partially the object and partially the subject. And the combination of these two makes up our personality.[1]

Now that *me*, which is the object of our consciousness or knowledge, consists of different things. It has material constituents or elements, and it has social elements. It has spiritual and moral elements, and so on. When we analyse our sense of *me*, we find that first of all we have the body. That is the material element, known as the gross physical body, and we call or identify ourselves as one with the body. Then we think that we are inseparable from the body, and that becomes the whole of me. Then next to that will come the family, the relatives, the home and everything we possess. The old saying: "the soul, body and clothes" is not merely a joke we know, because many people would rather think more of their clothes than of their body. They would rather have an ugly body and fine clothes than a fine body and ugly clothes. Which would most people prefer to have, either an ugly body and fine clothes, or a fine body and shabby clothes? Very few would prefer shabby clothes with a fine body. That is true here, because we like to look everything beautiful. The love of self is at the root again. But that love of self has become identified with the

[1] According to Hegel an individuality is the 'false self' whereas the personality is the 'true self'. He says that the individuality separates us, while, the personality unites us. Sri Ramakrishna called the 'false self' as the *kancha ami* (petty self) and the 'true self' as the *paka ami* (higher self).

physical body. It goes outside of the body to the clothes, to the things that we possess, and to the furniture, wealth, bank account and everything. Then we love not only ourselves, but those who are related to us, and that becomes also a part of our personality. The father, mother, wife, husband, and brothers and sisters, all these become a part of our personality. We do not like to lose any one of them. We do not like to see any one of our relatives or friends, injured or hurt, or in any way displeased. We try to feel ourselves in perfect harmony with all of them, and then we are in a way contented and satisfied.

There is another personality which refers to the social side —our social position and honour. The recognition by others of our own kind in the society, where we live, is another kind of the expansion of our personality. That is, in the society where we live, we care a great deal for their opinion. If we belong to any club, we care more for the club opinion than for the opinion of our home or relatives, because that brings out some phase in ourselves and a kind of pride, or conceit, or egotism, or something of self-love that brings out a certain feeling in us, which must be gratified, and in social life we win it. We know that a thief will never steal from a thief. That is his honour. A gambler would first of all rather pay off gambling debts than other debts. It is a point of honour, because his social *me* is very strong there. In this way, in every avocation of life, we will find this is so, that is, the people who belong to the same profession, or hold the same position, or belong to the same society, are considered first. That is the social *me* in ourselves, and that is the social side of our personal life.

Then there is spiritual side. When we go to church, we have our spiritual self very prominent. And that is our spiritual *me*. That is our whole being, as it were, which includes all our powers, our characteristics, our intellectual and moral faculties, our spiritual ideals, our conceptions of God, and our conception of the future. And all these make up our spiritual *I* or *me*, and that is our spiritual personality. We may expect certain things after death, for instance, going to heaven. We have that idea. So we want to avoid some torture or punishment which is allotted to the wicked ones. We try to be free from all discomfort, or unhappiness, which might come to us,

and we seek all the pleasure which the celestial beings are enjoying. These are our conceptions and ideals which we have in our mind, because we cannot separate ourselves from those ideas. They have become a part of ourselves, and that is our spiritual self.

Now, when we analyse in this way, we will find that the personality of ourself, which we are now conscious of, is the sum total of all these feelings, thoughts, passions, desires, and everything, that come up in our conscious being. Then again if we go deeper and try to compare the personality of today with that of yesterday and also with that which we had ten years ago, we will find that it has gone through a great many changes. In every minute detail, we find that everything has changed. Our ideas have changed, and our feelings have also changed. We do not perhaps feel the same way, as we did ten years ago. We do not have the same conception of the outside world. In this way, we have gone through all the minute changes.

We are, in fact, changing every minute. Our body is changing, and every seventh year, we have new particles, and new matter in our bodies. In fact, the physical particles are entirely renewed. We have not the same brain, which we had ten years ago. We have not the same eyes and other sense organs, as we had when we were younger. This is a fact, and we cannot deny it. Still when we call ourselves *person* or *I* or *me,* and we do not recognize those changes. The personality of today will not be the same personality of tomorrow, or of the next year. It will be changed entirely. It will be a different thing altogether. We would not have the same body ; we would not have the same sense faculties and the brain powers. They will be all growing bigger and wider perhaps, or growing less. But some kind of change will take place. And this is our personality. If we analyse that, we will find that there is a cotinuous and constant change in ourselves. In fact, we are like an atom of the matter, the every particle of which is revolving around its axis, or in one centre, which is positive, and that centre exits in each one of us.

Now we would realize that if we have noticed our own body through X-rays, we must have discovered that our body is nothing but a mass of the most fine particles of the matter, and that is covering the outlines of the structure of our body. Every

second it is going through a tremendous change, and the constant influx and reflux of the finer particles of the matter make up the wherewithal of our physical form. Every time we get a sensation, and that sensation may be little different from the sensation which we had before. Then our sensations will be the foundation of our percepts and concepts,—thoughts and ideas. Our intellect has changed, and our thoughts have also changed, but at the same time we do not recognize these changes. Because we have a sense of personal identity, and so we think that we are the same one.

What is inherent or imbeded in us that brings out that sense of identity that I am the same one who lectured here yesterday or last year and that you are the same ones who heard me yesterday and are hearing me now ? What makes that feeling of sameness? That has ever been the great compelling question in the minds of all the great thinkers of the world. But how difficult it is to describe that source from which we get that idea of sameness that I was the same one who went to the schools and played with the playmates and went through all kinds of experiences. We have a phase of the memory, and that brings up the faculty of recollecting our impressions of the past. Of course, our life depends a great deal upon our memory. But is the memory all in all ? Do you think that our whole life, or the personality, or the identity, depends entirely upon the memory? No ; because the memory might be very poor in some cases, and it is subject to change.

There is also an alteration of the memory. Sometimes we will find the abnormal cases, where memory becomes very weak, and the personality of today might not remember exactly the experiences and sensations and perceptions of heat and cold which that individual had perhaps a few years before. That will make the alteration of the memory, but at the same time the individual is conscious of the changes that he is going through, and that consciousness is not changed. That is, the conscious *'I'* is the same, which is stringing together these various experiences and thoughts and ideas, although the power of the memory might be weak.

Now each individual is a bundle of sensations, or thoughts, or ideas. The bundle of sensations, or thoughts, or ideas may be regarded as a stream of the continuous states or units, one

following the other. Just as in a river, for instance, we see a continuous flow of water, and if we look at one point in that stream, we see the water is there, but the same particle of water that we saw just a minute ago or half a second ago, is gone and its place is taken by another drop of water. Thus we see that it is constantly changing, but the unchangeable stream is there. That idea has been taken up by the modern psychologists who do not believe in the existence of a soul as an entity, distinct from these various functions of the mind. That idea was very strong among some of the Buddhist thinkers,[1] and the Buddhist philosophy which denies the existence of an individual entity, as distinct from the changeable phenomena of the mind, intellect, and the physical body. They have regarded that there is a stream of consciousness, in which one particular unit of consciousness, or sensation, or feeling, is always influx, and they explain the personal identity, by saying that it is a matter of quantity. A certain state of consciousness is changed into another state, but a portion of it is left, which is carried on and a portion is eliminated, but the continuity is kept up, and it is a matter of quantity. But, at the same time, they do not search further to go beyond this changeable mental state.

David Hume denies the existence of a soul or an ego as a separate entity. He says: "When I enter most intimately into what I call myself, I always stumble on some particular perception or other of heat or cold, light or shade, love or hatred, pain or pleasure. When my perceptions are removed for any time, as by sound sleep, so long I am insensible of myself and may be truly said not to exist. Were all my perceptions removed by death and I could neither think, nor feel, nor see, nor love, nor hate, after the dissolution of my body. I should be entirely annihilated; nor do I see what is further required to make me a perfect non-entity". Now, Hume carries his psychology and philosophy to absolute nihilism.[2] According to him, nothing exists but a bundle of ideas or impressions that are held together by some mysterious force, and there is left nothing else. It is Kant, who afterwards had made a revival

[1] These are the *kshanika-vijnanavadin Buddhists* who say that everything in this universe is momentary.

[2] Cf. (a) Swami Abhedananda: *Life Beyond Death*, p. 17. (b) Prof. Lindsay: *Kant*, pp. 106, 109-110.

of the true philosophy from another viewpoint, because Hume had killed all psychology, by saying there is no constant and permanent thing in experience. Now it seems that the ideas or sensations, according to Hume, are like the floating clouds. As the clouds float in the eternal voids one after another, so the bundles of sensations pass like fluxes, said Hume. But where are they passing and who is conscious of them, Hume did not go deep enough to explain that.

The modern psychologists would say that the thoughts and the thinkers are one, and thoughts are conscious of themselves. There is no necessity of believing in something beyond themselves,—the something that feels, the something that perceives. In fact, the modern psychologists consider the thinker, knower and perceiver as one with the thoughts. They say that the thoughts are conscious of themselves. But that is not true. The German philosopher Fichte once said somewhere in his philosophy that thoughts are the products of the thinking, and there must be a thinking principle which thinks, and the product of thinking is a thought, and you become conscious of this thought. So, when you analyse very deeply and minutely your own being, there you will find that you are looking at your thought, as it were, as you would look at any external object. You can separate yourself from the thought. You are outside of your thought. Thought is just like a photograph or an image that has come to your mind, and that thought is an object of your consciousness. It is not true that thought is conscious of itself, but you are conscious of the thought, and that thought might pass away and another thought might take its place, and you are just like a by-stander. You are looking at it, as it comes, and you know, as it goes, and you know also, when another thought comes and takes its place. That phenomenon or process we cannot deny. The more we go deep into our own beings, the more we find that there is something which is not empirical ego or *'me'*, but that is a pure ego which is *'I'*, and there is also a relation between the empirical ego and the pure ego,—between the *jivatman* and the *Paramatman*.

That is the phenomenon which we cannot also deny. The pure ego is that which knows and thinks. This pure ego, when it is clothed by the thoughts and the thinking powers of the mind, becomes a thinker. When it is clothed with the garments

of the ideas, emotions, and feelings, it becomes a feeler. When it is clothed with the garment of the sense powers and is connected with this power of perceiving, it becomes a perceiver. When it is connected with the power of hearing, it becomes a hearer. When it is connected or identified with the power of smelling, then it smells. Now, you see that your innermost core is behind of everything, and there is something as a medium in you, which is finer matter in vibration. You may call those finer particles of matter as the electrons, or the proto-electrons, which are always in vibration, but in the Hindu philosophy, it is called the finer ethereal particles (*sukshma-bhuta* as the *vayu* or *akasa-tanmatra*). These finer particles of matter are transparent. They are not so gross as the external particles of matter of the outside world, and so they are finer and transparent. Those finer particles of matter are vibrating with a tremendous speed. We all know that among our perceptions, we can hear an audible sound, when a vibration of air is 32,000 in a second. We cannot hear the vibration which is beyond 32,000 per second, or nearly 40,000. That would be the range of our perception of the sound. There is a range of our perception of the smell, of the feeling, and of the touch. So you see that we can get sensations within that range. But there might be other sounds which are lower in vibration, or higher in vibration, and we cannot hear them. Our senses do not reveal those things which are lower or higher. As Prof. Huxley once said that when a rose-bud blossoms, it makes a noise which would be as loud as the firing of a cannon-ball. But we do not hear it. We have not the power to hear it. Some day we may invent a certain kind of instrument which would reveal to us the imperceptible sounds which are below the range of our perception. What does that show? That shows that there are manifestations of the finer objects of sensation, which we cannot know at present. Voltaire said once that if we had a thousand senses, instead of five, we would see the world in a different light. It would not be the same world to us, as we have it now.

These are the limitations, and within these limitations we are working. We do not feel at present those limitations, because we are too busy with our self-interest. The self-interest is working in a very narrow circle, pertaining to our body. The

self-interest is involved with an ego-centric idea. It can be said to be our little home life, or social life, which is infinitesimally small, compared to this infinite universe. There we are like the little worms in a mud puddle. That is our conception of life. But the greater conception of life we have ignored. How can we find the greater conception ? We can find the greater conception by analysing our personality in relation to self-interest as well as to the external objects of our sense perception. We must go deeper and deeper, and go to the bottom of the things and also to the finer objects, which we do not perceive now, and which we do not think of now. Then we will have a different idea of our personality.

Now, this stream of consciousness, each unit of which is within time and space, is continually flowing or changing. But each is specialized, just as our own personality. When we feel a pain, that pain is not merely a sensation which is floating in the mental space, but it is our pain. It is a not the pain of anyone else. And there is a difference. My feeling is my own feeling, and it is specialized in relation to me. But what makes that feeling as my feeling ? Because it is related to something which is *'I'*, the knower and the subject, and which feels, and that subject is not the effect of that feeling. When we look at a chair, the chair is the object of our sight. We cannot be the same as the chair. All mental ideas are the objects of our knowledge or consciousness, and if we can distinguish the subject from the object, we will have a greater knowledge, not only of our personality, but also of our individuality. So our personality depends upon the egohood, or upon the senses of *'I'* and *'me'*, which are duplex, very complicated, and interwoven with one another. We cannot separate the sense of *'I'* from the sense of *'me'*, and that is our personality. There is something like the string in a garland, or in a necklace of pearls. The little pearls may be compared to our states of consciousness, or units of sensation, and there is a string that goes through each one of them, and holds them together, and makes a beautiful necklace.[1] That string is not visible from outside.

[1] Sri Krishna has given this idea in the *Gita*. He says: *"mayi sarvamidam protam sutre manigana iva"* (7. 7). That is, as a thread is interwoven with all the pearls in a necklace, so the *Atman* is interlinked with all the objects of the universe.

If I hold a necklace in front of you, all the pearls will appear as strung together. There might be a single thread inside, but we do not see it. If we want to see that chain, we will have to go inside the pearls to that golden thread that links them together. Ordinary people, whether they are the philosophers or the psychologists, do not go deep enough to find out that unifying thread. They are satisfied with the states of consciousness like feelings, sensations, percepts, concepts, and ideas, each one of which is changing and is not the same, which it was a minute ago. But it is that string of our own self or individuality, which holds them together, and makes them a complete whole. There is that string of our own individuality which is not a thought, not a function of the mind, not a function of our intellect, not a sensation, not a percept, or a concept, but which is the unifying element of all, and which makes each one of them related to us.

It should be remembered that, that is our individuality which forms the background of the personality. That individuality does not change[1]. So, in ourselves, we will find something that does not change in the midst of all changes. It is our pure self or pure ego. It is the source of the shining consciousness. It is the substratum of all the states of consciousness. The consciousness is a relative state.[2] It is a state, in which the subject and the object of knowledge are related. That object of knowledge may be a chair, may be a table, or a flower or a feeling of chill or cold, or a feeling of warmth or an idea or an image which we have made either by reading a book, or by hearing a sentence of the book, or by any mental image in our mind. That might be the object of our knowledge as well as of our relation to that object. In other words, the relation between the object and the subject would make that state of consciousness. But that which is conscious of these things, is not the same as the object of consciousness. We shall have to realize that, and then we shall be able to discriminate aright, and can

[1] This individuality is the unchangeable existence of the *Atman* of the Vedanta. The personality may vary, and may be manifold, but the individuality never changes, and it shines as one without the second.

[2] Here consciousness means the modal consciousness (*vritti*), and, therefore, it has different grades or states. But the consciousness as the ground or sub-stratum of all the states of consciousness is the pure consciousness which is known in the *Upanishad* the *suddha-jnana* or *vijnana*.

go to our innermost being and find out our individuality. The individuality refers to that greater self within us, and it is the *Atman.* The *Atman* does not change, as it is one without the second.

The word 'individual' literally means 'that which is indivisible, or that which cannot be divided'. We cannot divide our consciousness, because that is our being, existence, and the sense of *'I'*. We cannot find any break or a separation from it. We cannot do that, because it is a continuous state like the ether. The ether is like a gelatinous substance. There is no space between the particles of the ether. It is like an one undivided mass. So we cannot divide, or cut it, or make a gap in it. It is the same case with our individuality. We cannot make a gap in our individuality or self. Our memory might fail, we may have the double, triple, or quadruple personality, as there have been cases, but we cannot divide our pure self which is the *Atman,* or the Brahman. In the case of insane persons, there might be a delusion. One might think of himself as Nepoleon, and forget his birth and everything, related to his physical conditions and earthly life, and he is just overwhelmed with the idea that he is a Napoleon. He takes a false premise, and then thinks of himself as one with it. In that self-delusion, he is conscious of himself on that one plane, hence it is a self-hypnotized idea. That self-hypnotism is possible. In the case of the mediums, there are changes of memory and personality. The one medium might be possessed by self-hypnotism, auto-suggestion or some discarnate spirit influence. In that case, that medium might not remember exactly in the state of trance what he was before, or what his normal life was, but even in his trance condition, his individuality is at work, when he knows what he is doing or thinking even in his trance-like condition and conscious of himself as Mr. So-and-so, or as an angel, or as Napoleon. That, source of consciousness is there behind that delusion, and that makes the delusion a reality.

What makes our dream a reality, when we are dreaming ? The sense of *'I'*, or the source of consciousness that makes us related to that dream-like state, because that sense of *'I'*, or the source of consciousness, is real. Everything that is connected with it for the time being, appears as real. It catches the

reflection (*pratibhasa*) of reality. So we delude ourselves by thinking it permanent, and it will always remain like that. In fact, we cannot think of ourselves as broken up, or as going to be a non-entity, or destroyed. As for example, we try to think ourselves as dead. We can never do that. When we try to think of ourselves as dead, we will have the mental picture of a dead body—something like ourselves, as we have seen in the mirror and we are looking at it. We are there, but we are not dead. Our body is dead, and we are looking at it. How can we think of ourselves as dead ? That is one of the strongest proofs of our immortal nature. Try to think of ourselves as going into nothingness. We cannot. It would be impossible. Our very consciousness will not permit it to think of ourselves as a non-entity. So that indivisible reality which is the background of personality, is the real self in us.

Let me give another illustration. Suppose we are looking at a beautiful portrait, painted on a canvas. The portrait, which is very beautiful, is the outside appearance, and that is outside me. But the canvas is a background upon which the portrait stands. If we take away that canvas, the portrait is gone. So, like the canvas, our individuality is the background, upon which the portrait of our personality is resting for the time being, but that personality will also change, as it is changing now constantly. We cannot hold on to any personality for ever, because we are in the course of the stream. It is constantly going. We will have to let it go, as we cannot stop it. When we are thinking of our personality, we should remember that we are the real individual, who has to watch the personality, just as we impersonate on the dramatic stage.

The word 'personality' is derived from Latin *persona,* which means 'mask'. When the true ego or the self puts on the mask of a particular person, which is related to a particular body and sense powers, with a language, with nationality, and with all the relation, in connection with the home life and parents and so on, then all these make up our personality. But our individuality is more lasting. It is immortally related, while our personality is a changeable something. So, at the time of death what happens ? We throw off a portion of our personality. We leave a portion of our personality here, and that is the physical body, which goes, and is destroyed. Our

personality splits. We leave a portion here with all its relations, and we take another portion of our personality, the ideas, thoughts, sensations, feelings, emotions, and the experience, which we have gathered during our lifetime. It is a part of our personality, and we take that with us. The individuality is the background of that too. We carry that with our character, sensations, thoughts, and ideas. They go with our subtle body. Our physical body remains here, and our subtle body goes with us after death. It may go to this planet, or to another planet, to the plane of consciousness, but it can never be lost. It will continue to roll on and on for ever, but it is subject to change.

By 'change' I mean what is subject to growth, progress and evolution. That personality may come back again in another form on this plane. Then our personality will also be different. When we talk about the reincarnation, the personality of that individual who is reincarnated, cannot be the same. Because it is subject to change, but the constituent elements of the personality re-embody themselves as a human being. The ego is there, and the powers of perception are also there. Our memory might have its limitations. We might not remember all the things that we experienced in our previous lives. But we cannot have the same personality, because our present personality is related to our birth, limitations of time, space, home-life, and nationality. It would not be the same personality, but it would be the same individuality, as the individuality does not change. It has already been said that we can lose our personality, we can split it up, and we may have two, three, or four personalities. A girl had four personalities, that is, in each state she would be a different person, and she would remember nothing of her previous state. Another state of personality will come, and she will remember nothing of what happened in her previous personality. But there will be a continuous thread between the successive stages of the first personality and the successive stages of the second personality, and so on. But there would be a link or connection, and that is very peculiar. But it is the individuality which strings together these thought bodies. We may form a thought body of our own. In the abnormal cases, some maniacs create a thought body of their own, and become identified with it. They

cannot separate themselves from it. Then, perhaps through the hypnotism or some other treatment that thought body can be awakened, and the maniac would no longer be a maniac. It is a strong auto-suggestion that he has got, and he has felt himself hypnotized. We are hypnotized by this idea of our own personality, and we need a dehypnotization, and that will make us realize our individual pure self which is glorious, immortal, and not a part of the changeable states of the mind and the body.

The individuality is the greater self. The 'greater self' means the self of the universe, or the cosmic ego. I will give you an illustration of a leaf of a tree. Suppose the leaf which is on a tiny little branch, has a personality. In fact, each leaf has a personality, and each leaf is not conscious of the personality of other leaves. This personality is sustained by the sap of the tree which goes to each other. That sap may be a greater race soul, or the race individuality. Then one race might be like the one branch, and there may be the other branches. So a race individual or the great individual of a race would be like the soul of the one branch. There would be the other branches, and all these branches have come out from the common trunk. That common trunk is like the Absolute which contains all, and our national or racial self will be like the one branch. But we must not think which is all in all. Just as some people might think that their own individuality is all in all, without recognizing those of the others. It is not the ego, or the sense of *'I'*, which is our individuality. That is a function. It rises in our mind, just like a bubble. It is not coming up. The sense of *'I'* is constantly beating like the tuning fork. It has produced that sound, the *I, I, I,* but when you go to a greater individuality, there is no sense of *'I'* or *'me'*. The greater individuality never says *'I'*, as it is the source on the fountainhead. But it has no sense of the function of *'I'*. It is all-knowledge and all-intelligence. It is all-happiness and all-existence. It does not require to know anything, because it is all-knowledge. God is all-knowledge, being an ocean of knowledge and intelligence. He is the source of consciousness, life and happiness. All these are the categories. and all these categories are there. But the ego which is the apparent man, should be distinguished from the real self, the *Atman.*

The apparent self (*jivatman*) gets its happiness and knowledge, as reflected from the source of all-knowledge and all-happiness. Remember that whenever we get happiness in our life, we do not get it from the object outside of our self, but we get the happiness in a state, when our desire is gratified and the mind is peaceful and transparent, so that the reflection of happiness which is in our individuality, may come upon ourselves, and we get it, and enjoy it.

If we can hold our mind in an undisturbed state all the time, we will always be happy. That is the secret of happiness. But, with all these things running around, we will never be happy, because our mind will be muddled and agitated. But if we let that divine light of knowledge and happiness be shine upon our ego, we will find there a blissful state. Then we will forget our personality, and we will transcend it.

This personality may be regarded as Jesus, and again this individuality may be regarded as Christ. Now, the Christ-individuality lies in each one of us. It is a part of the greater *'I'*. Our individual ego is trying to trace the source of its consciousness and existence, just as a leaf is trying to find out how its particular personality has come to it. It may think: 'I have no relation to the tree and to the other branches', but when it wakes up ond begins to search within, it finds that the sap which is coming to it, is coming from the same source, from which the sap of the other leaves is going. Each one has a channel. Then it begins to see this relation to the other leaves and branches, and it cannot ignore their existence. On the contrary, it feels oneness.

Think our self as a leaf. We cannot feel oneness outwardly with the leaf, as outwardly each leaf is different from one another and also from us. In time and space, each leaf has its distinct body. But if we go to the innermost being and to the source of our sap which nourishes us and the leaves, we will find there the oneness. The same sap which nourishes us, is nourishing you and is nourishing all, but we do not see it. There may be a change of colour, of expression, of language, of habits, of manners and customs, but they do not affect the individual. Now I am speaking to you in English, and now English has become like my mother tongue. Today I have a new personality, which is entirely different from what I

had, when I was in India. I did not speak the same language, wear the same clothes, have the same surroundings, and did not have any relation to any of these places or things, in which I am interested now. So, if we have a summer and a winter home and a villa in Italy, we are in three personalities. Suppose we are speaking Italian or French. We have a chateau in France somewhere and is speaking French, mixing with the French people, and there we have a different personality. The individual may manipulate the manifold personalities. We may manipulate three personalities in three different times. That is, we may manipulate one personality here, another in our office, and another in our home. We do that all the time, only unconsciously. Now, how do we manipulate our personality, when we are walking along the street? How do we manage? We are regulating the muscles of our feet and looking out for automobiles, so that might not be run over, and at the same time continue our sight-seeing. Then we meet a friend. All these things we do. But we have only one mind which does all these. Each is connected with a portion of our separate personality, and we are the sum total of all. But we must not forget that as we are a person so others are in the same way. He cannot know any other, unless we know ourselves. We cannot enter into your feelings, nor I into yours. We infer from our own feeling what kind of feeling I would have by my expression, words, and motions of the limbs, or by different organic functions. But when we go to the source or the individuality which is unchangeable, birthless, and deathless, we find the one source of all, and we may call it the Spirit. We may call it by any name we like, but we can never know it, unless we know the background of our personality. The personality is a compound one, while our individuality is the simplest thing in the universe. It is the knower. There is only one knower, and that knower is a part of the universal knower, which is God. Our own true self by its birthright is the part and parcel of the immortal infinite Being. Therefore, we cannot die, and we should not also be afraid of death. The fear of death is also a state of the consciousness. Again we should not be elated, when anybody praises us. We should not also be attached to our costly clothes or furniture. Because that is a bondage and that bondage will hold us down to this

material plane and make us unhappy. Every act of bondage also makes us slaves, and in that state of slavery, we forget our real individuality which is always free and immortal. And that freedom and immortality are our birthright but we do not know how to enjoy them. And so we are playing the part of a fool. We have rather hypnotized ourselves, and so we need someone to awaken and dehypnotize us, and help us in rising above this state of self-delusion. And really we are seeking that. But remember that as soon as we have begun to seek that, we have made a great progress; and that is the search after freedom, or the desire to be free and immortal, or the desire to get over the struggles. Gradually we gain our experience and restore the consciousness of freedom. Now that is time to go back on our return journey towards the very core of our Being, the heart of our hearts, the soul of our souls, the life of our life. And that eternal Being, or the eternal Knower, is the real individual.

So when we understand the difference between the personality and the individuality, we know that the personality is changeable and we are the real individual. We also know that we can never lose our individuality, no matter where we go. When Christ realized his individuality, as one with his Father in Heaven, he did not lose his individuality, but he became conscious of his greater individuality in the Father as the immortal Being. He became conscious of his infinite and immortal individuality. So we are also marching onward towards that goal, and we cannot stop until it is reached, until we have become one with that infinite Being.

CHAPTER VII

THE STATES OF EXISTENCE

Our whole life depends upon our individuality which is no other than the true or absolute Reality, and our personality is like the apparent reality. The individuality is our true self. When we think of ourselves and see things around us, we always have this feelings that we exist and the things around us also exist. When we see a chair, the chair seems to be in a definite place, and we have the feeling that it exists. The chair is not only a piece of wood, but it is bent in its shape, and there is a feeling of an existence of the chair. Now what do we mean by that existence ? What is the real existence of the chair, or of the flower, or of anything that we see with our eyes ? What is the real existence of a sound, which we hear with our ears ? All these things are like different conditions of the existence.

Now if we analyse our perception of the chair, we shall find that the chair exists so long, as there is the name and the form of the chair. Take away the name and the form of the chair, it will turn into a common wood. Take away the name and the form of the wood, there will remain nothing but the atoms and the molecules. Take away the names and the forms of the atoms and the molecules, there will remain what has produced the atoms and the molecules. So you see that which has produced the atoms and the molecules, exists just in the same way as the chair exists, but apparently they are two different things.

Again take a pot made of earth, or an ornament made of gold. When we think of a golden bracelet, we think of its name and form. But that is not as real as gold itself, because we can break the bracelet, but we cannot break the gold. When we break it, its form is gone, and, consequently, its name is gone too. But the reality that underlies the bracelet, is the gold, and that gold will remain. In the same way, if we analyse the chair, we will find that what has produced the atoms and

the molecules of the chair, is like the gold. The wood holds the same relation to the chair, as the gold is in relation to the bracelet. When we understand this, we go down to the reality of all things. The chair, outside of its name and form, produced the feeling of existence in us. The flower, outside of its name and form, produced also a feeling of existence in us. So everything that we perceive with our senses, has a close connection with the existence.

Now this existence should be known i.e. it should be known what it is and whether it changes or not. It is a fact that everything in this universe seems to change, but the feeling of existence does not change. As for example, when the chair is destroyed, the feeling of existence would remain with other chairs and other things, and at the same time, it will remain with the nameless and formless chair which is wood. It will remain with the particles of the atoms and the molecules, or with that which produces the atoms and the molecules. So, when we understand so clearly as to realize that existence is universal, we will be able to analyse everything of this universe and reduce it to its primordial state which is the existence. And when that existence is universal, it cannot be more than one. And then it is the only existence.

The existence which is in the chair, is also in the table. Take away the name and the form of the table, and take away the name and the form of the chair. The existence in these two objects is the same. Similarly, we can connect that existence with a book, with a tree, with an animal, with our human body, and we will see that only the manifestation of the existence is in various names and forms. So we come to the point of the one existence in reality, which appears through different names and forms. That is the whole condition of this phenomenal world. The whole universe, the sun, the moon, the stars, and the planets, and all that exist on this earth and all that we perceive with our senses, have the one source of existence plus their individual names and forms, which are produced by the combination of the atoms and the molecules and different forces of the nature.

We may consider this existence as universal like the vast ocean. In this ocean of existence, the sun, the moon, the stars,

and the planets are like so many waves or bubbles, which are constantly rising and going down. And that will give us an idea of the unity in the variety of the phenomenal appearances.

Now, we understand the meaning of the appearance. When this existence works within the limitations of time and space, it becomes an appearance of that existence. A chair exists in time and space, a table exists in time and space, a book exists in time and space, and everything of the universe also exists in time and space. So we shall have to understand that form means an extension in space, and time refers to its birth and death. The chair had its birth and death. When the carpenter formed a mental image of the chair, that was the beginning of the chair in the mental plane. Then afterwards he projected his mental image outside on the material of wood, and then he gave the shape of the chair. Then there happened the birth of the chair. Now everything that has birth, must go through the changes of decay, and, eventually, everything must die. Our body had its birth, and, therefore, it is subject to growth, and gradually it will decay and die. So everything that is apparent, is subject to change. Of course, the particles of the matter are constantly changing and moving. There is the vibration or motion in every particle of the matter, and we cannot see the same thing twice in the same way. We may think that we see the same sun, and the same sun rises day after day, but when we study the conditions, under which these phenomena are appearing, we will notice that constant change is going on everywhere in everything. Our eye-balls are changing, our brain-cells are changing, and the vibrations of ether are also changing. The sun itself is changing, and in some day or other we will see the death or decay of the sun. Science also says that there are many dead suns in the sphere of the limitless sky, the present sun will die one day, and the future suns are in making in the nebula. In the midst of these changes, it apparently seems that there is nothing permanent, and we are also watching these constant changes. Thus apparently we delude ourselves by thinking that we see the same thing day after day; but really we do not. We do not see the same face twice in the same way, because the face is changing constantly. We do not bathe twice in the same river water as the water of the river passes constantly. So everything

of the universe is changing always. And we are all also subject to growth and change all the time.

But in the midst of all these changes, the only thing that does not change, is the existence. Try to understand it. And if you try to sincerely understand it, you will know that this existence is the truth and is also the reality. The existence is called in Sanskrit *sat* i.e. that which *is*. It can never change. It may appear through the name and the form, but, in reality, it is beyond time and space. It is unchangeable. It is the Absolute or absolute Existence. I have already described it as the ocean of Reality. It is the eternal substance, and in it everything exists. Out of it, everything comes, and everything goes back into it at the time of dissolution, says the *Upanishad*. It is called, in Sanskrit, the Brahman. The Brahman is the absolute Reality as well as the absolute Existence of the universe. The Brahman is one without a second: *ekamevadvitiyam*. You may think that there are many things, but the underlying current of the existence permeates through the atoms and the molecules of every name and form of the thing which we perceive with our senses. This will give us an idea that the same existence, which is in the sun, is in the most remote stars, in the planets, in the nebulous mass and in everywhere. There the whole universe is like a painting upon the canvas of the eternal Existence. It has no change, and anything that has taken a form, exists. It draws its existence from that ocean of existence, and appears as the individualized existent object. Then it dissolves again, ond goes back to its primordial state. For instance, the electrons are the finer particles of the matter, and when they come together by the force of attraction, they produce the atoms. The atoms again produce the molecules, and the molecules produce the elements of nature, and, again when the elements of nature come together, they produce everything that we perceive with our senses.

The food or any kind of vegetable product, that we eat, is nothing but the combination of the atoms and the molecules. We say that the potato exists, any other vegetable exists, the meat exists, the particular dishes like soup or anything else exist, the fruit exists, the nuts exist, and all the existing things we put into our system also exist, then we think that we have eaten, and have a particular feeling that we have gratified our

appetite, and thus we feel satisfied and happy. Now, what is happening inside ? It happens so that it goes through a chemical change, and, in course of time, this food-stuff that has entered into our system, is transmuted into the blood and into different elements that make up our physical form. It produces the nervous energy, and sustains our brain cells. It has all been transmuted into these different things. It has gone through a radical change. Our body is also made up of these changes. Every time we are gathering from outside the new particles of matter, and replenishing the waste matter that is thrown out of the system. So this continuous influx and efflux of the finer particles of matter make up our physical form, and that is just like an eddy in the ocean of ether. If we can imagine our body, just like a whirlpool in the ocean of the ether, then that would be a good illustration. It is constantly revolving round and round, and it is moving and changing all the time with its position. That is going on always in our system. But, in every particle of this physical form, we will notice that there is the same existence which forms like a background, and cannot be separated. It is closely related to everything, however minute the particle of matter is. In fact, this one ocean of existence is manifesting itself in these various forms, but the names and the forms (*nama-rupa*) are not realities. If we want to find out the reality of the soul, or the reality of the universe, we will have to go to the source of existence, which is the universal or absolute existence. We will have to go to the source of the universal spirit, and there we will find some clue or something that is more substantial than mere thoughts. Everything that we say or utter in sounds or words, they all exist, and, therefore, that existence is the reality, and everything else is like a dream.

When a child is born, its brain receives the impressions or the sensations. It does not know what is going on in its system. At that time the child is in a state of confusion. Because its mind is not able to discriminate, but yet it is receiving all the impressions that are coming through the doors of the sense organs. The eyes are made in such a way by nature that they can receive only the vibrations of the light. The vibrations of the sound will never affect the eyes, and the vibrations of the light will never affect the ears. The eyes and the ears are just

like the different conduits, closed in a box, and one is impervious to the light, whereas the other, to the sound waves. The optic nerves would be impervious to the sound waves, and the auditory nerves to the light waves. They are wonderful constructions of the Nature. Through these conduits, the brain receives the impressions. The brain receives the impression of light through the optic nerves. And the child, when it first opens its eyes, does not see anything. It simply finds then the light impression. It does not see light, although it is there. Then its mind is one with light. When a sound enters its auditory nerves and is carried to the brain, it comes one with the sound. They are in different parts of the brain. It would require some intelligent mind to connect these different centres. Just as you have different keys on the piano and you will have to span your fingers in order to touch the different keys and get them together and mix them and fuse one into the other. That is not done by the brain itself. We have the same difference now.

Our experience of the outside world, to begin with, is nothing but a confusion, and we do not know anything at that time. We refer back to our past experience, when this confusion comes, and a discriminating faculty of the mind discriminates these different conditions, compares with the previous experiences, and produces the images through the memory. Then it produces another image or idea that the external world is like this. In this way, we are living in the universe. This is what we call our walking state of existence (*jagrat-satta*). This walking state of existence appears to us as real so long as we are in direct connection with the organs and also with the external objects. We know the external objects simply by the contact of the external objects with our sense organs, and that contact produces different sensations. But these sensations are changeable. They are either agreeable or disagreeable. When they are agreeable, we call them pleasant, and when they are disagreeable, we call them painful. So the feelings of pain and pleasure are not real things. They appear to be real for the time being, but they are like an infinitesimally small point in the chain of the various sensations that are coming in a stream and entering into our brain in the form of a stream.

The feelings of pain and pleasure are regarded like the dreams, and this will give up a real definition of the Christian Science theory that we must not think that we have pain, pleasure, this feeling, and that feeling, because they are all like delusions. But our existence which is inseparable from us, gains from them knowledge, or intelligence, or consciousness. Now that will make us realize that we exist, because we are conscious of our existence. In fact, pain is a feeling that comes and rises like a bubble in the small sea of our existence. When we feel a mosquito bite, a little sensation of pain feeling rises there like a bubble or wave, and we are conscious of it. But after a moment, it passes away, and another wave takes its place. Then it catches our attention, and stays there for a while, and then it passes away again. And this is our life.

Now let me give you an example of an existence. Just think that you are now here in this place. But how do you know that? Who tells you about the fact that you are here? How can you prove that some other spirit has not entered into your body and is not sitting for you? Can you prove it? And if you can, then what would be your standard of proof? To this it can be said that your standard of proof would be your knowledge. If you are conscious of your sitting there, then you know that you are sitting there. Do you need any other proof outside of your knowledge? No, it is sufficient. You do not require somebody else to convince you that you are sitting there. That proof is enough for you. If the whole world says that you are not sitting there, but a ghost is sitting in your place, you would not believe it. Because you know better about your own existence. And this existence is the only reality that is worth-having. Everything that exists in relation to you, is secondary. First, you exist, then something else outside of you exists. But if you doubt your existence which is the primary condition of your knowledge, then everything else falls to pieces. There is no question about it, because it is the final analysis in both the psychological and philosophical studies that your real existence is one with your knowledge. You cannot separate your existence from your knowledge, because existence and knowledge are inseparable. Try to separate your existence from knowledge, you cannot.[1] No matter where

[1] In Vedanta, it has been said that *sat*, *chit* and *ananda*,—exist-

you go, if your body is taken away and you are in the astral plane in the form of a spirit, then you must know that you are there. That body is gone, and you must also know that. When you went to sleep and did not know it, still you existed. So long as you know that you are sleeping, or after waking up you know that you slept so long and did not know anything of the outside world, still then you existed. And that is the third state of your existence. First is the waking state (*jagrat*); then would come the second dream state (*svapna*), and then would come the third dreamless sleep state (*sushupti*).[2] In the waking state, all these vibrations of ether (light) and the vibrations of the air which make the sound, are coming and going in a current like a stream into our brain, and we are receiving these sensations, and are trying to trace the cause of these sensations through our percepts and concepts. Then we locate the cause outside of us. If there be any colour we see from the flower, we say that is the cause of this particular sensation of colour, and so we say that the flower is red or blue or yellow. But what is there in the flower? It is nothing but a certain vibration of ether which is around the flower and which produced that particular sensation in our brain, and we call it the colour.[3] Then we say that the flower has that particular colour,

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ence, intelligence and bliss are one and the same. As for example, you exist and you know it, and for the knowledge of your existence, you feel pleasure. So *satta*, *chaitanya* and *ananda* are inseparable from one another.

[2] These are the three states of our consciousness (or mind) which are experienced by the same existent being (*satta or sat*), and that is the *Atman*. It should be remembered that this existence or *satta* or *Atman* as witness (*sakshi*) is always distinct from these three states (witnessed).—Vide *Mandukya Upanishad*. 6, and its *Karika*, VI, 1.

[3] The colour is a sensation, produced in eye by the rays of the decomposed light in vibrations. Prof. Woodworth says that colour-tone depends on the wave length of the light stimulus. Light varies in amount of mixture of different wave lengths. Light varies also in intensity or energy. "The stimulus, entering the eye from any point, can vary, then, in three ways: in wave length, in energy, and in amount of mixture; * * To the energy or intensity of the stimulus corresponds the *brightness* of the visual sensation. * * To the wave length of the stimulus corresponds the *colour-tone* of the visual sensation. The colour-tone series extends from red through yellow and the other colours of the spectrum to violet and then by way of the purples back to red again. It is a circular series". At the red end of the spectrum, the wave length of the light is 760 millionths of a millimeter, and at the violet end it is 390 millionths. In between are waves of every intermediate length, appearing to the eye as orange, yellow, green and blue, with all their transitional hues. A wave length of 600 gives yellow, one of 500 gives green, one of 470 gives blue, etc.—*Psychology*, pp. 365, 366-367.

but, in reality, the flower has not. There is only a certain state of vibration.

Now, our ears can hear the sounds within the range between, say, thirty and forty thousand vibrations in a second. Below and above that range there may be sounds but we do not hear.[4] The nature must have produced other organs besides human ears of other individuals or other beings, who might be hearing great noises in that state which we call the absolute silence. If our ears are quickened, perhaps we would be able to hear sounds, where ordinary ears would not be able to hear. Perhaps those, who are clairaudient, would be able to hear the finer sounds that are going on in the absolute silence, and which ordinary persons cannot hear. So these vibrations are constantly running in a stream through our nerves into the brain, and we are receiving these sensations in our waking state, and this is the one state of existence.

Then in the dream state our mind apparently becomes separated from the connection with the sense organs, and it should be remembered that it is partially separated, and not absolutely. We do not hear any sound. We do not receive any sensation of light or smell or touch at the time, when we are sleeping, but, of course, in that sleep state, there is a gradual going from the waking state to the climax of the sleep. There is a gradation. We go to sleep slowly. We do not fall instantly into sleep. We enter into a kind of oblivion, as it were, and

[4] Professors Drummond and Mellone have said: "To excite a sensation of sound at all, a certain number of vibrations must occur in a given interval of time. The lower limit is about 25 vibrations per second, and the upper limit about 20,000. Below 25, we should not hear the vibrations but feel them as puffs of wind. At the upper limit, however, people differ very much, both individually and at different ages. * * For musical purposes only a comparatively small portion of this range can be used with advantage,—from about 40 to about 4,000 vibrations per second, covering thus from 6 to 7 octaves".

Prof. R. M. Ogden has said in this connection. "* * Sensibility to tones in the higher range of pitch gradually decreases with age. Thus Gildenmeister found that children could hear tones of 20,000 v. d. (*i.e.*, complete vibrations per second); but persons in the middle thirties rarely heard a tone above 15,000 v.d.; while at the age of fifty the upper limit had been reduced to 13,000 v.d".—*Elements of Psychology*, pp. 294, 295, 298.

Prof. Woodworth is of the same opinion. He said: "The deepest audible tones have a vibration rate of about 20 per second, and the highest a rate of about 20,000. Outside these limits, there are plenty of physical sounds, but they arouse no auditory sensation. * * A tiny whistle gives out 30,000, 50,000 or more vibrations per second, and these can be heard by some animals but not by the human ear".—*Psychology*, pp. 405-406.

this state remains for sometime. In that state, perhaps when the mind is not completely resting, we see dreams, and these are caused by the impressions that we have gathered from our waking state, and also from the impressions of the various sensations that are left in the brain and in our subconscious mind. These impressions remain dormant. They are all pigeon-holed. When you see a horse, the impression of a horse is in your mind. When you hear any sound, it is all stamped in the mind, as it were. The ethereal particles of the mind substance are stamped every time we receive an impression of the sensation. Then the sensation begins.

The memory is that power, by which the mind brings out those dormant sensations above the threshold of our consciousness. These dormant impressions exist below our plane of consciousness, and from there they rise. The mind which works in the dream state, has the creative power. It can create a new form like a new symbol over the materials which are all pigeon-holed in the form of the impressions. For instance, you may see in the dream state the half man and the half horse, i.e. a man with a horse's body, but the head and the neck is like that of a man. The mind has created that from. You will notice that half of the man's form is put upon half of the horse's form, and the man has created a new figure. This is an illustration. But you will find that there are a great many images which you see in your dreams, made up in that way, and you have a certain impression of a certain thing. That is put in a grotesque manner, by the creative power of your mind, as a cartoonist might make up a new figure. Always it has some purpose, and all dreams have some meaning, which we may not know at first, or which may not be interpreted by ordinary minds. But they are all symbolic. Those, who see the visions which are like dreams, will explain them properly, if they can interpret correctly the lines and the vibrations and the forms and the colours. But, if the percipient cannot interpret correctly, he would not be able to explain anything. It requires a great deal of experience and test conditions by which one can be exact, and can interpret correctly. Ordinarily persons who make mistakes, might be psychic, but their interpretation is not correct, because their reasoning faculty is not developed enough. They have not analysed and discovered the

correlations between the signs or the symbols which they saw in their visions and the real things to which they refer. For that reason, many psychics would make mistakes. They may not be fradulent. They might be in right earnest and be honest, but still they are apt to make the mistakes.

So, when you go to a psychic and find that the symbols or the prognostications that have been given about you, are not correct, there the psychic, perhaps, is not able to interpret them correctly. He might have the impressions all right. So, in that dream state, we see the results of these various combinations of the impressions that we have received during our waking state. There are some dreams which bring us in close touch with the spiritual world. For instance, you may dream that your father or mother or friend or lover, who has passed away, has come to you, and is giving you a message. Such dreams happen, and they might be real. Perhaps your friend or relative, whoever he may be, has really come to you, and has given you the message, while you are sleeping. Because, while you are sleeping, you are away from this world. That is, your minds or egos are away from this world, which is lighted by the sun. The spirits do not like sunlight because it is too bright. The vibrations of light are not agreeable to them, as the vibration of the spirit world is different. When we withdraw ourselves from the sunlight world and go into our innermost being, we can reach the spirits in that state more quickly than in our waking state. For that reason, this state of existence may be one of the conditions under which we can come in touch with the spirit world and receive the communications. You know those who receive communications from the spirit world, and go into a sleep or a semi-conscious state. They do not see the external objects even when their eyes are open, but they withdraw their minds from the external sense organs and go inside. There comes a kind of screen or a veil that drops, and it is a misty or hazy kind of screen that appears in front. But in that hazy screen, the perceiver might be able to notice the particular individuals like the shadows. Just as you are sitting now, and if I have that screen before me, I would not recognize you at all, but I would see figures just like the shadows in front of me. I would be able to go through your body and come in touch with your mental states, and perhaps

I would be able to read your thoughts, because your thoughts have these forms. The thoughts have forms, and perhaps I would be able to read them correctly, if I have previous experience and then I would be able to know exactly what you are thinking.

The thoughts can be photographed. If you hold a sensitive plate in front of your forehead, and if you are allowed to think of a particular thought or an image, that image will be photographed on that sensitive plate. These experiments have been made, and they are all psychic experiments. Now that will show that in our dream state, sometimes we come in touch with the real things. They might not be real in our waking state, but they are real so long as we are dreaming. Sometimes, however, the results of our dreams or communications with our friends can be remembered even in our waking state, if they are very impressive, and if they are of great importance. Then we do not forget them.

But, as in the dream state, all the experiences of the waking state vanish and appear as unreal and the experiences of the dream state appear as real, so in our waking state all the dreams appear to be unreal, and whatever we perceive with our senses, seem to be real. This reality is the conditional reality. But the existence that I have described in the beginning, is the unconditioned absolute existence, which is not limited by time or space, and not subject to the law of causation. All these particular experiences which we are having in our waking states and call them realities, are the conditional realities; that is, they exist in time and space, and are subject to the law of causation, and so they last only for a while like the dreams.

The other state of existence is the dreamless sleep state (*sushupti*). There we enter when we are in sound sleep, and we do not dream at all[5]. The mind rests there. That is the causal body (*karana-sharira*), and there the mind goes to its causal state. It has no particular form, but is like a nucleus of the finer particles of matter which is something like the electrons, and which receive the ethereal impressions of the mind, and the different forces or powers of the mind remain latent. They are in a seed form, and yet there is that existence.

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[5] "*Yatra supto na kanchana kamam, kamayate na kanchana svapnam pashyati; tat sushuptam.*"—Mandukya Upanishad, 5.

We do not become non-existent, although our body does not exist in relation to us. When we are sleeping soundly, although we may not have any dreams, still we exist. What is the proof of our existence? We do not become absolutely unconscious at that time. Because, when we wake up, we remember that we had a fine sleep, when we did not have any dream at all.[6] We are conscious of that void and of not having any dream or any disturbance of any kind in that dreamless state (*sushupti*). The consciousness of that particular state of existence remains, and, therefore, we, as the individuals, who had that consciousness, existed. So our existence is not disturbed by the change of the states of existence. That is, neither the waking state and nor the dream state does disturb it, and even in that dreamless sleep, we exist.

So that existence is a continuous thing. There is no break in this flow of existence. It is indestructible, and you cannot separate one existence from another. From this waking state, you go into the dream state, and then into the dreamless sleep state, and then you wake up, and it remains inseparable. This individual existence is the real individuality, because the word 'individuality' means that which cannot be divided by the waking or the dream or the dreamless sleep state. It remains as an unbroken and continuous entity.[7] So, even after death, you remain as a spirit, and that is an unbroken existence. The body is gone, because that which has had birth, must die. The gross physical body is taken away, but there may be an ethereal body.[8] That might be taken away too. But those are only the appearances of the real existence, and there is a continuity of the life existence. So existence can never become non-existence. It is said in the *Bhagavad Gita*: *"nasato vidyate bhavo nabhavo vidyate satah,"* i.e. an existence can never become a non-existence, and that which does not exist, can

[6] This state has beautifully been explained or described in the *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad.*

[7] This 'unbroken continuity' implies an existence which is eternal, changeless and indestructible. It enjoys the three states: *"jagrat, svapna* and *sushupti,* but is never disturbed by those states; but it remain always unaffected, indeterminate, and unconditioned. The Mandukya Upanishad (*karika,* 1.5) says: *"trishu dhamashu yad bhojyam bhokta yascha prakirtitah ; vedaitadubhayam yastu sa bhunjano na lipyate".*

[8] This ethereal body is known in the *Sankhya* and Vedanta as the *'sukshma-sharira'.*

never exist.[9] That will give you the proof that a chair as a chair does not exist, but the existence of the chair is the reality. Try to differentiate that. The chair, which is known by its name and form, does not exist. So a chair is really a delusion. It exists as a vibratory state, so long as we look at it, because we can never perceive that chair otherwise. If we analyse that perception (of the chair), we can only receive a reflection of the light falling on the chair. And that reflection produces an inverted image upon the retina, and that is carried by the optic nerve into the grey matter of the brain, and there it becomes a sensation.[10] Now, if it can be asked as to where did we see the chair and how can we see it, then it is said that the handling is a feeling of thickness, or smoothness, or roughness. The colour is only that which we can see with our eyes, and the feeling of the solidity comes from the touch; and it is the combination of these qualities that we perceive with our senses which appears to be a chair. But where do we see the chair? In truth, we do not see the chair, as we simply feel the qualities of the chair that exist. We trace the cause of the sensible qualities outside of us and call it the chair. But the chair as a chair never exists in relation to us. So we can never see it. So is the external world. The sun, the moon, and the stars never exist. If we shut our eyes, the sun might rise and set for ever, it does not matter to us. It does not exist in relation to us. Then it exists in relation to those who are waking, but we never see the sun. There might be a sun outside of our impression of the sun. The sun appears to us like a small disc. But is it, in reality, a thing like a small disc? No, it is millions of times larger than the earth. Then how can we see such a

[9] This theory has been confirmed by the *Sankhya* philosophy.

[10] The terms *sensation* and *perception* are "names for different cognitive functions" said Prof. William James. But, in fact, they are "not for different sorts of mental *fact*", (*Vide* James: *Principles of Psychology*, vol. ii. p. 1.). Professors Drummond and Mellone said: "The fundamental process in our apprehension of the material world present to us is called *perception*; and *perception*, in the simplest form in which we experience it, is called *sensation*. * * *Sensation* * * differs from *perception* only in the comparative simplicity of its content. * * *Sensations* arise normally when a sense-organ is stimulated so as to give rise to nervous impulses propagated to brain, and only when these have reached some part of the cortex does any kind of sensation arise" (*Italics ours*).—*Elements of Psychology*, pp. 273-274.

[11] Prof. Jeans says: "* * the sun is not only about 400 times (92,900,000 miles) as distinct as the moon, but is also 400 times big. Its diameter is

big thing? In fact, we do not see the sun, but we see only the image of the sun. In reality, these things do not affect us all, only we give the reality to them, because we are possessed of the reality. The chair is real, so long as we are sitting on it. If we were unreal and if a ghost were sitting in our place, then the chair would not exist. So the existence which is the eternal existence, is called in Vedanta the Brahman, and it is the unchangeable absolute Truth.

The advanced lesson in the psychology will lead us to the highest realization of our true being, and not only of our true being, but also of the reality of the universe. It will lead us to the knowledge of truth. The realization of truth will come to us when we have transcended these three states[12] of existence.

There is a fourth state of existence which is known as the transcendental or *turiya*. It is very difficult to understand this transcending fourth principle. It is like the third, yet it is not the same. Again there is a resemblance of the dreamless sleep with the fourth state[13]. Then the fourth state, in which all the states, waking, dreaming and dreamless sleep state, would not appear as real. They would all appear as dreams or delusions, which never existed. Now, that state is the state of realization. If you can once enter into that state, you will never forget that these states never existed in relation to you. And, in reality, they never can exist. But they appear like a delusion (*maya*). We could not have a body, wife, or children, because these are all in the realm of names, forms, and appearances which are known as *avidya* or *ajnana*. So the apparent reality (*pratitika* or *pratibhasika satta*) is on the sense plane, and the absolute or permanent reality (*paramarthika satta*) is beyond time and space, and beyond our thoughts. When we go beyond our thoughts which are relative, there is the realm of the Absolute. There we come in touch with the Infinite, and become one

about 400 times the moon's diameter, or 109 times the earth's diameter, or 8,64,000 miles. This of course means that the sun is 109 times as big in each direction as the earth—in length, and breadth, and height. As a consequence no fewer than 1,300,000 earths could be packed inside the sun".—*The Stars in their Courses*, p. 19.

[12] *Jagrat* (waking), *svapna* (dream), and *sushupti* (dreamless sleep). Vide also the *Yoga Psychology* by the author.

[13] The third state or principle is known in Vedanta as the *Ishvra* or *Avyakta* which are equal to the dreamless state or *sushupti*. The third state is the causal state, and somehow or other the third state (of consciousness) resembles with the socalled fourth state.

with the Infinite. So these states of consciousness when properly understood will help us to realize our relation to the Infinite, which is beyond time, beyond space, and beyond causality. The Infinite[14] is the absolute Brahman. It transcends even the fourth state, *turiya*[15], because the categories of the different states (of consciousness) are also the limiting adjuncts (*upadhis*). So the Brahman is absolutely raised from all kinds of state, all kinds of category and all kinds of adjuncts. It is one and without the second—*'ekamevadvitiyam.'*

[14] The term 'Infinite' is used here to denote the timeless and spaceless transcending principle, the absolute Brahman.

[15] In fact, *turiya* or the fourth state (of consciousness) is not a state at all, it is called the fourth in relation to the third one.

CHAPTER VIII

OUR RELATION TO THE ABSOLUTE

A clear understanding of man's relation to the Absolute is a matter of momentous importance to all the students of philosophy and religion as well as to the seekers after absolute Truth. From ancient times, all the philosophers have tried to explain this relation, and have arrived at different conclusions, and out of these conclusions various systems of philosophy and religion have been built up.

But, when we study the different scriptures of the world, we do not find any mention of the Absolute which absolutely transcends the limitation of the nescience[1], rather we hear and read about the personal God. But is the personal God the same as the Absolute? No, the personal God is attributed with different qualities which are no other than the products of nescience (*maya*) or the adjuncts. But the Absolute or the absolute Brahman is devoid of all kinds of qualities, which means the Absolute or the Brahman (indeterminate) is absolutely raised from all kinds of limiting adjunct (*upadhi*). The Absolute is like a witness (*sakshi*), which does neither create, nor preserve, nor destroy, but remains alone as one without the second. But, for instance, when we read the Christian Bible, there we find God, the Lord of the universe, the Creator, the Governor, and the Ruler. In the *Puranas* and in different scriptures and in other systems of Vedanta, we also find different attributes have been ascribed to the Absolute or the Brahman. In fact, all attributes are given to God, but He is not called the Absolute according to the non-dualistic Vedanta. Then again, if we study the other scriptures of the world, for instance, the Zend Avesta of the Persians, and the Quran of the Moham-

[1] Here mention can be made about the status of the Absolute, as maintained by Kant, Hegel, Fichte, Bradley, mystic Plotinus, and Echart and others, and it can be said that none of them has described the status of the Absolute, as has been described by the non-dualistic Vedanta.

medans, we do not find any mention of the real name of the Absolute, unless we regard God the Creator as the Absolute.

There are persons again, who have no conception of the Absolute (the absolute Brahman). They do not know about its real essence. They do not believe even in the existence of God, or the soul, or the Absolute. They think that everything has come through the mechanical process of the nature, or through the process of the finer particle of the matter, and so all such questions, regarding the relation of the soul to God or the Absolute, are merely waste of time and energy. They would rather live in the world, and consider it as a Godless world, and get all the comforts from the Godless world for the benefit of the soulless body. Their idea is that everything will end after death (of the physical body), and so there is no existence of soul after death. As it is with the physical body or soul, so with the phenomenal universe. They think that there is no such thing as the Absolute, and so we cannot think of it. These thinkers are known as the materialists, the agnostics, and the atheists. The other class of thinkers can be divided into three classes, the dualists, the qualified non-dualists, and the monists or the non-dualists.

The dualistic believers regard that phase of the Absolute which is the Creator, the Ruler, the Governor, and the personal God. They consider this Creator as the Ruler of the universe, or as the personal God who is all in all. They believe that the personal God creates the universe and the human beings out of nothing, and then fashions everything, gives names to everything, and governs everything afterwards. He is outside of us as well as of the universe. He is beyond the nature, He is beyond our reach and also our thought, and we are nothing but His creatures. Some of these believers give the human attributes to God, and regard Him as a human being with attributes infinitely magnified. Others again regard Him with a form. They consider that the personal God, the Creator and the Governor of the universe, has a form like that of a man. We also find this idea as described in the *Genesis*. In the garden of Eden, says the *Genesis*, the Lord God walked. He had a voice. Adam heard the voice of the Lord, and he hid himself behind the bushes, so that the Lord might not see him. Then we find also that the elders of Israel, Korah, Dathan,

Abiram and seventy of the elders of Israel saw Him. Moses saw Jehovah's back. Jehovah ate under the oaks at Mamre. He was pleased with the sweet flavour of sacrifice.

Jehovah had the human qualities, just like any one of us, only our imperfections are not given to this personal God. He sits on a throne with a right hand and a left hand. He punishes the wicked with the eternal fire. Our relation to such aspects of the Absolute is like that of a creature to the Creator, or of a slave to his master. As a slave must be obedient to the master and must perform his duties and obey all the commands of the lord, so we must obey all the commands of the heavenly Lord; otherwise He will punish us. That fear of the punishment is at the root of all such religious and devotional beliefs and exercises. Why should we live and let others live? They say, because of that fear of the punishment. Otherwise, we will be punished. Just as in a state, if we violate the laws of the state, or the commands of the governor, we will be punished.

This relation also exists among the Jews, among the Mohammedans, and also among the Christians. If you speak about any other relation with the personal God of them, they would not be able to listen to you. They say that we are His slaves, His servants, and His creatures; we can never approach Him. We will eternally be separate from Him. In the Persian scriptures, we also find that Ahura Mazda is sitting on the throne, and no one can approach Him.

Although we find in the *Genesis* that God created man after His own image, still it is very difficult to understand what that the image means. Does it mean that our form is the image of the Lord? If the Lord is with a human form, then ordinary minds naturally take it for granted that by the word 'image' is meant our form. That we are like the human form of the almighty Lord, who is the Absolute. But still the relation exists the same,—that of a creature to the Creator, that of a servant to his master. If you try to understand the meaning of the word 'image', you will find that Adam was created after the image of God. That is, at first, before his temptation and before his fall, he had some divine qualities in him. But afterwards he lost them and became a sinner. Then he remained no longer the image of God. And since we are born of that same (Adams) source, we have inherited all the sins. So we

have also lost the image of God. Jesus the Christ was the only-begotten son of God. He was an exception. He was not born in sin and iniquity. You have learnt all these facts or stories in your Sunday schools. I do not have to mention these things, but I simply remind you of what you have already learnt. But whether Jesus the Christ ever meant that he was the only-begotten son of God and an exception to all other mortals, is an issue yet to be solved. That question has not been solved. The Christian churches do not raise that question, because it creates a lot of misconceptions and difficulties. Supposing that we are all sons of God, then why should our heavenly Father punish us with the eternal fire, as we read in the parable of the marriage of the king's son ? There it is said that the king ordered his servants to bind him hand and foot, take him away, and cast him in darkness, where there would be weeping and gnashing of teeth, for 'many are called but few are chosen'.

Then again we find in the *Matthew*, when Jesus says: "Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell ?" Such ideas make us rebel against the thought that the heavenly Father, who is merciful and all-loving, could punish His own children with eternal fire and damnation! These ideas have been taught and preached for centuries, but do they change the conception of God which we believe ? Do they give us any new explanation of the Absolute and our relation to the Absolute ? No, they have failed to give us any new explanation of the Absolute. Whether we have come out of nothing, or we pre-existed, all these questions are left to us as unsolved as the mysteries. We cannot understand, by reading the scriptures, the nature of the son and its relation to God. We cannot understand whether we shall continue to live and come to this earth or not. So it remains as the unsolved mystery to us. A set of doctrines and dogmas like it has been handed down to us and we are forced to accept them, whether we like them or not, whether we are helped by them or not ; but still we must accept them and take them for granted.

There are other kinds of the dualists who exist in the other parts of the world. They believe that the personal God is extra-cosmic, i.e. is outside of the nature, and does not create something out of nothing. He does not create us out of nothing, but He creates everything from the material of the nature. The

nature, according to them, is eternal and is co-existent with God. According to them, God is eternal, and the individual souls are also eternal. The individual souls remain in nature, and at the time of creation, the Lord creates them from the nature, and makes them as the animals and the human beings. So this creation of the material which already existed in nature, is the meaning of creation of those other dualists who live in India and in other parts of the world. According to them, the relation of the individual soul to God is not merely that of a creature to the Creator, and not merely that of a slave to his master, but that of a son to his loving father. The Lord does not punish His son. He does not even punish the wicked. So they answer the question of the punishment and reward by a law, and that law is the law of causation, or the law of cause and effect. Every cause must produce an effect, and this law of causation or the law of action and reaction binds all the human beings. We cannot escape that law. If we do anything wicked, the result of it comes back to us, and we reap the consequence by the law of cause and effect. For instance, if I put my finger into the fire, the fire will burn it, and that action of putting the finger into the fire brings a reaction of burning, and I suffer. Every wicked act produces suffering as its natural result. So there is no necessity of believing in a devil, or in a Satan, or in a creator of the evil, and, naturally, there is no such place for the eternal damnation, or the eternal hell-fire. But there is a kind of darkness where the wicked souls grope. They do not realize after death where they are. They cannot see their path for proceeding after death. They do not see what is going to happen, just as in this world you will find many people who are groping in the darkness of ignorance. They do not see anything.[1] Their eyes[2] are closed as it were. Their sight is very narrow at that time. They will plunge into a certain kind of work without thinking of the consequences, and that is the conditiotn of what we call the hell. We are all living in the

[1] Generally the ignorant people, when die, leave the material bodies in their unconscious state, and so when their subtle ethereal or astral bodies reach the afterworld, they remain unconscious for an indefinite period, and they are unable to ascertain whether they are alive or dead. Cf. Abhedananda: *Life Beyond Death*, pp. 234, 238, 257-258.

[2] The material eyes are destroyed with the death of the body, but there remains the luminous power of the eyes in subtle form of impressions.

darkness even in this earthly life. Suppose, a man who lived in the darkness in this world, did not understand any of the laws. He made mistakes all through his life like an ignoramus. When he passed out beyond the grave, do you think he would be suddenly changed into an angel who is an all-knowing being? Not indeed. Because he will continue to remain in the same condition. A man, who commits suicide, will not be able to know where he is after death. Then everything will be in confusion, and everything will be in darkness. He has violated certain laws, and, therefore, he has produced the effects upon himself. What has the Lord to do with it? Where is the necessity there of a devil, or of a creator of the evil?

So those dualists who live in India and believe in a personal God, but not in a devil, have understood some of the laws that govern our soul life, and those, who believe in a creator of the evil, have personified some aspect of that law, and have learnt to fear that personified evil. That is only an imagination. There is no personification of the evil outside our own minds.

On the other hand, the souls who perform the good deeds, enjoy happiness, health, prosperity, longevity, and all the pleasures of life. But a man, who is born with the evil tendencies, has brought them with him from his past incarnation. The souls have not been created suddenly, but they have to pass through the different stages of evolution, from the lower to the higher planes, gaining experience after experience and marching onward towards the ultimate goal of the realization of the Absolute. The realization of the Absolute is the goal of all living beings. We do not know now what the Absolute is, but some day or other our spiritual eyes will be opened. Some day we shall be able to see things in a different light, and some day we shall be able to understand the laws which govern our lives. At present, we do not know them for the veil of ignorance. For that reason, our evolution has not come to an end. We are evolving and progressing every day, until we reach that goal, which is the ideal[3]. Before we understand what the Absolute is, we must pass through the different stages of evolution in our ethical and spiritual progress. First of all,

[3] Bernard Shaw says in his *Back to Methuselah*: "* * mankind gains in stature from generation to generation, from epoch to epoch, from barbarism to civilization and from civilization to perfection" (pp. 173-174).

we shall start from the gross physical body and its relation to the universe. Then gradually from the surface we shall go inward towards the centre. We will have to proceed in the spiritual path step by step. If we have a conception of God, who is personal and extra-cosmic, and who is the creator of something out of nothing, we shall gradually come to a plane where we shall be able to remove all those misunderstandings and misconceptions, and analyse the nature of God, analyse the nature of the attributes which we give to God, and then find out the ultimate truth which underlies all these conceptions. We are worshipping at present a human God who has been created by the human mind. The real God is far away. When we kneel down to a personal God, we make a mental picture, and that mental picture is a creation as well as projection of our own mind. When we think, for instance, of Christ, we will have to make a mental picture of Christ. We have seen perhaps a painting or some statue, and we form a mental picture that agrees or looks like that painting or statue. So that mental picture is of our own mind, and the real Christ is far away. Some artists have painted Christ with the golden hair and the blue eyes, though perhaps Christ never had any golden hair and blue eyes. Because he was born in Asia, he was an Asiatic, and was born with the dark hair and the dark eyes. We may also imagine that he was just like one of us, with golden hair and blue eyes and white figure, but that is also our mental picture. We have created that in our mind, and we are kneeling down and praying to that mental picture.

Similarly, when we think of Jehovah, or any other name of a personal God, we repeat His name, and make a mental picture of Him, perhaps of a gigantic figure with the enormous strength, power, immense knowledge and all-seeing eyes, but these are all the conceptions of our own mind; these are nothing but the projected ideas of our own mind. Sometimes they are known as the imagination of our mind. So when we are trying to search what the true nature of the Absolute is, we have to go beyond such conceptions or ideas. Such conceptions or ideas can be regarded as only the steps towards the realization of the Absolute.

The conception of the personal God is the first step. Then after that we rise still higher and get into another state which

is deeper and grander than the conception of an extra-cosmic personal God who is conceived as sitting above the clouds. That is called the qualified non-dualistic conception of God. According to this conception, God is not separate from the nature, but He dwells in the nature. He is not far away, but He is near, dwelling in everything. He is not the Ruler from the outside of nature, but He is ruling from inside, just as there is a soul which is the ruler of the body. Just as the soul dwelling in the body and yet is the ruler of the body, so the Lord of the universe is dwelling in the nature, yet is the Ruler of the nature. He dwells in the atoms and the molecules. He is in the solar system, in the sun, the moon, and the stars. He is in the earth, in our body, in the table, in the chair, and in everywhere. In fact, He pervades the whole universe. So He is omnipresent, and all the forces of nature are but the expressions of His will. His mind is like the sum total of our individual minds, and that is the cosmic mind. His will is the sum total of the individual wills. He has infinite eyes, and He sees through all the eyes. He hears through all the ears; He thinks through all the brains; and He works through all the hands. We are the part and parcel of that one universal Being. He is the one stupendous Whole.[4] In Him we live, through Him we exist, and without Him there can be nothing. That conception is harmonizing God and the world. That is more universal than that of the personal God. It is not only more universal, but is more practical. We have got a religion that will help us to live the ideal life of the Godconsciousness. and that ideal life of the Godconsciousness cannot be realized, if we know that God, or the God the Absolute is far away from us, that we cannot reach Him. But, on the contrary, if we know that God[5] is dwelling in us, we live and move and have our beings in God, then we can understand that all the works that we are doing, are not our own actions, but we are guided by a supreme will, or by a divine power, which is the ruler and governor of every-

[4] (a) *Sahasrasirsha purushah sahasraksah sahasrapat*
Sa bhumim visvato vritvaty atishthad dasangulam
—Rik, X, 90, 1

(b) Consult the *Bhagavad Gita,* where Arjuna saw the Absolute through his ecstatic vision.

[5] The Swami has used the word 'God' in the sense of the absolute Brahman which is non-dual and transcending.

thing. In fact, He does not create something out of nothing, as the dualistic believers describe Him. He is not merely the efficient cause (*nimitta karana*) of the universe, but is both the efficient and the material cause (*nimitta* and *upadana karana*) of the universe. He is our very nature, and the nature is His body. The nature is nothing but the divine energy which forms the body of God. His physical body is the gross phenomenal universe which we perceive with our five senses. He is the soul of the universe. His mind is the cosmic mind which is the sum total of all our minds; and our relation to the cosmic mind is like the relation that exists between the eddies and the eternal current of the cosmic mind. Our minds are like so many eddies or whirlpools in the eternal current of the cosmic mind, which is running and flowing from eternity to eternity. Our individual wills or desires are like the rays of the sun, and the divine will or desire contains all these rays. That is, all the rays of the individual wills or desires emanate from that one source like the rays of the sun which emanate from that self-effulgent, luminous and heavenly body. We cannot be away from Him, as we are living in Him. As for example, when we do anything, when we walk on the streets, or perform any action, if we think that God is dwelling in us and we are like His instruments and these instruments of the human bodies are guided and governed by the divine will, then we cannot do anything wicked or wrong; then it would be impossible for us to commit any wrong or wicked act. Because, at that time, we shall be conscious of the omnipresent divine Being that can never commit anything wrong. And that consciousness is more real to us than our present consciousness, because the present consciousness of our individual self is separate from another such consciousness which is separate from the universe. We are living only for our individual body, and everything that is related to the individual body is very narrow and limited. This limited and narrow idea or consciousness cannot bring any happiness to us. In fact, this consciousness of the individual self which is generally accepted as separated from the rest of the universe, is the result of ignorance and self-delusion. But, in truth, we cannot exist in this universe, being separated from each other and also from the universe.

Now think of our present existence which is a relative one;

and that means that our existence depends upon the existence of everything else. For instance, we are sitting here. The very existence of ourselves in this room depends upon the existence of the room, and this room again cannot exist, if there be no city of Los Angeles and the city of Los Angeles cannot exist, if there be no United States, and the United States cannot exist, if there be no earth, and the earth cannot exist, if here be no sun, no solar system, and the sun cannot also exist, if there be no other systems around which this whole solar system is moving. So you see that our present existence is so intimately related with the rest of the universe that when we try to separate our existence from the rest of the universe, we delude ourselves, and commit a great mistake or error. But, on the contrary, if we think that our consciousness depends upon the whole universe, i.e., if we try to realize that our individual consciousness is a consciousness of only one part, then we see that the part is closely related to other parts, and, ultimately to the stupendous whole which is the Absolute.

So we must not live for ourselves, but we must live for the rest of the universe. We are here to help in the onward progress not only of our own individual self, but also of the whole humanity, of the whole race, and of all living things. We must not stop simply after doing something that will help our own people and our own nation, but we must go on doing things that will help not only our own nation, but also all nations, not only all human beings, but also all living creatures, the lower animals, and even the plants. So the life of a great saviour is for the humanity and for more than the humanity, for the lower animals, and for the whole creation. Each individual must learn that one truth, that we are the servants of all the creation, and not servants of a particular nation. Philanthropy is narrow, when compared to the service of the creation, and that is our ideal. The moment we realize our relation with the Absolute, we cannot live within the limitation of our selfish motives, selfish ideas, and individual consciousness. We must transcend all these, and that is the purpose of religion.

Now what do we mean by a religion? It is not a set of doctrines and dogmas. It transcends rather the limitations of doctrines and dogmas. It is the realization of the higher self, the Absolute. So we must learn to live in and through the

Absolute, because if the Absolute is the one stupedous whole, then how can the parts exist independent of the whole? It would be an impossibility. And for that reason the Vedanta philosophy tells us: 'Try to seek the Absolute first. And the Absolute is described in the Upanishad: *"yato va imani bhutani jayante, yena jatani jivanti, yat prayantyabhisamvishanti ; tat vijijnasasva, tat brahmeti"*. So the Absolute is that, from which all the animate and inanimate objects have come into existence, in which they live, and to which they return at the time of dissolution. Know it, and realize it. It is the *Alpha and Omega,* the beginning and the end of this phenomenal world. We have come from the Absolute, and again we shall go back to the Absolute. If the whole phenomenal universe be destroyed and if the earth is suddenly changed into a nebulous mass by coming in cotnact with some other planet, or with a comet, then where shall we be? We shall go back to the causal state. We shall remain there, and nothing will be lost. There is no such thing as destruction of anything. Destruction means reversion to the causal state.[7] We can never be desroyed. Our body might be dissolved and disintegrate, or might go into its original elementary conditions, but from those elementary conditions other forms will rise and continue to live. After the dissolution of this earth, a new world will be created, perhaps a new earth and a new solar system and new planets will be framed, and that is the process.

So, in this eternal process we are living. It is the play of the Absolute, and in this play of the Absolute, we have lost our bearings. We do not know where we are, and what we are doing. We are following like the children who play in the streets 'blind-man's buff'. They shut their eyes and play the part of a blind man without knowing anything and seeing anything. So we are playing the part of ignorant people, because we have no better sense. It is the light of religion that opens our sight, and enables us to see the things as they are in reality. That religion is not confined to any book. It is the feeling. It is the divine realization (*Atmanubhuti*). This realization does not mean a mere intellectual apprehension of thought or ideal, but you will have to bring that ideal and to harmo-

[6] Cf. *Taittiriya Upanishad.* III. 1.
[7] *"Nasah karana-layah."*—The Sankhyasutra, I. 119.

nize that ideal with your daily life. If you can do that, you are able to feel the presence of the Divinity in you. Then your present consciousness will be transformed into a higher consciousness which is known as the Godconsciousness, or the consciousness of the Absolute. That consciousness of the Absolute means that you will feel the omnipresence of the unchangeable Reality of the universe. The unchangeable Reality of the universe cannot be many. It is unique and one. It is beyond time and space. It is omnipresent. It is infinite. It cannot be divided into any part. But at present we feel that we are the parts of the whole. This idea of the parts of the whole or the parts related to the whole is the qualified nondualistic conception. In this conception, God is qualified by the matter and the individual souls. In this qualified nondualistic conception, the individual souls form a part of the whole Being.

I will give you an illustration. Our individual body is composed of the minute cells, and each cell has its individuality. Again each cell in body has its mind, memory and a little consciousness, and myriads of such cells make up our self-consciousness or mind. Now we are like these minute cells in the cosmic body of God. We cannot exist, being separated from His cosmic body. Yet we are playing our parts, and are helping towards the expression of the divine will that is at the centre. In that way, we can find our relation to the Absolute. If the centre is the Absolute, then we are related as the parts to the centre. But, when we think of the Absolute, time and space entirely vanish. Because time and space only exist in relation to our thoughts, as they are the modes of our thoughts which are no other than our conscious life. Now what do we mean by time? It means a succession. One thought rises in our mind and another follows, and the conception of the interval between these two thoughts is, time. Take the sunrise as one thought and the sunset as another, and the interval between these two thoughts is time. Divide it into twelve parts and that would be an hour. In that way, we have got the conception of time. So time cannot exist if you have no thoughts. If you can make your mind absolutely free from thought, you will rise above time. Then five hours may appear to you as five seconds. If you go into that state which is beyond the thought realm

and sit there for a while, you will feel that it was just like five seconds, but, in reality, you have been sitting there for hours according to the watch. So it will prove to you that you can rise above time and yet remain conscious.

Space will not exist either, because space means the co-existence. When two ideas rise simultaneously, that which separates them, is what we call space. For instance, suppose you are looking at the sun from the earth. If you think of yourself and the sun at the same time, that which intervenes between and keeps apart these two ideas, is space. So time and space are the conditions, under which all phenomena can exist. They are the forms of the sensibility, or the appearances, or as Kant says, the forms of intuition.[8] But when we go towards the Absolute, we realize that in the realm of the Absolute, there is no phenomenon. There is no time, no space, and, consequently, no law of causation does work there. Because these are the conditions of the relative world. We must know that we are living in the relative world, and everything that we perceive with our senses, has a relative or the conditional existence. But that which is unconditioned, is beyond the relative existence, and is the Absolute. Take, for instance, the conception of a Creator. Can He be the Absolute? No, He is relative, because a Creator requires to be related to the creation. If creation is taken away from Him, He is no longer the Creator. It is a name, which is related to the created object and that relation makes a Creator what He is. So the Creator of the universe or God is not the absolute Being, or the non-different

[8] Kant says in his *Critique of Pure Reason*: "Space is, therefore, regarded as a condition of the possibility of phenomena, not as a determination produced by them; it is a representation *a priori* which necessarily precedes all external phenomena". And about *time* he says: "Time is, therefore, simply a subjective condition of our (human) intuition (which is always sensuous, that is so far as we are affected by objects), but by itself, apart from the subject, nothing"—*Max Muller's Translation*, pp. 19, 28. So *space* and *time* are regarded by Kant as the forms of appearances as well as content of pure intuition. "As forms of all appearances, space and time are known to be necessary and universal. Hence we may say that our ideas of space and time are *a priori* or pure—they cannot be dependent on experience or sense-perception, which can never give us strict universality or necessity. * * This implies further that the *content* of our ideas, namely space and time themselves are due to the nature of our sensibility. They are forms under which alone we can sense appearances, and are necessarily imposed on appearances by the nature of our sensibility. This doctrine is expressed in the statement that space and time are *forms of sensibility*"—Prof. Paton: *Kant's Metaphysics of Experience*, Vol. 1, p. 102.

Brahman. The Creator is relative. He is a part of the phenomena, and therefore, He is the first-born Lord of the universe. He is the first-born Lord means He is the first manifestation of the absolute Brahman.[9] The Absolute projects out of its own body the first-born Lord or *Isvara,* and projects this cosmic consciousness or the cosmic ego, which becomes the Creator, the prime mover of evolution. Matter again comes out of the same Absolute.

The whole universe is a gigantic magnet. Its one pole is the matter, and the other pole is the mind. The matter is the negative pole and the mind is the positive pole of that magnet and the neutral point is the absolute Brahman which is neither the mind nor the matter, yet is the cause of both. But even the term 'cause' is a relative one. The term 'cause' can be applied to a thing only, when it is related to the effect. So the causeless cause or the uncaused cause is an anomalous term. It does not refer to the Absolute. Again the Absolute cannot be expressed by words, as it is beyond speech and thought: *'avanmanaso'gocharam.* Both words and thoughts cannot reach the Absolute ; it is beyond our thought and beyond our conception. So the personal God is not the Absolute. It is a phase or expression, or it can be said to be the manifestation of the absolute expression through the force of nature, and that expression will last so long as the objects, to which that expression is related, will last. So if all the phenomenal world would vanish, there would be no more necessity of a Creator or the personal God. Therefore the monistic thinkers who are the sincere and earnest seekers after the Absolute, do not stop in dualism, do not stop in qualified non-dualism, but want to go deeper and still further, and try to find out the absolute Truth which is beyond all changes and all relations. When they once discover this absolute Truth, they find that it is the eternal con-

[9] The first-born Lord or God is the first manifestation of the absolute pure Brahman. According to Vedanta, the pure Absolute is the supra-temporal and supra-spatial reality, and it transcends the categories of time, space, and causation. It is called the fourth or *turiya* in relation to other three—*Isvara, Hiranyagarbha* and *Virata. Isvara* is also called the *Avyakta* (*Prakriti* and *Prajna*). The *Avyakta* is the state of *sushupti.* It is the unmodified, undifferentiated, and unmanifested cause of the projection of the phenomenal appearance. The causal nescience lies in *Isvara* or *Avyakta* in a dormant state. *Isvara's* wills are to be many and His divine will or contemplation becomes crystalized into the phenomenal world.

sciousness, existence and bliss. It is beyond all manifestations, and that idea is beautifully described in the Rig Veda: *'nasadasinnosadasittadanim, nasid rajo no vyomo paro yat'*.[10] Before the beginning of the evolution there was neither entity, nor non-entity. Now here you notice words, entity and non-entity. They are the two relative terms. If one exists, it presupposes the existence of the other, and, therefore, it would be a relative thing. So when they are describing the Absolute, they must describe in paradoxes. That is something which is neither *this,* nor *that,* and yet it is the cause of both. There was neither entity nor non-entity (*'nasadasinno-sadasit'*), neither death, nor birth, nor immortality (*'no mrityurasidamritam na'*). Immortality is also a term which is relative to death. So the Absolute cannot be called immortal, or mortal, because if you call it immortal, there must be something which is mortal, and you call it mortal, there would be something that would mean death. But, in the Absolute, there is only one existence which can be experienced only by the Divine intuition (*anubhuti*). It is neither one, nor many. In it, there is neither space, nor anything that exists in space; and it is the one being and one reality, and yet it contains everything. It holds us all there. We cannot get away, and nothing can exist outside of it.

All these phenomena are nothing but dreams. They are like the waves in that eternal ocean of the non-dual Brahman. Individual souls are like so many bubbles. A bubble would rise on the surface of the ocean, meet other bubbles, remain together for a while, move on together for a while and ultimately go down again into the ocean without losing its individuality, because its individuality depends upon the individuality of the ocean. So these individual souls are rising in that ocean of the Absolute like the bubbles, or the waves. We think that these are our friends and relatives, but, in truth, these are the cause of our bindings. So from the standpoint of the Absolute, these are rather regarded as the delusive attachment or the delusion.

In fact, each one of us is like a bubble in that eternal ocean of the Absolute. Then why do we differentiate? Because we do not understand our relation to the absolute ocean. But when

[10]Vide the *Nasadiya-sukta.*

we understand the relation of the bubble to the ocean, or the relation of the wave to the ocean, then we understand our relation to the Absolute. In truth, we are living in the ocean of the Infinite. Our existence is a part of the infinite existence, and our life-force is a part of the infinite life-force. Everything that belongs to us, does not belong to us, as it belongs to the universe. We simply make mistakes and suffer on account of our mistakes. A philosophy which is a true philosophy, will help us in getting out of this dark abyss of ignorance, and show us the light, so that we can live in this world without suffering and reaping the consequences of the works that we perform through ignorance and selfishness. Then we enjoy the life of true happiness, pleasure, joy, and peace in our hearts. If we cannot live in peace and knowledge, our life is not worthliving.

Then why should we do all these things that make us suffer? We are not here to suffer. There is no other devil stronger than the devil of the darkness of ignorance. It is the ignorance that makes us selfish and makes us understand that we are separate from each other. But the light of divine knowledge will dispel that darkness of ignorance. A room that has held darkness for thousands of years, or a cave where darkness has been for thousands of years, is instantly illumined by the stroke of a match-stick, and the darkness of thousands of years is dispelled. So says Vedanta that you strike a match in the cave of your heart, and there you will have the light. We will then understand things as they are in reality. There is no use of running after different things. Nothing can help us unless we have that light within us. If we have not received that light within us, everything will appear as different. It is the consciousness of the Absolute that removes all differences, and gives us the real freedom. It is what we need, and then we shall live the right kind of life. Nothing will be wrong then. Then whether we believe in God, or in the scriptures, or in the dogmas and the doctrines, that matters very little. The doctrines and the dogmas and the creeds are the non-essentials of religion. The religion of religions is our true knowledge and true realization and true love. When that true knowledge and true realization come, then everything non-essential vanishes, and everything disquieting disappears like a dream.

The Christian Science has done one good thing in saying that matter does not exist. It is a delusion in reality. Mind is also a delusion. And that is what Vedanta teaches that if matter is a delusion, mind is a delusion too. So discard both, and go into the realm of the Absolute. Then the health, or the body, would neither be our ideal nor prosperity, but we live in the Absolute without thinking of tomorrow. Christ came to teach that, but very few then understood Christ, and very few do understand Christ even now. Christ tried to teach that this world is a delusion, but he lived among people, who were too realistic, and would not let him express his ideas. He said: "Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself."[11] Because the morrow is delusion. If we are part and parcel of the Absolute, everything is provided for us. Why do we worry? If we have bad health, remember that we have brought it upon ourselves. Turn our attention to something that is grander and something that is nearer the Absolute, and we will regain our good health. It is our evil thoughts and mental ideas that reflect upon the physical body. Sometimes of course we inherit certain diseases, because that is the result of our past bad works. We suffer in this life for the works that we have done in our previous lives. We are born of such parents, and with one stone many birds are killed, and that is the wonderful, mysterious, and inscrutable way of nature. We suffer much, but yet we do not blame ourselves. When we open our eyes and understand the law, we know that nothing is mysterious or inscrutable, and everything is governed by the law of nature.

Vedanta tells us to take the whole responsibility on our own shoulders and to march onward towards the realm of the Absolute. Every individual soul will reach the Absolute sooner or later; no one will be lost. There is no such thing as eternal punishment, as punishment or reward is a temporary phenomenon. Because everything that is on the relative plane, lasts only for a time, exists in time and space and must pass away. The only thing that does not pass away, is the Absolute, and that Absolute is like the background of all phenomena. The Absolute is the substratum of the changing appearance of the

[11] *St. Matthew*, VI, 34.

universe. It is like the canvas upon which the most beautiful landscape of the nature is painted. It is the canvas which gives the life and support to the portrait of a beautiful figure like a maiden which is painted by an artist. So if you take away that canvas, the portrait is gone. Therefore the Absolute is the background of these individual portraits of the human beings who are working and moving here and there. The human beings are like the pictures. So a true seeker after the Absolute, when he dives deep into the ocean of the God-intuition, does not feel himself separate from the Absolute, but feels that the Absolute is one and he is one with the Absolute. Then he says: "I am in the sun, I am in the moon, I am in the stars, I am in the wind, I am everywhere, and I cannot die. The fire cannot burn me, the water cannot moisten me, the air cannot dry me, but I am imperishable, immortal, deathless, and birthless. I am here manifesting my powers through these individual physical forms, but I live in all individuals. I am the one and undivided Spirit". You might feel then that you may not eat with your own mouth, but you are eating also with other mouths. Then you are one with everyone. A soul that has realized the Godconsciousness, feels himself one with the universe. If anyone breaks a branch of a tree, it hurts him; if anyone kills an animal, it hurts him, because he sees in that tree and animal the Brahman which projects all animate and inanimate objects and the Brahman which pervades all the universe with its presence and sublimity. That universal and unifying consciousness will make us rise above this mundane world, nay, above all worldliness and selfishness, and then and then alone we shall realize what Christ meant, when He said: "I and My Father are one".

That highest ideal we must consider as the unchangeable Reality. The oneness is the relation of the true seeker after the Absolute with the Absolute, and there is nothing beyond that. When we have become one with the Absolute, there is no other relation that can be higher than that. Some people may think that we again come down to the plane of the earth to play our parts. That might mean a lower step and not higher than the Absolute. You may indeed come down, but never go beyond, or cease to be in the Absolute. Imagine a state higher than the Absolute, where there are neither thoughts, nor time, space,

and causation. But you cannot imagine that state. Because when you will imagine a state higher than the Absolute, you will have to come down to the realm of thought which is relative; you will have to come down to the realm of time, space, and causation, and that means you have come down to the plane of nescience or *maya*. So is that going beyond the Absolute or going down to the plane of relativity where reign supreme the limitations of time, space and causation possible? No, because there is no longer any going beyond the Absolute. or coming back (*vyutthana*) from the Absolute by one who has realized it: *'na sa punaravartate'*.[12] People who have not realized the true meaning of the word Absolute and have not understood the state of that realization, talk like that. But Vedanta says: *bhidyate hridayagranthi-scchidyante sarvasamshayah, kshaiyante chasya karmani tasmin drishte paravare.*[13]

So when we realize the Absolute, there is left no further questioning in the mind. All doubts will cease for ever, all questions will be answered forever, and we transcend all the laws of nature and even the law of cause and effect, which binds us so strongly and irresistibly on the plane of the phenomena. Then we become free, and realize that freedom which is ever-lasting, and has neither beginning, nor end. Vedanta also teaches that dualism, qualified non-dualism, and monism or non-dualism are the different stages in the process of realization of that Absolute and its relation to us. *It accepts them all and at the same time transcends them all.* A true and sincere seeker after the Absolute who has realized the eternal truth, says: "O Lord, when I think of myself as related to the physical body, I am Thy servant; Thou art my Lord. When I think of my soul which is an ego, I am Thy part and Thou art the one stupendous Whole. But when I think of my true Self, which is the *Atman* which is a part of the Absolute, then I am one with Thee, I am one with the infinite ocean of existence intelligence, bliss and love".[14]

[12] Sankara has also used the term *vyutthans* in his different commentaries, but logically he has not supported this theory of descending or coming down from the *turiya* state.

[13] *Mundaka Upanishad*, II, 8

[14] *Dasaste'ham dehadishtya'smi sambho*
Jataste'nso jivadrishtya tridrishte;
Sarvasya'tmannatmadristya tvameve-
tyevam me dhira nishcita sarvaskastraih.

APPENDIX

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Q: When should we consider a material universe an illusion?

Ans: You cannot call it an illusion until you reach the Absolute. It would be a mistake. It is real so long you live in nescience. But anyone who has reached the Absolute, to him it would appear like a dream. So long as we are conscious of the phenomenal things, they appear as real to us. They are not illusions.

There is a great difference between the terms, illusion and delusion. An illusion has not even apparent existence, and it is non-existent for all the time like the sky-flower (*khapushpa*). But delusion has an apparent existence (*pratitikasatta*), but has no permanent existence (*paramarthika-satta*). And, therefore, delusion is a correct term for *maya* or *avidya* instead of the term, illusion.

Q: Most ministers and preachers of the Gospel tell us to put our mind on the spirit. But to gain the knowledge of the universe, why should we not put our mind on the material universe?

Ans: Certainly, you should put your mind on the material universe, and harmonize God and the universe.

Now to make it explicit, it can be said that there are different stages in the process of the Divine realization. In the first stage, we consider the material world as well as our gross physical body as real; but if we are seekers after the Absolute, we do not find any limitation. Generally we are mixing up the Absolute with the material world, or the matter, but the Absolute is neither the mind, nor the matter. When we rise on the plane of the Absolute, or as I gave the illustration of the magnet, when we come to the neutral point of the magnet, there is neither positive nor negative; but when we come to

These questions were made by the American audiences when Swami Abhedananda was taking a class on Vedanta Philosophy in a lecture hall in America in 1920.

the one pole, the other pole, of course, exists. When we are on the positive pole, we cannot deny the negative pole. How can we deny the consciousness of the body, unless we go to the neutral point which is beyond thought, time and space? So we must not mix the ideal of the Absolute with any of our mental conditions, which are within the limitations of time and space. That would be the distinction, and so there is no confusion about it. We must describe the different viewpoints to understand the relation of the Absolute to the universe, and also to ourselves.

Q: If the Absolute existed in the beginning of all, and if the ultimate goal of all is to involve in the Absolute, then why can we not understand the necessity of evolution, as it is necessary for the Absolute to constantly manifest itself by means of the material phenomena?

Ans: Yes, the Absolute constantly exists and manifests in some form or other. It is a part of its nature. There is no question of necessity of forcing its nature. If this manifestation stops here (as in the case of *khanda-pralaya* or partial dissolution of any planetary system), there would be the manifestation in some other planet.

Q: Then we would never attain to the Absolute.

Ans: No, you will certainly attain to the Absolute when you go to the neutral point and where is no subject and object. You may attain to the Absolute, but the rest of the world will go on just the same without you.

Q: Do we understand you to say that the law of the action and the reaction is a fixed law?

Ans: It is fixed in this way that it is the law that governs all the phenomena. If you strike a blow on the table, you will receive a blow in return. It is fixed in that sense. But it is not fixed beyond the limitations of time and space, because beyond time and space this law cannot work.

Q: Then a person who once made some mistakes, had to suffer all the rest of his life. Is it natural?

Ans: Yes, every action will produce its reaction. Nothing is done without producing a result, and that is a good thing to happen.

Q: Then everyone would have to suffer all his life! Can this Absolute not cure it, or wipe it out?

Ans: It will be cured in the end. The Absolute does never suffer but the person himself would have to suffer all his life, or as Christ taught that your own spirit will wipe it out, when the Divine realization comes. Be rest assure that everything will be wiped out after the attainment of the God-intuition.

Q: Do you believe in the truth of Astrology?

Ans: Partly, as far as there is truth in it; and as far as it is concerned with the province of science.

Q: How much truth is there in it?

Ans: The fortune-telling rarely gives us truth. The scientific side of it I accept. But the modern Astrology goes too far in the fortune-telling business. Our country (India) has been the home of Astrology from ancient times, and we accept Astrology, but not in all its phases. There is some truth in it, which cannot be denied, but the people stretch it too far. But sometimes they become a puppet in the hand of the Providence or *adrishta*. But remember that there is the *purushakara* or the self-effort, which can help you much in the progress of life.

Q: When should we feel at liberty to go into the ultimate state which is known as the Absolute? It would seem that when we do that, we have risen above the mental plane, and hence would disconnect ourselves by that from our work in this world.

Ans: When there is so much work to be done in the world before the humanity is lifted out of this ignorance, of which you speak, and as it is said by Christ, that work would continue, until this world would become the kingdom of Heaven, and finally all would be laid at the feet of God.

Q: Now, until that work is accomplished, are we at liberty to leave our jobs here and go into the Absolute ?

Ans: When you are ready for marching towards the Absolute, the world will not need you. The world will give you permission to get out. The world will make you free to proceed towards your divine goal.

Q: Do we ever reach that point so long we are in the field of work and duties ?

Ans: No, we impose upon ourselves all these works and duties through our ignorance.

Q: Who are we to take the responsibility? We cannot move our finger without the will of the Lord, so the Lord knows how to manage His business.

Ans: No, it is our business to seek the kingdom of Heaven. Because, if you seek the kingdom of Heaven first, everything else will be added unto you. First of all, we must search for the Absolute with an intense longing within us, and must try to realize that, before we can do anything else. If we do everything else outside of that, we are always making mistakes, and, therefore, the teachings of Christ were greater than the interpretation of them. Christ said: "Seek ye at first the kingdom of Heaven and everything else shall be added unto you". Vedanta tells us that first realize the Absolute, and then you will do your duty with knowledge and without mistakes. At present we are groping in the darkness of ignorance, and every way we turn we stumble. That will stop. The kingdom of Heaven will be established on this earth if everybody can do the right thing.

Q: We would like to know what are these creatures good for in this great universe?

Ans: They are good for everything that you can think of. Every individual has his place, and your place cannot be taken either by me, or by anybody. You fill your place, and you are the only one who can fill it. A little animalcule which is living under your feet, has its place. No one can take its place. That is just as important as anything that you can think of as the most important thing. Each one has its place and purpose, only we do not realize that purpose, because we see only the surface, and do not go into the depth. We do not understand even the law which is governing all beings and the universe. Each one is trying to be conscious of the God-consciousness. That is, by doing everything you are becoming conscious of your own powers. In this life, an individual will go through doing certain things and accomplishing certain results. So, much of his infinite nature he has realized. Then he will take another form, and will accomplish other results, and manifest other powers. So, much of the Infinite he has realized, and he goes on becoming conscious of all the powers that are latent in him. You have infinite potentialities and possibilities, and the only way you can become conscious of

those potentialities, is by manifesting them on the physical plane. So; nothing is wrong, and nothing can be taken away from us. Rather we are filling our place, and realizing what we possess as our birth-right.

Q: Does one necessarily have to leave the world, when one enters realization of the Absolute? Can he remain here as a great spiritual teacher?

Ans: He does not have to go away from the world, because where would he go? If there is no place outside the world, where can he go? Everywhere he sees the same thing. The world is not outside of you, and it is only in your mind. If you conquer the world in your mind, you may live in the world without being of the world. Live in the world, but not of the world. A boat can stay on the water, but if the water gets into the boat, the boat is doomed. You can live in the world, but if the worldliness gets into you, you are doomed. That is what it is. Get rid of the worldliness from your heart, and the Absolute will be realized then, and not under any other condition. You must be simple like the children. You must learn to forget all that you have learnt in these artificial ways. They are only making you more ignorant. It is not real knowledge. Real knowledge is to go back to your simple nature, and to go to the centre. You can never eradicate any evil by the reformed works. That is a mistake. Train and educate also the children. The parents must be responsible for bringing them up and educating them. Give them the ideal in the beginning, how and what should be their ideal. Do not try to reform them from outside.

Q: Cannot all these reformed societies do any real good?

Ans: Yes, it depends upon our educational system. Take the boys and the girls in the schools and the colleges in their home life. They must learn the truth how this world exists. Parents ought not to have children, unless they know how to rear them. So, it is a great responsibility. Outside reformers who are reforming on the surface, do not go to the root of things. If the cause of evil is removed, the effect will be removed naturally. That is the real reform work which we need today. Christ came to do that work, but what are those modern reformers doing? They are not helping the humanity

in that sense, as Christ did. We must first of all try to realize our spiritual nature as well as our relation to the Absolute, and then out of the fulness of the heart the mouth will speak, and the hands will work.